

PROPOSALS TO SIGNIFICANTLY CHANGE THE LAYOUT OF KEY THORNDON STREETS

On 6 March WCC publicly launched Traffic Resolution (TR) 63-23; a proposal to significantly change the layout of key Thorndon streets. The routes in scope include all the key 'connector' streets between Tinakori Rd and the CBD e.g. Murphy, Mulgrave, Molesworth, Hill, etc.

The TR notification was a shock to many affected people and businesses, as was the short 3-week period to make submissions on this complex set of road layout proposals loaded with considerable potential for a significant range of consequences; some good, and some flagged as 'perilous' by affected people. Councillors supported a successful appeal for WCC to extend the submission deadline by an additional week.

Changes to Bowen St and Tinakori Rd during 2022 have provided insights into WCC's design and engagement processes, as well as opportunities to witness how these new layouts perform. Armed with these insights, the Residents' Association recommended that WCC properly consult with all affected persons and businesses on the design details for the proposed changes to Thorndon's streets; especially. WCC declined to take the consultative path on design details and the Association needed to use the Local Government Official Information and Meeting Act) to obtain plans for the proposed work. Frustratingly, these plans were not up to date on project details.

The Council continued to promote its proposals without any formal discussions on design detail, and options, and refused to discuss the consequences of the proposals with key affected stakeholders – local residents and business owners.

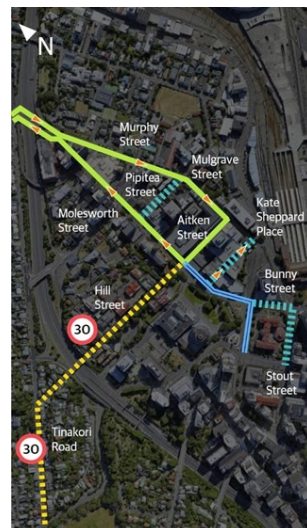
It wasn't until 6 March that affected residents and businesses discovered that the street redesign proposals existed. There was no detail provided - no design drawings for alternative options, or safety treatments and the effects of the proposals on the safety of pedestrians and bus users was lacking.

The TRA consider that the proposals could have been substantially improved if the WCC had chosen to undertake the consultation on design details in good faith and with an open mind during the 'discovery' phase of the project.

The Council asserted that they had consulted with all key stakeholders in the area, but it became clearly apparent that this was not the case, and WCC had fallen well short

of standards for consultation with affected persons by failure to give information on the proposals and failure to provide opportunities to explore viable alternatives.

In response to this situation, the Thorndon Community Group was formed to give information on the proposals and to encourage submissions to WCC. The Group coordinated information distribution, designed a simplified submission process, and arranged delivery of submissions to the Council. The submission form used by the Group is on the Bike Network page of the TRA website.



This effort validated that there was widespread community concern and that a substantial number of affected people were unaware of the Council's proposals.

1276 submissions to WCC were facilitated by the Thorndon Community Group's initiatives.

997 (78%) strongly opposed the Council's proposals. 203 (16%) strongly supported the proposals. 76 (6%) comprised the balance.

91 submitters elected to make an oral submission. Of these, **82** were strongly opposed, and **9** strongly supported WCC's proposals.

These statistics summarise the numbers known to the Thorndon Community Group. Separate to submissions encouraged by the Community Group, there have been 1084 submissions recorded directly by WCC. The statistics for these are on the [Council's project webpage](https://www.transportprojects.org.nz/current/thorndon-connections) www.transportprojects.org.nz/current/thorndon-connections WCC's [Regulatory Processes Committee](#) is scheduled to meet on 11 May 2023 to consider this complex traffic resolution.

WE HOPE THAT THE PROJECT TEAM AND COUNCILLORS COME TO THEIR SENSES AND REWORK THE DESIGN OF THE CYCLEWAYS THROUGH THORNDON. THERE ARE SUBSTANTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT TO THE CURRENT PROPOSALS WHICH WILL BENEFIT THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY AS WELL AS CYCLISTS.

WELLINGTON CITY PROPOSED DISTRICT PLAN

A remarkable feature of the proposed Plan has been the removal of the Selwyn and Portland Street residential areas of Thorndon from residential zoning and the reallocation of these to Central City zoning. Additionally, the District Plan proposal fails to identify the very significant character and heritage of these areas.

