

WADESTOWN SCHOOL



Side School: Weld Street
Wadestown 6012

Main School: Rose Street
Wadestown 6012

Tel: 472 4779 **Fax:** 499 1605
Email: office@wadestown.school.nz

14 June 2011

Paul Davidson
Property Services
Wellington City Council
PO Box 2199
Wellington

Dear Paul

We are writing to oppose the application for Road Stopping at 62 Weld Street, Wadestown.

The Wadestown School Road Safety Committee under the Wadestown School Parents Association, along with Wadestown School management and the Wadestown School Board of Trustees have serious concerns with regards to this application. Please see attached letters of support.

The Wadestown School Road Safety Committee was set up in late 2007 to address many road safety concerns and issues around both Wadestown School sites (72 Weld St and Rose St), to improve the areas and make them safer for children on their travels to and from School.

We have been working with members of the Council for the past four years, including presenting a proposal in 2008 to the Mayor and councillors for the areas around both Wadestown School sites to be made safer. Stuart Bullen, Senior WCC Traffic Engineer - Infrastructure, has been very supportive in helping us achieve our goals. We will approach him with regard to this issue.

Weld Street is a very steep narrow street with limited parking. Many of the original Weld Street properties have been subdivided creating many rear sections, making this area of Weld Street reasonably high density. Many Wadestown properties do not have offstreet parking. We do our best as a Committee to help make the best out of a difficult situation for the School and community. For residents there is the added issue of restricted visibility when driving in and out of their properties due to the steep topography of this street

Attached is a copy of the original proposal presented to the Mayor and councillors, one aspect of which was "Weld Street parking". These issues remain unresolved.

For more than 30 years there have been a number of informal initiatives in place around Wadestown Side School (72 Weld Street). These include a drop off system in the morning (whereby a parent is on duty at the school gate to open car doors for the child to get out and enabling the driver to continue on their way). Another system is an informal one-way system which operates between 8.30am – 9.00am and then again at 2.30pm -3.10pm. We have been very fortunate over the years that most residents are aware of these systems and respect and abide by them. Parents are rostered on duty at the junction of Cecil Road and Weld Street in the afternoon to help children cross safely (there is no zebra crossing) and further down outside the Wadestown shops a parent is also on duty and assembles children safely here to be picked up. All these systems help move vehicles away from the school gate by giving parents other areas to retrieve their children from. These measures are well supported by the school community and local residents. Without these systems in place, traffic congestion and resulting traffic behaviour could be disastrous. Small children cannot be seen. In fact some long term residents have developed the convention of tooting as a warning as they leave their property.

Our concerns regarding vehicular access to 62 Weld St are that this is the narrowest and steepest part of Weld Street and we believe by selling this land it will enable the owners of 62 Weld Street to apply to subdivide. Whilst we do not have an issue with this in principle, our concern is that any future development may result in the apparently existing Weld Street vehicular access being developed. In the past we have asked for more formal parking to be put in place here as currently there are only six legal angle parks outside the Side School. There is no footpath on this side of the road, which is the same side as the school, and the direction the cars are travelling when on the one way route.

The need and desire for more parking and extending the footpath has now become more pressing for the Side School. This is because the Ministry of Education has recently approved the development of another classroom for this site. Effectively the Side School will now be able to cater for a maximum of over 100 students on this site. Work will be commencing at the site within the next 2-3 weeks. It must be recognised that this school is the “infant” school. The children who attend this school are only five years old. They cannot walk to school by themselves and lack the judgement or ability to be independently roadwise. Typically parents of five year olds also have other preschoolers and/or babies and they require safe, accessible and close parking to the school.

We request the Council does not sell this area of land. Six short stay angle parks for a School that can cater for over 100 five year olds is not enough. There are a number of residents' entrances and exits on the other side of the road making it difficult to park on that side of the road and then children need to cross the road.

It is virtually impossible for one car to drive up this street as one drives down. Another related concern is access for emergency vehicles.

As a school and a community we have so many unique, valuable and respected systems in place to counteract the awkward terrain and traffic congestion issues the Wadestown Side School faces. We believe we are already taking as full a responsibility for the children who attend this school as we are able to. In addition to the systems described, we encourage Walking School Buses and provide parent education. Hence our concern with the implications for the safety of children, that will arise from a sale of this land and any subsequent development.

