



3 December 2020

Auckland Transport
By email

Mission Bay Safety Improvements

We broadly support the proposed Mission Bay safety improvements, but have some suggestions for further improvement.

1. We significantly prefer the Option B cycleway, with cyclists at a separate grade. We believe that the kerb provides an intuitive separation, and no education of locals, or more importantly, children or overseas visitors is required for walkers and riders to understand where they should be. With Option A children and others could easily cross the white line delineating the two modes, either inadvertently or through not understanding the purpose of the two sides.
2. We very strongly prefer not to have a roundabout at Atkin Ave. If that means that the bus layover cannot be moved then so be it. Buses laying over in Patteson Ave almost always turn off their engines, and there is little nuisance value from them waiting there for a few minutes. The front of the bus stop is set back some 5 m from the main car park entrance, which provides reasonable visibility for cars exiting the car park. There are spaces for 3 cars beside the car park entrance, and these currently are accessed through a driveway immediately adjacent to the bus stop. While these vehicles reverse out onto the road beside the buses with poor visibility, there are other solutions to address this which would not burden the rest of the community with a roundabout at Atkin Ave.

For example, removing the vehicle crossing immediately beside the bus stop would remove the hazard of backing out into traffic. The 3 cars could then undertake normal parallel parking. It is of note that only the rear car of the 3 spaces can reverse directly onto the road anyway, so removing that dangerous option would be a good move. Removing the vehicle crossing would also reduce the incidence of illegal parking on the footpath by vehicles stopping to get coffee. This is a bigger risk, particularly for small children walking past.

3. We strongly recommend that the cyclepath be continuous, with no break as shown near the clock tower. This is the most congested and dangerous part of the current shared path, with masses of people crossing the shared path after crossing the road to enter the reserve, and people getting on and off buses, all crossing the shared path with its normal flow of pedestrians, cyclists and scooters. If this part cannot be made safer, there is little point making any of the changes elsewhere.

Fortunately, we believe there is an easy fix for this; if the footpath is moved onto the reserve between the current path and the trees, then there is room for a footpath and cycle path. We realise the reserve and road corridors are under the control of different council entities, but a difficulty for council to coordinate with itself should not penalise the community. There may be other solutions, for example Bike Auckland had another way to resolve the problem, but regardless, we need to close the gap.

4. We are concerned about losing the painted median on Tamaki Drive, and believe that we should explore options to retain it. At the moment, it provides a level of protection for the numerous people crossing everywhere along Tamaki Drive. They can look one way and cross to the middle, then look the other way and complete the crossing. Without the median, they have to cross the entire road in one go, with more chance of making a mistake.

Further, the median provides enhanced safety in other ways. The median is critical for westbound traffic turning right into the carpark entrance near the police building. Without a median here, right turning traffic holds up the entire westbound flow of traffic. In addition, parked cars regularly open their doors into the traffic, particularly because much of the time there is no break in the traffic flow. The median allows drivers to move out to avoid the doors without having to cross the centre line; without it, and with 3.5m lanes, cars and particularly buses are likely to cross the centre line to avoid an opening door.

5. For this reason, we recommend a review of the cross-sections and the allocation of available width to each function. The typical cross-sections show a total road and path width of 22.1m to 22.6m for Option A and 22.5m to 23.0m for Option B. While one of these must be wrong, the more important question is whether the space available has been allocated in the best manner. For example, the Tamaki Drive Hobson Bay cycle path currently under construction is 2.8m wide, compared to the 3.0m or 3.6m proposed here (whichever number is correct). Likewise, the footpath proposed here at 3.0m – 3.5m wide is much wider than the 1.8m on the southern side of Tamaki Drive (we are unable to see dimensions for the footpath on the northern side).

If the cycle path were built to the same 2.8m width as the one currently under construction, and the footpath to 1.8m, that would save 1.4m to 2.5m (depending on which figures are correct) that could be used as a painted median. While we understand that a wider two-way cycleway might be desirable, that ideal should not be met by reducing safety on the road. We see room for a reallocation of space to provide a better balance between the various functions.

6. We recommend exploring the option of moving the footpath onto reserve land for the full length of the town centre in the same way we have suggested for closing the gap near the clock tower. If this were possible, then maybe more optimal cycle path and footpath widths could be achieved along with a centre median.
7. We recommend extending the 30km/h speed limit at the eastern end of Mission Bay approximately 75m further east to include the Selwyn Avenue intersection. The Marau Cres intersection here is quite difficult already, and with buses making a sharp right turn into Selwyn without any turning lane, it would seem logical to ensure traffic is going relatively slowly through this intersection. This would require adjustments to

other 30km/h signage to either add signage at the bottom of Selwyn Ave, or to include Marau Cres within the 30km/h zone.

8. We are being reminded that the Council has a serious budget hole right now, and many projects are being cut back, deferred or cancelled. In this environment, we recommend that the priority of this project be reassessed against other projects to ensure that it is sufficiently important to proceed despite budget cutbacks. We are keen to see a proper cycle path and safer town centre, but not at the expense of other projects we would consider to be of higher priority. For example, we believe that another AT project - the connection of Kohimarama, Mission Bay, Orakei and St Johns to the new Glen Innes Shared Path - is of higher priority for our community. Likewise, we believe that retaining the Tagalad Reserve as a community asset, and restoring the Selwyn Reserve playground to an operational status are higher priorities for our community. If any of the projects are cancelled or deferred due to funding difficulties, we would recommend deferring this project instead.

Yours sincerely



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