



29 April 2019

Auckland Transport

Orakei Local Board

By email

Feedback on the proposed Mission Bay Town Centre Safety Improvements

We have reviewed the proposal to install 10 new pedestrian crossings and a new roundabout in Mission Bay, and have a number of comments.

Overall, we find the proposal to be a vast over-reaction and not justified by any evidence. Tamaki Drive is the main arterial route for the eastern bays, and also a major commercial and recreational facility that draws pedestrians to the area. It is clear that these competing needs must be balanced in a logical manner. We do not believe that AT's approach achieves this.

Instead, we recommend the following:

1. Install a new pedestrian crossing across Atkin Avenue at Tamaki Drive at location 2 on the overview plan (attached). We believe that this is a useful safety measure that more safely connects the restaurants on this corner with both the existing crossing on Tamaki Drive and the restaurant zone near Patteson Ave.
2. Install a new pedestrian crossing on Tamaki Drive near the western end of 105 Tamaki Drive approximately at location 7a. This provides an alternative way for pedestrians to reach the beach and Selwyn Reserve car park near the eastern end of the bay.
3. A pedestrian refuge in Patteson Ave near Marau Cres (location 6). There is little justification for a full pedestrian crossing here, but a refuge in the centre of the road would make it easier for pedestrians to cross safely.
4. Upgrade the planting on the road side outside the restaurants east of Patteson Ave to make it impenetrable. Pedestrians currently cross here somewhat unsafely and walk through the existing vegetation.
5. We recommend that the crossings on Tamaki Drive not have raised speed tables to the current standard design as this will increase danger for cyclists, delay traffic, and seriously impact the running of cycling events such as triathlons that are common on Tamaki Drive. Instead we recommend consulting with cycling organisations to design less intrusive raised speed tables that would enforce speeds of 30km/hr without increasing risks or delays.

We oppose the following:

1. The pedestrian crossing proposed on Tamaki Drive west of Atkin Ave (location 1). We see little justification for this either through anecdotal evidence from residents, or from accident statistics. If anything were to go ahead, it should just be a pedestrian refuge in the centre of the road, leaving through traffic with the right of way.
2. The proposed mid-block pedestrian crossings on Tamaki Drive east and west of Pattesson Ave (locations 5 and 7). These additional crossings are within 40m of existing crossings, and the excessive density of crossings will cause significant disruption to traffic flow on Tamaki Drive, the single arterial route for the eastern bays.
3. The proposed pedestrian crossing on Atkin Ave near Marau Cres (location 4). We see little justification for this crossing, with very little pedestrian demand here, no pedestrian accidents in recorded history, and slow traffic speeds in the vicinity making unassisted crossing quite safe.
4. The roundabout at the Tamaki Drive, Selwyn Ave and Marau Cres intersection (location 10). AT has given no indication of what problem they are trying to solve here, and yet they propose a rather complex and expensive solution. We see no significant benefits and significant unintended consequences such as providing priority to minor side roads over Tamaki Drive, the main arterial route for the area, as well as delays to commuter traffic and a likely increase in minor accidents.
5. The proposed pedestrian crossing at location 8. This is effectively replaced by our suggestion for a crossing at location 7a.
6. Other pedestrian crossings close to the proposed roundabout (locations 9, 11 and 12). We cannot see any justification for crossings at these locations, but regardless, they would need to be reassessed if the roundabout does not go ahead.

We have provided more detailed comments on individual aspects of the proposals in the attachments.

Yours sincerely



Don Stock
Chairman
Mission Bay Kohimarama Residents Association

Appendix I: Overview map



Appendix II: Comments on components of the proposal

The overall impact of 13 pedestrian crossings

- We see this as a ridiculous over-reaction to a poorly defined issue.
- Accident statistics do not indicate a serious problem with pedestrian safety in Mission Bay
- A detailed review of pedestrian related accidents in the NZTA database shows that there have been 13 accidents involving vehicles and pedestrians on the roads in this area since records started in 2000. Of these, only 2 were in the past 5 years.
- The majority of pedestrian accidents have been in the vicinity of the Tamaki Drive Patteson Ave intersection. As no changes are proposed here, the proposal cannot be expected to make a material difference.
- The large number of crossings proposed means that 34 car parks will be lost. Mission Bay will remain a destination of choice for people from all over Auckland, the majority of whom will arrive by car, and so this will push 34 cars further into residential streets such as Marau Cres, Ronaki Rd, Patteson Ave, Selwyn Ave and Atkin Ave. Most of these roads are already struggling to accommodate 2 way traffic due to continuous parking on both sides, and this will exacerbate the situation.