We urge you to make a site visit at around 8.50am and 2.50pm on a school day, particularly if it is raining, bearing in mind the Side School does not currently have its extra classroom and the school roll is not at its peak. By making a site visit we are sure you will encounter for yourself the many difficulties and challenges we face.

Since the time of the 25 June 2008 WCC report, the Wadestown Side School has undergone extensive refurbishment and are now expecting another new classroom. We were surprised to read in the 2008 report that *"The school's principal completed the standard neighbour's comments/consent form on behalf of the school's Board of Trustees. The school did not object to the road stopping proposal"*. After consulting the BOT minutes around this time we found that the school neither supported nor objected to the sale of the land but brought to the Council's attention the concern that the street is already heavily congested with infill housing, and further housing or access ways could result in greater safety issues around the access of children to the Side School.

On this occasion it is disappointing that the Council has not contacted the Side School directly, nor the Principal, nor the Board of Trustees and the placement of the very unofficial looking A4 paper sign on the actual street is less than satisfactory as there is no footpath in front of it, only yellow lines, and it is partly obscured by bushes making it difficult to even realise it is there.

In summary, we oppose this application. However, in principle we do not want to deny the applicant the opportunity to purchase this land but would request a condition be imposed, in perpetuity, to forgo Weld St vehicular access in favour of Cecil Rd access.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Wadestown School PTA- Road Safety Committee
Jennie Johnstone, Hannah Small, Phillipa Paviour-Smith

APPENDIX 3 WADESTOWN SCHOOL



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Paul Davidson
Property Services
Wellington City Council
PO Box 2199
Wellington

Dear Paul

RE: ROAD STOPPING - 62 WELD ST

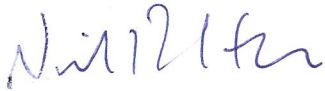
On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Wadestown School we write in strong support of the submission by the Wadestown School Road Safety Committee regarding the road stopping application at 62 Weld St, Wadestown.

Road safety issues have been a priority for the school in recent years and hence the existence of a specific Road Safety Committee to help the school with its management and attendance to these issues. In recent times, with the wonderful support of Wellington City Council, a number of essential initiatives have started to become a reality. The school has recognised that it has had a role to play in road safety and has done what it can with signage, parent/traffic management systems, child education/walk to school awareness and initiatives etc to demonstrate our commitment to working with Council in making the difficult neighbouring roads safer.

The submission from the Road Safety Committee outlines the various concerns we have with regard to the road stopping matter in Weld St as well as providing a summary road safety matters dealt with by the school, including parking and traffic issues in Weld St over many years. We now find ourselves in a position where the issues referred to in the submission in Weld St will intensify increasing safety concerns, which is a primary consideration for the Board with regard to the children of Wadestown School, bearing in mind that the Side School site in Weld St is the site for schooling for our youngest children.

We understand that school management have invite you to a site visit to experience the difficulties faced but also the systems the school has implemented to help manage these challenges. Words in a letter can only be convincing to a certain point. We strongly encourage you to visit and see first hand the implications of the road stopping outcome if approved.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information and thank you for your consideration of our concerns.



Neil Paviour-Smith
Chairman, Board of Trustees
Wadestown School

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14 June 2011

RE: ROAD STOPPING 62 WELD ST

Dear Paul

I am writing to strongly support the submission by the Wadestown School Road Safety Committee and the Wadestown School Board of Trustees regarding the above road stopping application at 62 Weld St.

This submission clearly outlines school management concerns and gives you a detailed brief of the history of road safety, parking and traffic issues in Weld St over many years. These have remained unresolved despite the high density of in-fill housing in Weld St and associated traffic issues which have had a major impact on Wadestown Side School and managing children's safety from this site.

I would like to invite you to visit the school and meet with me and the Road Safety Committee so that we can discuss this issue. Alternatively can I ask you to make a site visit around 8.45am and 2.45pm so that you can see the many difficulties and challenges we face. The Road Safety Committee work particularly hard for our school and are a group of dedicated and hard-working parents who have children's safety as their priority.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further information.

Sally Barrett

Sally Barrett
Deputy Principal
Wadestown School

Wadestown School

Traffic and Road Safety

1.0 Introduction

It is vital that all children are kept as safe as possible on their way to and from School.

The Wadestown School Parents Association, on behalf of Wadestown School (“the School”), would like to work with the Wellington City Council (“the Council”), the Police and Land Transport New Zealand to improve the safety of the children at the School. This document reviews a number of the particular issues facing the School and identifies the Parents Association’s preferred solution for each issue. Some of these are generic and some are related to individual locations.

