



29 March 2023

**WCC
Thorndon Connections Proposal**

This submission is made by the Wellington District Council of the New Zealand Automobile Association (AA).

1. The District Council represents over 200,000 members. We have many members living in the suburbs of Thorndon, Wadestown and Northland who are likely to be affected by this proposal. Although we are an organisation representing motorists all of our members are on occasions pedestrians and an increasing number are cyclists. We recognise and support the objective of creating safe transport improvements for all road users and particularly support well-designed cycle lanes.
2. We also recognise that Wellington's topography and often narrow streets make it difficult to install separate cycle lanes without causing significant effects to residents, businesses and local communities. Consequently, we support, and strongly recommend to the WCC, a balanced approach to transport changes including cycle lanes. We recognise the need for mode shift but this should not be implemented without careful consideration of the consequential effects.
3. In developing this submission, the Association has engaged closely with the Thorndon Residents' Association to get their perspective on local impacts, as their insights on the WCC's consultation with affected residents and businesses in the area. We would like to acknowledge their support.
4. Regrettably, there are several aspects of the proposed cycleways in Murphy/Mulgrave and Molesworth Streets that cause considerable concerns from a safety perspective.
5. Our biggest safety concern is the proposed bidirectional cycle lanes in Molesworth Street from Aitken Street to Lambton Quay. This street has been one way for many years and pedestrians and users of active forms transport crossing the road and vehicles exiting the two driveways will not expect to meet a cyclist heading downhill contra flow. We note that the Multi Criteria Analysis gave the same ranking to a cycle lane going the full length of Mulgrave Street onto Thorndon Quay. As this route removes the high risk bidirectional route we recommend if a cycleway is constructed that this route be adopted. This would also allow the angle parking to remain in Aitken Street, which has the highest parking percentages over the working day.

Recommendation 1: In the interests of safety introduce the cycleway along the alternate route running the length of Mulgrave Street.

6. There are multiple small businesses on Molesworth, Murphy and Mulgrave Streets most of which depend on short term parking on the street for customers. We are concerned that the removal of 146 metred street car parks may result in some businesses closing. Such an outcome would not appear to be consistent with the WCC's commitment to be a "business friendly city", as defined in its draft Economic Wellbeing Strategy. We note that on Tinakori



Road one of the businesses has recorded a 50% drop in turnover since the parking outside was removed as part of the safety improvements. To avoid this happening to Molesworth and Murphy/Mulgrave small businesses we suggest peak hour bike lanes be used as per the Austroads Guidelines (enclosed). There are several peak hour bike lanes in use in South Australia and Brisbane. In our view peak hour bike lanes would be a win-win solution for Thorndon, as they would allow off peak parking yet still provide bike lanes in the morning and evening peaks. We suggest that Murphy/Mulgrave streets have peak hour cycle lanes from 7am to 9am and Molesworth Street from 3pm to 6pm.

We acknowledge that currently peak hour bike lanes are not allowed in New Zealand. However, as this is a minor legislative change (similar to peak hour bus lanes) we understand the Minister of Transport has the power to implement this change.

Recommendation 2: In the interests of the livelihood of the small businesses in the area adopt the peak hour bike lane model that has been successfully implemented in South Australia and Brisbane.

7. We note that both Molesworth St and Murphy/Mulgrave Street are main arterial routes with both routes accessing the urban motorway and Thorndon/Wadestown. We are concerned with the proposed construction zone for 61 Molesworth St which will reduce Molesworth Street to one traffic lane for 2 or 3 years. This route carries over 9,000 vehicles per day most of which travel in the evening peak. We doubt whether one lane can carry the evening peak which will cause congestion including the buses travelling to Wadestown. To improve this situation we wondered if the construction zone could have a peak hour clearway requirement? Most construction sites only have deliveries in the morning so a peak hour clearway would in our view be a win-win solution.

Recommendation 3: In the interests of avoiding further congestion and delays in the central city during peak periods, set a peak hour clearway requirement on the 61 Molesworth Street construction zone.

8. Our next concern is the proposed bike lane in Murphy Street crossing the exit and entry lanes for the busy New World supermarket. We do not consider the high use driveway treatment will eliminate the risk of a car hitting a cyclist coming downhill in the right hand lane. We are surprised this busy exit/entry was not identified as a safety risk in the safety audit. Perhaps a better solution would be for the bike lane to cross to the left hand side of the road just uphill from New World? Less confident cyclists could use the traffic light pedestrian crossing in Murphy Street.

Recommendation 4: In the interests of cyclist safety investigate alternate options to the proposed lane crossing the exit/entry lanes to the New World supermarket carpark.