Installing raised speed tables

- We note that raised crossings slow traffic by design. That is presumably the intent of the proposal.
- We see advantages and disadvantages to installing these on Tamaki Drive. Advantages include:
 - Increased safety for pedestrians using the crossings.
 - Traffic already drives at 30-40km/h through the central part of Mission Bay most of the time, and so there is little negative impact from enforcing speeds to 30km/h.
 - We note that such enforcement might assist in controlling noise and nuisance from loud cars cruising around the block.
 - If the number of crossings on Tamaki Drive is limited to the 3 locations we recommend (locations 3, 7a and at the Patteson Ave lights), we believe that speed calming measures that enforce a 30km/h speed would reasonably balance the competing requirements of pedestrian safety, local noise issues and traffic delays.
- Disadvantages include:
 - Increased disruption to traffic flow on the main arterial route for the eastern bays

- We note that the proposed standard raised table crossing design slows traffic to 15-20km/h. We fail to see the logic of proposing a 30km/h speed limit and then enforcing it with 15km/h speed bumps.
- Speed changes at obstacles tend to increase nose-to-tail vehicle accidents in heavy traffic.
- The standard raised table design also increases the risk to cyclists. Firstly the sharp bump is not easy for bikes without suspension. More importantly, the design narrows the road and forces cyclists to merge into the main traffic flow at significant risk.
- Tamaki Drive hosts numerous cycle races such as international ironman competitions. Installing cyclist-unfriendly raised tables is likely to threaten these events. AT have given no indication that this aspect has even been considered.
- Given the historical record indicating very few accidents on pedestrian crossings, and our concerns about the negative impact on both cyclists and commuter vehicles, we do not support the proposed raised table crossings in their present form..
- If the raised table design were to be revised to make it safer for cyclists and to control speeds to only 30km/h instead of 15km/h to reduce traffic disruption, then we believe that raised table crossings would likely be a good approach.

Removal of flush median and widening of shared path

- We are unable to see exactly what is proposed here, but we have a few general comments.
- The current shared path is very narrow and in poor condition in places. Improvements are warranted.
- Removal of the flush median west of Patteson Ave will restrict east-bound traffic to a single lane until just before the traffic lights. This is likely to make it more difficult for vehicles to get into the right-turning lane to turn into Patteson, which in turn is likely to encourage traffic to bypass the lights by using Atkin and Marau. This would be a poor outcome.
- One of the biggest safety issues on the shared path is where the Patteson Ave pedestrian crossing crosses the shared path at the entrance to Selwyn Reserve. It is narrow here, and pedestrians do not anticipate fast moving cyclists or scooter riders right where they first step on the footpath. Nothing is proposed here.

Pedestrian crossing on Tamaki Drive (location 1)

- This connects the path to Bastion Pt and the bus stop to the beach side of the road which seems logical
- Conversely, from the pedestrian crossing, people would have to walk east to within a few metres of the existing crossing at Atkin before they could gain beach access. It would be virtually as easy to use the existing crossing as the new one.
- Locals see very few people attempting to cross here

- There are NO accidents involving pedestrians at this location in the NZTA database.
- It will impede the free flow of traffic, particularly if raised as proposed
- Why would we spend money on something of little or no benefit, but which impedes traffic flow?
- We cannot support this without evidence of an issue that this proposal would address

Pedestrian crossing Atkin Ave (location 2)

- This is a relatively busy crossing point, connecting the two commercial areas and the only existing pedestrian crossing in this area.
- We support this new crossing.

Crossing on Atkin Ave by Marau (location 4)

- While there is some logic to this crossing, it is far from clear that either the volume of pedestrians wanting to cross here or the volume and speed of traffic down Atkin justifies a crossing.
- There are no pedestrian accidents recorded at this location in the NZTA database.