Often primary school children lack the necessary skills to make good and sensible judgments when it comes to the speed and distance of vehicles. Encouraging walking to school, especially in a supported initiative such as the Walking School Bus, allows for some of the best road safety education. We need to make the Wadestown environment safe and pedestrian friendly in order to help encourage and reassure Wadestown parents their children can be safe getting to school.

Staff and parents have made numerous approaches to the Council over the years, and the school participated in “The safer routes to school” initiative. However, many of the issues identified have remained unresolved.

It is our strongly held view that the Council must adopt a pragmatic approach to achieve a realistic solution that promotes the safety of Wadestown School children and all road users.

The issues of greatest concern are:

1. *The Main School*

- The Mairangi Road- Rose Street intersection.
- The crossing of Mairangi Road where it meets the Wade Street zigzag
- Lytton Street
- Purakau Avenue/entrance, crossing area

2. *The Side School*

- The Weld Street-Cecil Road intersection;
- Weld Street parking

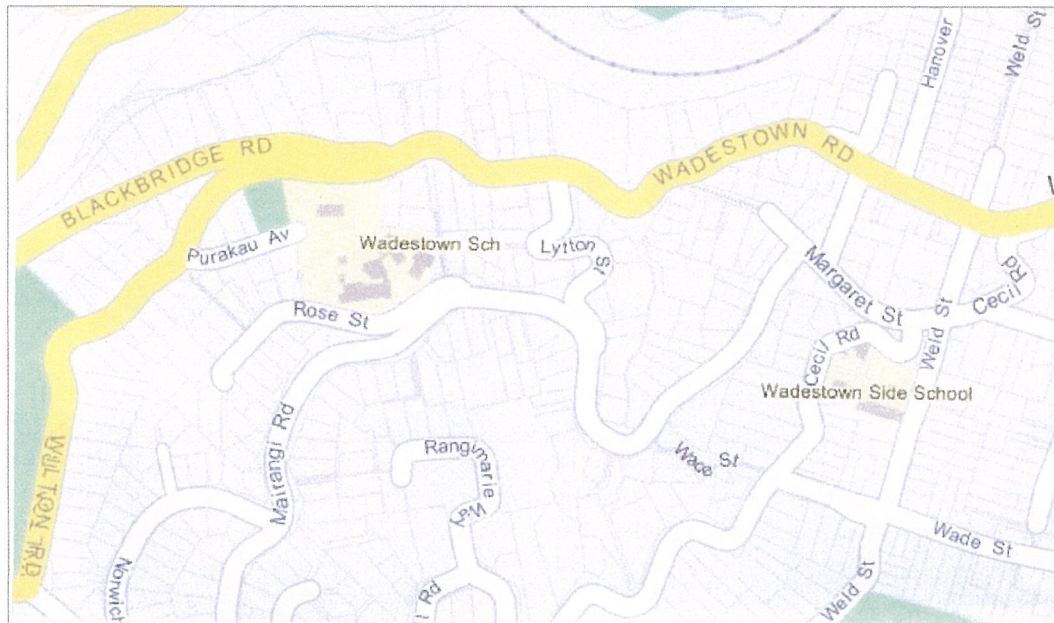
3. *Both Sites*

- Signage
- Speed limit

2.0 Wadestown School and its location

Wadestown School is a full primary school serving the children of Wadestown between year 1 and year 8. The school operates at two distinct sites, a three classroom school on Weld

Street, known locally as the “Side School” and a larger school on the hillside between Rose Street and Purakau Avenue, known as the “Main School”.



Each of these sites presents unique challenges in terms of traffic management and road safety. The fact that both school sites are served by winding and narrow roads, makes for hazardous crossing, poor visibility and unsafe stopping areas. These are main roads with relatively high usage.

For the Side School, these challenges primarily relate to the dropping off and collection of children on a narrow and extremely steep street, and the crossing of Cecil Road by children walking home.

The most serious issues in relation to the Main School are that the School is largely hidden from view from both of the main roads serving it (Mairangi Road above the School and Wadestown/Wilton Road below it), and that there is very little in the way of suitable access for vehicles to allow children to be dropped off and collected. These roads are all main thoroughfares for traffic from Wilton and Northland to the city.

