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## Regulatory Processes Committee Meeting 11 May 2023 - Thorndon Connections Proposal (TR66-23)

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### To all Members of WCC's Regulatory Processes Committee

Councillor Sarah Free (Chair)

Councillor Ben McNulty (Deputy Chair)

Mayor Tory Whanau

Councillor Nureddin Abdurahman

Councillor Diane Calvert

Councillor Tamatha Paul

Pouwi Holden Hohaia, Tākai Here representative

Pouwi Liz Kelly, Tākai Here representative

Kia ora koutou Councillors & Representatives

The officer's report has accepted that many significant changes are required to this complex Traffic Resolution (RF) proposal for the Thorndon Connections Project. Our community welcomes the recommended improvements.

**BTW** please ensure the intention to revert to a kerb side bus stop at the upper end of Murphy St is added to the recommendations list (this change is only signalled in the body of the report).

Perhaps, due to the rush, other significant problematic design features have been overlooked.

This is remarkable given that a clear majority of submitters (60%) opposed the proposal, provided clear reasons for doing so, and gifted viable solution concepts. Furthermore, many submitters went even further, to present oral explanations for the Council's benefit. Yet the report hasn't carefully evaluated or highlighted the merits of the viable solutions. This is a major deficiency of the report.

The report states that a safety audit highlights a 'dangerous conflict' arising from proposing to position a protected bike lane on the right-hand side of the one-way streets system. This conflict is underpinned by a dangerous design idea that is reapplied throughout this proposal. This type of dangerous conflict is repeated multiple times in this Traffic Resolution.

Clearly, 'protected' bike lanes are not a panacea for the entire bike network. The city's hills, weather (wind in particular), the shape, width and varying uses of the streets reveal that a 'one size fits all' approach has appreciable shortcomings, or worse. The so-called 'protected' bike lanes may, as they do in this proposal, introduce significant SAFETY issues and hazards, for cyclists as well as other road users.

Better, more effective designs are necessary to resolve a solution for the Thorndon Connections. The majority of submitters clearly believe that some solutions are readily achievable. If these alternatives are good enough for now, and safe enough to try, then WCC should consult on these with the affected community. Agree the best alternative options so as to achieve a SAFER scheme; one that is easier, faster and perhaps less costly to implement, and with a better outcome for all road users.

### Timing

Currently there is no time or formal opportunity for this Association or the affected community to further address the considerable inherent SAFETY issues that remain in the proposal, nor other anomalies and internal inconsistencies in the report.

TR66-23 has significant scope and complexity. The officers' report is huge and complex. Some people may not have had adequate time since Friday 5 May 2023 to dive into the significant detail. Yet such data and detail matters considerably when it comes to engineering our street infrastructure.

Also, our community has been inundated with WCC related matters that compete for attention. Some examples: On Monday feedback closed on the Botanic Garden to City experiences post implementation. Currently the Golden Mile proposal is being consulted. Folk are engaged in long term and annual planning process. Others in the Open Spaces and Recreation conversation, or actively engaged in hearings with independent Commissioners on the Proposed District Plan, and so on. Clearly, the Council is receiving lots of volunteered wisdom, but everyone needs some time to breath and reflect. We also ask that the gift of excellent feedback is honoured and the Council provides transparent responses via careful evaluations and consultation. There must be an improvement of getting the best outcomes possible, sooner.

Time is also needed for citizens to keep up, so that they can be carried along as well, and to help mitigate unnecessary safety hazards that will otherwise arise. The Association feels that matters concerning the layout and use of our streets are fair too significant to rush into without adequate preparation and very good consultation.

Ngā mihi  
Richard



Richard Murcott

Chair

**Thorndon Residents Association**

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## Appendix 1 Example dangerous conflicts

The report targets the intersection of Murphy St and Pipitea St as a '*dangerous conflict*'. It impacts the direct route between Murphy St and the medical centre, St Pauls shops, etc. Consequently, the proposal is to deny right hand (RH) turn at this relatively safe intersection; it's situated at the crest of the small rise when travelling down Murphy St.

But this example is but one of the least dangerous RH turns across that the bike lane proposal in these one-way streets create.

The report is silent on mitigating perils (dangerous conflicts) where other RH turns would be necessary by drivers across proposed protected bike lanes. Examples :

- Molesworth St/Pipitea St with bikes approaching turning drivers from behind.
- Molesworth/Little Pipitea St (cycles riding downhill approaching RH turning drivers from behind),
- Molesworth St/NW Thorndon (one of the busiest 'intersections' in the suburb with cycles approaching from behind the drivers turning right into the supermarket)
- Molesworth St/May St (the key turn for logistics vehicles into NW Thorndon's dock and staging area)
- Murphy St /NW Thorndon; one of the busiest 'intersections' with cycles coming downhill at pace (often with a tail wind), approaching turning drivers from behind. This site has multiple risks. Drivers emerging from the driveway have obscured sight lines as well. Prudent cyclists ride Murphy St down the LH traffic lane in order to avoid conflict with vehicle movements in and out of this NW Thorndon driveway. Forcing cyclists to hug the kerb on the RH side of the street.