
REPORT 6
(1215/52/IM)

BUS PRIORITY PLAN: COURTENAY PLACE, KENT AND CAMBRIDGE TERRACE AND ADELAIDE ROAD TRAFFIC RESOLUTION

1. Purpose of Report

To report on submissions received on the proposed traffic resolution for a package of bus lanes along Courtenay Place, Kent and Cambridge Terrace and Adelaide Road approved by the Committee at its 18 August 2011 meeting, and to seek the Committee's approval to the appended traffic resolution which will allow for the legal implementation and enforcement of the proposed bus lanes.

2. Executive Summary

On 18 August 2011 the Strategy and Policy Committee agreed to a package of bus lanes along Courtenay Place, Kent and Cambridge Terrace and Adelaide Road. It was agreed that the traffic resolutions required to implement the bus lanes be advertised and brought back to the Committee for confirmation.

The traffic resolution process calls for objections rather than submissions, never the less of the 52 submissions received only 10 were objections.

The period for submissions was open from 23 August – 6 September 2011. There was a high level of support with 42 of the 52 submissions (80%) in support of the bus lanes.

Officers have considered the submissions and have made some amendments to the original proposal. The section of bus lane on Kent Terrace from Majoribanks Street to Elizabeth Street has been removed from the proposal, and the bus lane on Cambridge Terrace has been slightly shortened to begin at Barker Street rather than the Basin Reserve.

The amendments address the major concerns raised by objectors to the proposal. Officers therefore recommend the amended traffic resolution attached as Appendix 1, be approved.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*

2. *Agree to recommend to Council that it approves the proposed traffic resolution, included as Appendix 1, to take effect on a date to be publicly advertised. Existing restrictions will remain in force until that date.*
3. *Note implementation of the bus lanes is expected to begin in February 2012.*

4. Background

The Bus Priority Plan was presented to SPC in April 2007, when Councillors reaffirmed their support for improving the performance of the city's passenger transport system through bus priority measures. Councillors agreed that viable public transport is critical to the functioning of Wellington's transport system and acknowledged the important contribution of bus lanes to achieving that end.

The Ngauranga to Wellington Airport Corridor Plan (N2A Plan) identifies that Wellington City has responsibility for passenger transport improvements along the Golden Mile route, and bus priority measures on arterial routes, to the airport, hospital and key suburban centres.

Bus priority measures are aimed at making travel by bus more attractive and reliable, encouraging a shift from private cars to buses, facilitating a more efficient and environmentally friendly means of transport, future-proofing bus movements from the effects of growing traffic congestion, helping buses bypass congestion and reducing journey times.

A significant number of bus priority measures are now in place both along the Golden Mile and on main arterial routes carrying high bus flows into and out of the central city. These are routinely monitored with the results presented to Committee, and the schemes have been shown to perform well.

The next stage of the Bus Priority Plan includes bus lanes on Courtenay Place, Kent and Cambridge Terrace and Adelaide Road all of which carry large bus flows. A detailed assessment of the scope for introducing bus lanes along these routes showed that it will be possible to implement these with minimal effect on parking or general traffic movement while achieving good benefits for public transport users.

5. Discussion

On 18 August 2011, SPC agreed to implement bus lanes along Courtenay Place, Kent and Cambridge Terrace and Adelaide Road. It was agreed that the traffic resolutions required to implement the bus lanes be advertised and brought back to the Committee for confirmation.

The period for submissions was open from 23 August – 6 September 2011. There was a high level of support with 42 of the 52 submissions (80%) in support of the bus lanes.

The great majority of the submitters support the proposal, primarily because they consider that bus priority makes public transport more attractive, and public transport is good for the city.

5.1 Major themes from the submissions

Cycling

There were 26 submissions that discussed issues relating to cycling in the bus lanes. There was support from cyclists as they are allowed to cycle in bus lanes. Policy 3.1 of the Cycling Policy says: *On main corridors, cyclists will have an option of riding free of general traffic by using dedicated cycle facilities where practical or by using dedicated bus lanes.* This proposal adds further cycle facilities on a main corridor along Courtenay Place, Kent and Cambridge Terrace and Adelaide Road.

There was concern regarding the width of the bus lane to allow cyclists and buses to use the lane at the same time. This would require a lane with of over 4.5m. There is not enough space in the carriageway to accommodate this width without major loss of parking, a traffic lane and/or footpath/kerb adjustments.

The proposed bus lanes are within the recommended 3.2m lane width for single flow traffic. At this width bus drivers and cyclists are not tempted to share the lane, and a full overtaking manoeuvre needs to take place. A bus lane width between 3.2m and 4.5m is considered dangerous for cyclists as there is the temptation for the users to try and share the lane. In this situation it is more likely the cyclist will be squeezed off the road, or be hit by a bus. Given the available space in the road corridor, officers consider that the proposed widths are the safest option with the least impact on other users of the carriageway.