There are school funds earmarked for the redevelopment of the school entrance area, once the road safety issues have been satisfactorily resolved. The intention is to make the entrance area and school banner much more prominent, and improve the collection point for parents and children, in order to better contain everyone on the school grounds/footpath.

3.0 The Main School

3.1 The Mairangi Road-Rose Street Intersection

The intersection between Mairangi Road and Rose Street constitutes the major dropping off and collection point for children at the Main School. Traffic issues before and after school are significant.

At the start and close of each school day a large number of vehicles approach this intersection. At present, regulation of this activity is minimal and parents operate as

best they can in the conditions. However, the very strong feeling at the School is that the management of traffic at this location must be greatly improved. This would have significant safety advantages.

Aerial shot of Mairangi Rd-Rose St intersection



Wadestown School's location in relation to the community it serves means that the majority of parents driving to the school approach the school from the East and turn at this intersection, effectively operating a de facto roundabout system. In the absence of a properly constituted roundabout, good traffic management relies entirely on voluntary compliance with a series of school "conventions".

However, this is not always effective as busy parents are often tempted to park at the closest point to the school, including on yellow "no parking lines". This prevents others from turning around the "circle", consequently having to reverse to complete a full turn. This creates significant congestion and safety issues for all road users.

The Parents Association has instituted a road patrol initiative this year, blocking the areas closest to the school with cones, "no parking" signs, and monitored by senior students. The Parents Association would like to acknowledge the assistance of Constable Ashton of the Police in putting this system into place. Local residents have complimented the school on this new system.

Expert advice obtained by the Parents Association from a roading engineer is that it would be desirable for the intersection between Mairangi Road and Rose Street to be formally made into a roundabout. Our advice is that the area is easily wide enough to provide an adequate and safe turning circle. This would significantly reduce vehicle speeds around the school. In addition, bollards in the current no-parking areas, kerb extensions and yellow lines are recommended.

These improvements would have several beneficial effects:

1. The speeds of all motorists near to the school would be reduced.
2. The practice of parents turning at the intersection would be formalised in a controlled way.
3. Unhelpful parking practises would be prevented.
4. Change in road conditions heightens drivers' awareness of surroundings.

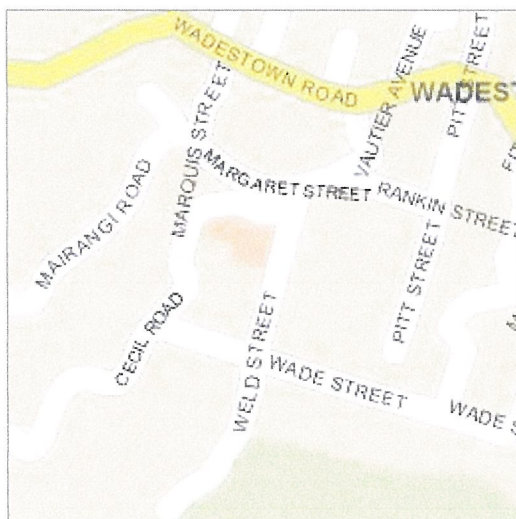
3.2 The Current System

Given that the Mairangi Road/Rose Street intersection is used successfully by many parents as a turning area, on an informal basis, it seems logical that that process should be formalised. Let's build on the system already in place, but make it safer for all traffic, the school children and more user friendly for local residents and road users.

If we try to prevent people from turning here it only moves the problem. Cars would be forced to turn in other areas on Mairangi Road. This is particularly dangerous for the school children given the unpredictable nature of the situation. For example people turn in driveways or in other street entrances, both of which cause other safety issues, such as children running along footpaths past garages into the path of a turning car, or another vehicle anticipates the car turning into a street but is then confronted with a car doing a u-turn.

3.3 The crossing of Mairangi Road where it meets the Wade Street zigzag

Mairangi Road is a long, winding and at times narrow road. It has no traffic lights or other forms of traffic regulation. It meets a pedestrian zigzag, at the end of a continuation of Wade Street beyond Cecil Road.



A number of children use this zigzag to access Mairangi Road from Cecil Road, Wade Street and other places. Where the zigzag meets Mairangi Road, there is no path on the zigzag side of the road. This requires children to cross Mairangi Road in order to get to or from the Main School. Crossing points have been installed to assist children. However, the zigzag meets Mairangi Road at what is essentially a blind corner. There is no pedestrian crossing at this location.