Crossing mid-block Tamaki Drive (location 5)

- This crossing is within 80m of existing crossings on either side. Such close proximity is very disruptive to traffic flow.
- It is very unclear what justification exists for an additional crossing here. There have been no pedestrian accidents in this area for 10 years, and only 2 since 2000.
- An unintended consequence of this crossing is likely to be that pedestrians don't bother waiting at the Patteson Ave signals to cross, but instead walk 80m west to use this uncontrolled crossing. This would further disrupt traffic flow.

Crossing Patteson Ave near Marau (location 6)

- While there is some logic to this crossing, it is far from clear that either the volume of pedestrians wanting to cross here or the volume and speed of traffic down Patteson justifies a crossing.
- There are no pedestrian accidents recorded at this location in the NZTA database.

Crossing mid-block Tamaki Drive (location 7)

- This crossing is within 50m of an existing crossing. Such close proximity is very disruptive to traffic flow.

- An unintended consequence of this crossing is likely to be that pedestrians don't bother waiting at the Patteson Ave signals to cross, but instead walk 50m east to use this uncontrolled crossing. This would further disrupt traffic flow.
- Another unintended consequence is that it is likely to affect the triggering of the nearby signals when pedestrians stop traffic at this crossing, resulting in short phasing of the Tamaki Drive phase.
- Pedestrians do try to cross here right now, but minor changes to the street planting would prevent that.
- No pedestrian accidents are recorded at this location in the NZTA database.
- This proposal would dig up much of the streetscaping that has only recently been completed.

Crossing on Tamaki Drive near Marau (location 8)

- In principle, we agree that there should be a crossing towards the Marau end of the block.
- In practice, we are concerned that locating a crossing immediately beside a roundabout may have safety implications.
- We could support this crossing, but would want to first understand whether this is the safest location, or whether it should be 30m further west at location 7a.

Crossing on Marau (location 9)

- It is far from clear that either the volume of pedestrians wanting to cross here or the volume and speed of traffic down Marau justifies a crossing.
- There are no pedestrian accidents recorded at this location in the NZTA database.

Roundabout Tamaki Drive, Marau Selwyn (location 10)

- We have no idea what this 'solution' is intended to address.
- There are some difficulties turning right out of Marau, but adding a slip lane on Tamaki Drive would greatly improve that.
- The proposal would eliminate right turns from Selwyn, requiring all traffic to turn left and make a 180 turn around the roundabout.
- All east bound traffic on Tamaki Drive, the main arterial route, would have to give way to all east bound traffic from the minor roads Marau Cres and Selwyn Ave. This seems counterintuitive and is likely to lead to significant delays during the evening peak.
- With pedestrian crossings at 3 of the 4 exits, the roundabout will be easily choked by traffic stopped for pedestrians. This is particularly true for buses exiting the roundabout towards Selwyn, where a single bus waiting for a pedestrian would completely block all west-bound traffic on Tamaki Drive.

- This is the most expensive component and has the most negative impact on traffic flows, and yet it appears to have no justification at all.

Crossing on unnamed road between Marau and Selwyn (location 11)

- It is very unclear what justification exists for an additional crossing here. There have been no pedestrian accidents in this area for 10 years, and it is far from clear that either the volume of pedestrians wanting to cross here or the volume and speed of traffic justify a crossing.

Crossing on Selwyn (location 12)

- It is very unclear what justification exists for an additional crossing here. There have been no pedestrian accidents in this area for 10 years, and it is far from clear that either the volume of pedestrians wanting to cross here or the volume and speed of traffic justify a crossing.

Appendix III: Test against historic accidents

Pedestrian accidents

The NZTA database contains 19 accidents involving pedestrians since 2000. Excluding accidents involving cyclists hitting pedestrians, and accidents on driveways which would not be impacted by any of the proposals, there were 13, of which 2 were in the last 5 years

Of the 2 accidents since 2013, 1 serious accident was at the location proposed for the Atkin Rd crossing. The new crossing would likely have prevented this accident.