Cyclists also raised the issue of signage to promote and identify that cyclists can use bus lanes. This is considered to be a reasonable request. Adelaide Road has a sign which identifies the users that are allowed to use the bus lane. The sign is quite large and may not be appropriate to use city wide. However officers consider it appropriate to install this sign on Kent and Cambridge Terrace also and will investigate options for providing better information on who can use bus lanes at other locations.

It should be noted that bus lanes are firstly designed for buses, with cyclists a second priority. The submissions from the cyclists did not discuss the location or time restrictions applying to the bus lanes.

Business parking

There were no submissions from businesses on Courtenay Place, all of whom were visited and delivered a letter on the proposal.

Only three businesses submitted regarding parking: Wellington Motorcycles, Gazley Tory and Deluxe Café. These businesses felt the suggested parking restrictions would have a negative effect on their business particularly those on Kent Terrace.

Wellington Motorcycles asked for a compromise of starting the bus lane after the motorcycle park. Gazley Tory asked why the buses can't run on the other side of the road beside the centre island. Deluxe Café suggested widening the road on the other side or use one of the three traffic lanes.

In light of the concern of the businesses together with NZ Bus view that there would be limited benefit to their operations resulting from the extension of the existing Kent Terrace bus lane, officers suggest the Kent Terrace bus lane be deleted from the current proposal, although this may still be required at some time in the future.

Bus lane times

Five submissions discussed the issue of the bus lane time restrictions. They were of the view that peak traffic extends beyond the 4-6pm restriction of the bus lanes, and that the bus lanes should therefore apply for a longer period.

Officers acknowledge that the peak traffic period is spreading and there is a need to review the bus lane time restrictions city wide. In the meantime the current standard bus lane time is recommended.

5.2 Submissions from organisations

There were nine organisations that submitted on the traffic resolution out of which there were two objections, one from Bikers Rights Organisation of New Zealand (BRONZ) and the other from The City Is Ours.

NZ Bus who operate the majority of the buses on the network and Greater Wellington, both support the proposal. NZ Bus recommended that Kent Terrace between Majoribanks Street and Elizabeth Street is excluded from the proposal because they see the businesses benefiting from parking for some time before there is a need to advantage buses. They also suggested the bus lane on Cambridge Terrace need only apply from Barker Street rather than the Basin Reserve. Officers have amended the resolution to reflect these recommendations.

BRONZ objected to the Kent Terrace bus lane between Majoribanks Street and Elizabeth Street. This has been removed from the proposal.

The City Is Ours Inc. didn't explicitly say whether they supported or objected but rather commented on a number of issues outside the scope of the traffic resolution that appeared to be against any changes to the bus network.

5.3 Breakdown of submissions

The break down of submissions shows that the majority were from individuals. Four businesses submitted, none of which operate on Courtenay Place. There were nine submissions from organisations that represent a wide range of interested parties.

- **Individuals** – 38
- **Companies/Businesses** – NZBus, Wellington Motorcycles, Deluxe Café and Gazley Tory.
- **Organisations** - BRONZ, Cycle Aware Wellington, Greater Wellington, Living Streets Wellington, Public Transport Voice, Regional Public Health, The City is Ours Inc, The Wellington Civic Trust Inc. and Trans-Action.

5.4 Consultation and Engagement

The traffic resolution process provided the opportunity to engage with the public and specific businesses potentially affected by the bus lane proposal. The resolution was advertised in the Our Wellington Page on 23 August 2011.

A letter and a map explaining the proposal was hand delivered to each business along Courtenay Place and Cambridge Terrace, Kent Terrace between Majoribanks Street and Elizabeth Street, and the eastern side of Adelaide Road.

Information was also available on the Council website. Most submissions were made online through the website.

5.5 Financial Considerations

The recommendations are able to be achieved within existing Bus Priority budgets (CX 492).

5.6 Climate Change Impacts and Considerations

Bus Priority is referenced in Council's Climate Change Action Plan 2010, addressing climate change by improving the current public transport service levels and making bus travel more attractive to a larger number of people.

5.7 Long-Term Council Community Plan Considerations

The recommendations are able to be achieved within existing Bus Priority budgets (CX 492).

6. Conclusion

The advertised traffic resolution received 52 submissions with 80% in favour of the proposal.

Officers have considered the submissions and have made amendments to the original proposal to reflect the issues raised. The bus lane on Kent Terrace from Majoribanks Street to Elizabeth Street has been removed from the proposal, and the bus lane on Cambridge Terrace has been slightly shortened to begin at Barker Street rather than the Basin Reserve.

Officers recommend the amended proposals to the Committee.

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Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

The recommendations of the paper are consistent with the expectations and desired outcomes of the Transport Strategy.

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

The recommendations are able to be achieved within existing Bus Priority budgets. (CX 492)

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

N/A

4) Decision-Making

This is not a significant decision.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

Public engagement has been carried out through the traffic resolutions process

b) Consultation with Maori

N/A

6) Legal Implications

N/A

7) Consistency with existing policy

This report recommends measures which are consistent with the existing Bus Priority Plan and other Council strategies and policies.

Appendix 1. Traffic Resolution