The real concern in this regard is the control of vehicle speed. Motorists can reach speeds on Mairangi Road that would make adjustment in an emergency extremely difficult. This is a cause of real concern at the School.

The Parents Association would like to see speed bumps installed before and after the location where the zigzag meets Mairangi Road. This would ensure that motorists were travelling at a reasonably safe speed at the point at which children would be crossing.

A major problem with the crossing point on Mairangi Rd is that it is further along the road from the exit point of the zigzag. Therefore it is often not used correctly. Yellow no parking criss-crossed lines in this area so that cars don't park in front of the kerb crossing indents would be helpful as well as highlighting it is the correct crossing area. This is essentially a blind corner and this is exacerbated by parked cars.

4.0 Signage at Both Sites

As identified above, both sites are served by roads which are narrow and winding. These roads, Cecil Road, Mairangi Road and Wadestown Road, are not regulated by stop signs or traffic lights. Motorists can and do drive at speeds well in excess of 50km/h. This has led to accidents involving children. The Parents Association is determined to do all it can to reduce the chances of another such accident, or worse a death.

Neither School site is particularly visible from any of the roads mentioned above. The School is therefore dependent on road signage to ensure that motorists are aware of the fact that they are driving in a School area and to adjust their driving accordingly.

Wadestown Road, below the site of the Main School is adequately served with School road signs. In other areas, the Parents Association takes the view that the road signage around the School should be improved. An example is Mairangi Road. Motorists approaching the Main School site from the east are met with a sign before the intersection with Lytton Street:



Mairangi Road and intersection with Lytton Street ahead to the right

But, for motorists approaching the School from Lytton Street, there is no such sign (see below):



Lytton Street and the intersection with Mairangi Road

This intersection requires hold lines and a Stop sign – as it is a major crossing area for children on their way to and from school. It is also frequently used as a turning area.



Mairangi Road

The Side School has similar signage issues. Motorists approaching the intersection of Weld Street and Cecil Road are met with a sign at Margaret Street. However, motorists

approaching the same intersection from Cecil Road could be entirely unaware that they might soon be confronted with children crossing the road.



Cecil Road-Margaret Street intersection

The Parents Association would therefore like to see additional yellow diamond school signs erected at the following locations:

1. At the top of Lytton Street;
2. On Mairangi Road, west of the School;
3. At the Cecil Road-Margaret Street intersection; and
4. On Wade Street facing the eastern approach to Weld Street.

The Parents Association would like to erect Wadestown School Signs on Mairangi Road road reserve behind the white council fences 10 metres either side of the school to alert drivers to the school's actual location.

5.0 The Side School

5.1 The Weld Street- Cecil Road intersection

A large number of children from the Side School walk down Weld Street at 3 pm and cross Cecil Road, a main road, having high usage, and poor visibility.

Parents from the School have raised with the Council the possibility that this crossing might be improved in terms of safety by the installation of a formal marked pedestrian crossing. However, the advice of Council officials was that this would not be compliant with Council bylaws.

This intersection is patrolled on a daily basis by parents from the School. There are marked crossing points and the School has been furnished with cones and 2 temporary signs. However, the crossing in its present form seems to fall short of the

descriptions of School Crossing Points or “Kea crossings” contained in the Land Transport Rules.

The Parents Association takes the view that safety at this crossing would be considerably improved by the installation of a pedestrian crossing. However, if that cannot be achieved in accordance with existing bylaws, then the Parents Association would like to see the crossing to have all the proper characteristics of a Kea crossing, including in particular, vehicle hold lines.

5.2 Weld Street Parking

Between the hours of 8.30-9.00am and 2.45-3.00pm the residents and parents operate an informal “one way system”, with cars driving down Weld Street only. This system is effective and has been in place for approximately 30 years. Without it, access to the school and street for all road users would be at best fraught. The Parents Association believes that the system must remain in place and be formalised.

Currently the side school is serviced by 6 parks on the school side of the road. Parking spaces have recently been added by the council on the other side of the road below the school. These were supposed to be put adjacent, on the school side to reflect the existing informal system of parking which is successful. These new parks on the other side of the road have created a slalom and blocked access for residents, parents and emergency vehicles.

A solution would be to provide a narrow kerb or footpath along the school side fence line and relocate the existing new parks back to the school side of the road, as they were originally intended. There is also a small road reserve area above the school which could be used for more parks.



Weld Street/Cecil Road intersection.



New parks on non-school side of road.



Angle parks on Weld Street.