The proposed Plan has significantly undersized the parts of Thorndon designated as character precincts, which is inconsistent with recorded evidence, developed by the Council itself showing the character and heritage of our suburb.

The Association is participating in a formal opportunity to review the District Plan proposals and to highlight perceived deficiencies before an independent panel of Commissioners.

At the time of writing, the Association has represented its submissions at two Hearings, and will continue to participate in future Streams where appropriate.

The proposed Plan comprises many detailed elements so the Commissioners have scheduled a series of Hearing Streams to hear all submitters on all topics; strategy, residential, heritage, city centre, district wide matters, special purpose zones, rural & open space, natural & coastal environment, infrastructure & risks, designations.

The full [schedule of hearings](#) runs well into 2024, however the Panel is obliged to fast track its recommendations related to residential topics later this year. This requirement arises from an 'intensification streamlined planning process' (ISPP) which obliges district plans to work with the Government's new Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) and the National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS-UD) intensification policies.

More information here:

<https://www.thorndon.org.nz/district-plan/>

THORNDON EMERGENCY RESPONSE PRACTICE

The Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (WREMO) has scheduled a Community Emergency Hub response practice at **Thorndon School**, 20 Turnbull Street, **6.30-8.30pm, Thursday 18 May**

More information here including free registration: <https://www.wremo.nz/news-and-events/calendar/thorndon-emergency-response-practice/>

WREMO are planning to offer pizza for dinner so registrations would be helpful for catering purposes.

Hubs are places where people in each neighbourhood can share ideas, skills, and resources to help each other get through an emergency. The hub will be opened and run by people in the community, utilising the skills and resources that are already available.

The response practice, using an earthquake scenario, is a practical way to learn how the [Community Emergency Hub](#) works and get hands-on experience solving issues that might arise following a disaster, as well as an opportunity for neighbours to get together.

Children are welcome too. They can take on the 'role' of community members visiting the Hub offering or asking for help.

You can view Thorndon's Hub Guide here:

<https://www.wremo.nz/assets/Hub-Guides/Wellington-City/Thorndon-and-Pipitea-2023.pdf>

Section 5 from page 32 is customised specifically for Thorndon/Pipitea.

TRA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 25 May 2023

6:30 for 7PM, The Cabinet Room, The Backbencher Gastropub, 34 Molesworth St

GUEST SPEAKER: Alex Gray

Alex is an experienced Civil Engineer re Wellington's tunnels, flyovers, car parking buildings. Member of the Wellington District Automobile Association Council dealing with roading and transport issues. Committee member Brooklyn RA.

CALENDAR REMINDERS

7 May Kings Coronation Toast, Queens Park

8 May Botanic Garden bike lane [deadline for feedback](#) to WCC

11 May WCC Regulatory Processes—streets

18 May WREMO Practice

25 May TRA AGM

QUEENS PARK PROGRESS SUPPORTED BY COUNCIL

Following the unveiling of the Queens' Park celebratory plaques in October 2022, described in the last Thorndon Tribute, we have been in discussion with the City Council on Council input to the Park and work that needs doing. The following improvements are planned:

- Repair and tidying of the walking path which runs from the timber steps off Wadestown Road, through the park to the Park Street steps. We want to see this path as useable as possible for commuters in street shoes.
- Repaving of the path through the lower part of the park near the new plaques.
- Continued removal of crowded, misshapen and dying trees from the Park. The Council made significant efforts on active tree management in 2022, for the first time in over 30 years, and we look forward to this continuing, to address the significant number of remaining kaka damaged and overgrown/crowded trees.
- Mulching of the pile of tree trimmings that we have gathered over the past year or so, so that we can spread the mulch around the park.

- Signage for the paths through the Park – at present there is only one sign indicating that this is Queens Park. None of the Park entrances or tracks are signposted – the only nearby directional maps of the Town Belt/ Te Ahumairangi Hill indicate that there are no tracks at all in Queens Park.
- Planting for the Park – for the past three years, planting for the Park has been funded by private donations, with no input from the Council. The Council have now offered to fund our planting for the next two years and we are planning the planting that we will do over the coming winter.

We would like to thank the Council for their increased attention and input to Queens Park and look forward to continuing to work with Councillors and Council Officers on restoring and developing the Park.

Look at the Queens Park page at <https://www.thorndon.org.nz/queens-park-a-forgotten-gem/> for current activities and the scheduled dates for working bees.