9. Also, we question the need for a ban on right turns from Murphy Street into Pipitea Street. The amount of traffic going into and out of New World supermarket is about 3 times the number of cars turning into Pipitea Street. If high use driveway markings are considered a safe solution at New World surely a signage/painted road solution could be designed for Pipitea Street junction? If we are trying to reduce emissions, it does not make sense to force motor vehicles to travel a longer distance than they currently travel.

Recommendation 5: In the interests of efficient road use and traffic flow to avoid unnecessary carbon emissions drop the proposed ban on right turns from Murphy Street into Pipitea Street and explore a road marking solution.



10. We understand the rationale for installing 4 raised pedestrian crossings in Tinakori Road, Hill St, Murphy St and Molesworth St and support the installation in Hill Street as this is a relatively narrow low speed street. However, the other 3 crossings are on arterial routes with buses and commercial vehicles. Bus passengers will be inconvenienced crossing raised platform crossings. As WCC have advised there have been no pedestrian accidents at any of these pedestrian crossings we question if there is a genuine need for the 3 crossings on the above streets.

Recommendation 6: In the interests of efficient road use and traffic flow, and comfort for users of public transport, proceed with the installation of the raised pedestrian platform on Hill Street only as there is no demonstratable evidence to suggest raised pedestrian platform are required at the other three sites.

Alternatively, if raised pedestrian crossings are considered essential, we request that the 3 raised crossings on arterial routes be limited to 75mm high with a slope each side of 1 in 20.

We thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the Thorndon Connections proposed safety improvements and wish to present our submission in person to Council.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Geordie Cassin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

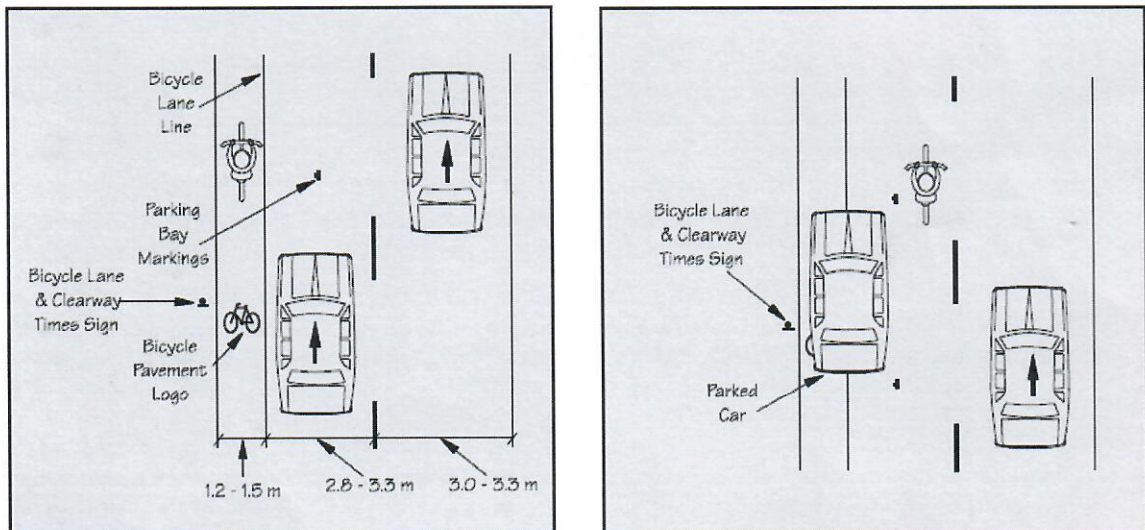
Geordie Cassin
Chair, NZAA Wellington District Council

4.3.10 'Peak Period' Bicycle Lanes

'Peak period' bicycle lanes are common on roads designated with clearways. The restriction of parking during peak traffic periods usually coincides with peak cyclist numbers. On roads where the adjoining land use is predominantly residential, the installation of bicycle lanes during peak periods can be a compromise between the adjoining residents' desire for on-street parking and cyclists' need for designated road space. Parking restrictions should coincide with peak traffic conditions (i.e. outside of working hours or outside of school hours) to provide an exclusive bicycle lane when it is most needed. The operation of this type of lane is illustrated in Figure 4.14.

Peak period bicycle lanes should only be used when no other option is possible. Often the carriageway layout is such that during off-peak periods, cyclists have to contend with stressful and potentially hazardous conditions when cars are parked at the kerbside. It is important in the design of the bicycle lane that conditions for cyclists are assessed for different periods of the day.

Figure 4.14: Operation of peak period exclusive bicycle lane during and outside clearway times



Source: VicRoads (1999).

Toowong, Queensland

Google Street View

Sep 2022

See more dates