6.0 Parents Association Initiatives to Help Get Our Children to and from School Safely

6.1 Both Sites

- Walking School Buses from as far away as Barnard/Sefton Streets to both sites.
- Regularly send out “Road Safety Newsletters” outlining expectations of driver behaviour around the School sites.
- Call on Parkwise and the Police to help prevent yellow line offenders.
- Highlight appropriate Road Safety messages regularly in the Wadestown School Community Newsletter
- Work with the Side school children to teach Year 1 children safe road practices when walking down Weld Street.

6.2 Side School Site

School drop off – Car doors are opened by a duty parent outside the school gate so children can walk safely inside the school gate. Prevents traffic congestion and eases parking problems.

One Way System – There is an informal one way system operating at the start and end of School day. This alleviates traffic congestion and road blockages.

After School Road Safety rosters - Teachers cross classes to the other side of the road. The children walk down Weld Street where a duty parent crosses the groups of children. Some of the children then walk further down to the Bus stop area opposite the Wadestown shops where a duty parent holds them and dismisses them when their parent collects them from this point. This further alleviates traffic congestion around the school and distributes the traffic elsewhere. This also helps with the lack of parking outside the Side School.

6.3 Main School Site

Home Walking School Bus – For the youngest class a home WSB operates. It escorts a large group of children daily to the Wadestown Road bus-stop area opposite Wadestown shops. This moves some traffic away from the school.

Purakau Avenue Entrance/Exit – Parent roster to cross children across the road safely before and after school.

Rose Street/Mairangi Road (Main School Entrance) - A variation on traditional road patrol. Children place cones on the edge of the footpath to highlight the presence of yellow lines and patrol the area to remind and encourage drivers to keep moving. This helps to prevent vehicles dropping off, picking up or parking on the yellow lines thus avoiding congestion and preventing the need for other vehicles to reverse and pull out in front of the mass exodus of children swarming around at busy times of the day.

Lytton Street Crossing Area

A parent roster has been implemented so that every afternoon a parent will be on duty to help cross the children safely at this intersection after school.

Scooter/Skateboard Licences

A form with basic road safety guidelines is taken home to be read, understood and signed by both child and parent. It is then returned to school and a licence is issued.

We rely heavily on parents to volunteer for these rosters. This also involves a parent to be the contact person and responsible for creating the rosters. These are a big commitment from our school parents that most schools do not need to have in place because their school sites are not so challenging and often they have effective road patrols and crossings in place. Wadestown School and its heavy use of parents on rosters such as these is unique.

Attached

- Wadestown School Principal letter of support
- Wadestown School Board letter of support
- Letter from Constable Duncan Ashton – New Zealand Police DAH848
- Copy of letter delivered to 60 houses (residents) surrounding the school
- Replies from residents

Wadestown School Traffic and Road Safety Document – Summary

1.0 Problems

- Our school is invisible (located on difficult geographical sites)
- Situated on two different sites
- Located on a main thoroughfare
- Numerous accidents and near misses
- Poor access to the school. Footpaths are narrow, winding, steep and generally in poor condition.
- Parking issues
- Traffic flow
- We have never had a cohesive road safety plan or funding, only piecemeal temporary solutions.

2.0 Solutions

2.1 Main School

- Informal roundabout on Mairangi Road formalised
- Yellow lines on road
- Five “P2” parks
- 40km/h school zone (Main school through to Side school)
- Signage indicating exact school location
- Pedestrian/Kea crossing at top of Lytton Street (Stop sign, vehicle hold lines)
- Pedestrian/Kea crossing on Mairangi Road junction where the zigzag from Wade Street meets Mairangi Road.
- Stop sign set back at the top of Rose Street
- Widening of the footpath by the school entrance to accommodate children “spilling” onto the road
- Bollards on the footpath outside the school between the two sets of residents’ carpads.

2.2 Purakau Avenue

- 40km/h School zone
- Improved signage
- Pedestrian/Kea crossing across Wilton Road
- Alternative parking (“kiss and ride” lane)
- Improved traffic management

2.3 Side School

- Signage indicating exact school location
- 40km/h school zone (Side school through to Main school)
- Pedestrian/Kea crossing across Cecil Road at the base of Weld Street
- Parks on right hand side (looking down hill) of Weld Street moved to left hand side.
- New parking spaces on road reserve above school.
- Formalise existing one way system at 9.00am and 3.00pm.