We will be gathering at the top of the Park Street steps to recognise and celebrate King Charles III's Coronation.

Come to Queens Park with your choice of appropriate beverage and plate. 11AM on Sunday 7 May.

If you have enjoyed reading this newsletter please consider joining your Residents' Association.

| | | | |
|---|---|----------------|--|
| MEMBERSHIP FORM | Thorndon Residents' Association Incorporated Society No. 2174304 | | |
| SUBSCRIPTION | \$15 individual or \$30 per household (financial year begins 1 April) | | |
| PAYMENT | ANZ Account 01 0505 0380782 00 Use Surname/Street as Reference/Particulars | | |
| EMAIL your Member details to contact@thorndon.org.nz or complete and POST to PO Box 12282, Wellington 6144 | | | |
| Name: | | | |
| Address: | | | |
| Email: | | | |
| I am happy to receive newsletters and notices by email: YES / NO (please circle one) | | | |
| Phone: | | Mobile: | |



BECOME A MEMBER AT WWW.THORNDON.ORG.NZ

Published quarterly by Thorndon Residents' Association & distributed throughout Thorndon. Proudly supported by Tommy's Real Estate.
Email contact@thorndon.org.nz with comments, suggestions or advertising.

Thank you for your positive feedback and support for myself and Tommy's Real Estate. I have enjoyed the opportunity to be of service to those who have made contact. Please note I am more than happy to provide free market appraisals with absolutely no obligations. If you are interested, please give me a call!



25 Hawkestone Street, Thorndon

4 | 4 | 3

House
BEO: \$1,995,000
Floor Area: 214sqm

Ref: T23205



17/127 Molesworth Street, Thorndon

2 | 1 | -

Apartment
BEO: \$565,000
Floor Area: 67sqm

Ref: T23127



5/1 Hobson Street, Thorndon

3 | 1 | 2

Apartment
BEO: \$750,000
Floor Area: 120sqm

Ref: T22899



22/2 Newman Terrace, Thorndon

2 | 1 | 1

Apartment
BEO: \$560,000
Floor Area: 70sqm

Ref: T22920

Despite rising interest rates, more Wellingtonians are looking to buy their first homes.

"I think one of the most positive things we have seen over the summer in terms of real estate is the number of first-home buyers that have returned to the market," Tommy's Director Nicki Cruickshank says. "It's really pleasing to see this group get 'on the ladder' and achieve the dream of owning their own home. "After being locked out over COVID years with extraordinary price rises, the return has been steady. "After a period of 'sitting on their hands', families, too, have started to get on with things and are looking to upsize or downsize in what they perceive is a more steady market to do so."

However, the lack of investors continues to be a weakness of the market that has worrying implications beyond property values and high rents, Nicki says, "There has been virtually no activity in this part of the market, and for a city that prides ourselves on our universities and the students we attract here, it is a real concern going forward where they are going to live.

"I know there has been a trend for students to go south to Christchurch or Dunedin in the last year be-cause it is cheaper and easier to get accommodation. "We have been fortunate in the past couple of years to have a number of townhouses introduced to the market by developers, which has increased the rental pool, but this has come to a screaming halt now."

While new government policies, including the removal of tax deductibility on the interest landlords used to be able to claim, has been one factor, another is rising mortgage rates.

Just this month Reserve Bank this month hiked the Official Cash Rate by 50 basis points to 5.25 per cent.

"The latest OCR rise was a bit of a shock to the market as most commentators, and indeed real estate professionals, thought we were at the top of the interest rate cycle," Nicki says. "It has probably delayed the peak by a few months. But I still feel that with the competition between banks and the real lack of activity over the last year, interest rates will start to come down by the end of the year."

Nicki says higher interest rates notwithstanding, it's still a great time to buy — and that includes not just first-time buyers but also selling your own home to buy another.

"If you are buying and selling in the same market, it is all about the 'difference' and the size of the difference should be a lot less than in a hot market. "So although the interest rates are a bit higher, when they come back down you will be better off.

"This is certainly the time of the cycle to 'buy' as you have a lot less competition and can make offers with conditions, which gives you a lot more time to make sure you are happy with your decision. "We are likely to experience a flat market in Wellington for quite some time, if we are to experience similar cycles to previous years. "So it's time to just get on with it, and if you have made the decision to move, then just 'do it' - you won't regret it in the long term."

Everyone wants to live in Thorndon

Very proud to support Thorndon



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