The other accident was a non-injury accident on Patteson Ave at the existing crossing controlled by signals. The primary cause must have been either the vehicle or pedestrian going against a red light. Speed was unlikely to have been a major factor as the vehicle was turning out of Patteson Ave. No changes are proposed for this intersection, so we would not expect any improvement.

Of the earlier accidents, the most serious were 2 fatalities on the existing Tamaki Drive signalised crossing at Patteson Ave in 2003 and 2007. Causes are unknown, but this type of incident is unlikely to be affected by the proposals as no changes are proposed here.

Overall, we believe that only the proposed Atkin Ave crossing would have prevented a serious accident. We support this proposal both because of the accident history and the volume of pedestrians who would potentially use it.

We can't see that the proposed measures would have had any significant impact on any of the other accidents involving pedestrians. Mission Bay's accident history therefore does not support the proposals.

Cycling accidents

There have been 47 accidents involving cyclists since 2000 (excluding those on driveways which would not be impacted by any of the proposals), with 6 of these in the last 5 years.

4 of the total were between cyclists and pedestrians, 4 involved only cyclists, and 39 involved vehicles. 5 accidents resulted in serious injuries and 31 minor injuries.

Despite the much greater history of cycling than pedestrian accidents, the proposed changes do not specifically address safety for cyclists except through a general reduction of vehicle speed due to raised crossings and a lowered speed limit (separately proposed in the previous consultation).

Conversely, the design of the new pedestrian crossings is likely to increase the risk to cyclists. The obvious risk comes from bikes without suspension hitting the raised crossings. These are typically designed to slow cars to 25km/h, but at that speed could be quite dangerous for a bike. The more serious risk, however, results from cyclists being forced to merge into the vehicle traffic, as the design of the crossings removes much of the shoulder on which cyclists ride.

We are not qualified to assess the increased risk, but must conclude that the proposals are highly unlikely to reduce the number of accidents involving cyclists and more likely to increase it.

Vehicle accidents

There have been 160 accidents involving only vehicles since 2000 (excluding driveway accidents), with 28 of these in the last 5 years. 1 accident resulted in serious injury and 26 in minor injuries, with the serious injury and 3 of the minor injury accidents occurring in the last 5 years. The majority of accidents (129) were on Tamaki Drive.

The reduced speeds on Tamaki Drive can be expected to generally lower the risk of accidents. The average speed in the commercial area is around 40km/h according to AT surveys, so reducing this to closer to 30km/h would have an impact. Of course, with only 4 injuries in the last 5 years, even a 25% reduction in risk could only be expected to reduce injuries by 0.6 injuries per year. And while lower speeds reduce the severity of injuries, with only 1 serious injury in the past 18 years the impact will be very minor.

Conversely, with more stop start driving from slowing or stopping at all the new pedestrian crossings proposed, we can assume that there will be more nose to tail accidents resulting from inattention. These are unlikely to result in many injuries, but the financial impact and the impact on traffic congestion could be significant. We are not qualified to assess this increased risk.

Overall, we would expect that the proposed changes would have an immeasurably small reduction in the severity of vehicle accident injuries, but an unquantified increase in vehicle damage and congestion.

Roundabout at Tamaki Drive, Marau Cres Selwyn Ave

There have been 16 accidents in the vicinity of the Tamaki Drive, Selwyn Ave and Marau Cres intersections since 2000, with 3 in the last 5 years. 1 accident resulted in serious injuries and 6 in minor injuries. 6 accidents have involved cyclists, possibly from cars turning right out of Marau or Selwyn and not seeing cyclists on Tamaki Drive.

It can be expected that by removing the right turns from Marau and Selwyn, that some of the accidents could have been avoided, particularly those involving cyclists. The proposal to locate a new pedestrian crossing immediately adjacent to the roundabout, however, increases the risk of nose to tail accidents. We cannot assess this increased risk.

It is difficult to turn right out of either Selwyn or Marau at peak times, partly due to visibility and partly due to constant traffic in one direction. The roundabout proposal may be intended to address this as well as safety issues. It should be successful in this respect, although the design effectively gives traffic from Marau and Selwyn priority over the main arterial route of Tamaki Drive which will cause additional congestion on Tamaki Drive.