

Submission on Amyes Road

Prepared by David Palmer on behalf of Greater Ōtautahi Inc.

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1 Introduction

Greater Ōtautahi is an incorporated society which advocates for better housing and transport in Ōtautahi Christchurch.

The Amyes Road area of Hornby has undergone significant change in recent years, with a number of infill developments along the road. Prior to the subdivision of the area in the 1940s, Amyes Road was a rural road. Elements of that design have persisted through to today; most notably in terms of its width (approximately 12 to 13 metres gutter-to-gutter), its length (approximately 1 kilometre), and its straightness.

Wide, straight road lanes signal to drivers that they should drive fast. Roads designed this way may be appropriate in a rural setting, where speeds are expected to be high, but it is very inappropriate on a suburban road where pedestrians, cyclists and children are expected to be present.¹

¹ [Kay Fitzpatrick, Karen Dixon, and Raul Avelar, “Evaluating Operational Implications of Reduced Lane and Shoulder Widths on Freeways” \(2016\) *Journal of Transportation Engineering* 142 \(11\)](#); note also that this is borne out by practical experience: many notice that, upon reaching passing lanes on highways, slow cars tend to suddenly speed up, frustrating other drivers. This phenomenon occurs because the width of the road pushes vertical objects further away from the driver, causing them to move more slowly in the driver’s peripheral vision, due to a parallax effect. This has the side effect of subconsciously signalling to the driver that they are travelling slower than they actually are, and so they naturally increase their speed.

The key issue that council must address is that the purpose of Amyes Road has substantially changed in the last 80 years, from a rural road to a suburban street. The road design has not been amended to reflect this changed purpose. We are therefore pleased to see that Council is proposing to undertake this work now. We have general recommendations for designers, and also have specific recommendations for design elements we think are important at key points along the length of the road.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on this renewal. We are extremely supportive of the initiative within council to do these pre-renewal design consultations. We would also like the opportunity to speak to our submission when it comes before decision makers.

2 General design suggestions

Overall, the vehicle carriageway needs to be narrowed. At some points, the road surface is roughly the width of 9 cars. This is an excessive amount of space to provide for vehicles, and will contribute to high vehicle speeds on this road.

We recommend the installation of parking-protected cycle lanes on this road. Under this design pattern, a cycle path is installed between the footpath and parked cars. This pattern effectively separates cars and cyclists, increasing perceptions of safety for cyclists. This can be a relatively cost-efficient implementation, using only paint and “stick on” bollards or separators. This design pattern has been well-proven internationally, and would present a considerably better use-of-space than the present design. These cycle lanes would provide a safer way for children to cycle to school, particularly for students of South Hornby School.

We recommend installing pedestrian crossings at regular locations along the length of the road, as well as at points where side streets intersect. We recommend considering mid-block locations such as outside 94, 78 (to complement the pedestrian cut-through for Trevor Reserve), 51, and 6. These pedestrian crossings can be implemented with kerb buildouts. If buildouts are staggered, it can be used to create an effective “slalom” for vehicles; this has been well-proven as an effective way to reduce vehicle travel speed, and discourage rat-running behaviour, particularly for large trucks. At these locations, the proposed parking-protected cycle lane could be redirected onto a widened area of shared footpath, to keep cyclists separated from vehicle traffic.

We recommend generally widening the footpaths on Amyes Rd. The existing footpaths are quite narrow, and this creates accessibility issues for people with mobility issues. When it is rubbish bin collection day, the bins block the footpath nearly completely. A wider footpath would improve the pedestrian accessibility of the area considerably. If a parking-protected cycleway is not feasible in this process, widening the footpath also creates the opportunity for it to become a shared path. That would provide a much safer place for cyclists, as it would separate them from road traffic.

We recommend installing additional street lighting down the length of the road, to improve visibility and safety for vehicles and pedestrians alike. This is particularly important during the winter months, when children may be walking or cycling to school in the dark.

2.1 Springs Road intersection

We note that work is already underway to redesign this intersection, so please refer to our earlier submission dated April 20th of this year.

However, we would like to suggest that council take a close look at queueing at this intersection. Observations by our members have identified an issue where the vehicle queue depth can become quite deep, essentially creating standstill congested traffic. This is particularly bad as it also traps buses. We recommend council look at extending the length of the parking restriction on Amyes Road approaching the intersection with Springs, and using road markings to clearly indicate that cars turning left and right should queue side-by-side. This would drastically increase intersection throughput at peak, and help to reduce congestion.

2.2 Trevor Street intersection

We recommend:

- This intersection should be upgraded to a full Stop Sign control. Currently the intersection is uncontrolled, other than by a 20km/h recommendation and a speed bump.
- Installation of kerb buildouts on either side of Trevor St to tighten the turning radius, and thereby reduce the speed of vehicles making this turn.
- A kerb buildout on Amyes Rd opposite the exit of Trevor St, in order to reduce the distance pedestrians need to walk when crossing from Trevor St onto the south-west side of Amyes Rd.
- The bus stops adjacent to this intersection should be upgraded with raised kerbs to enable close-to-level boarding, appropriate shelters and rubbish bins.

2.3 Witham Street intersection

We recommend:

- Traffic-calming measures to discourage truck drivers from attempting to turn into Witham – this intersection includes signage to warn truck drivers that trucks are not permitted on Boston (except for deliveries), but these signs are easily ignored. The road design can be improved to better signal to truck drivers by tightening the radius of corners and narrowing the carriageway at the intersection.
- Upgrading the intersection to a full Stop Sign control for vehicles turning on Amyes;
- No-stopping restrictions on Amyes should be extended at least another 10 metres to increase visibility for vehicles turning onto Amyes, as well as to increase the visibility of pedestrians crossing Witham; and
- Widening the median pedestrian crossing refuge on Witham Street to provide additional space for schoolchildren with scooters or bicycles.

2.4 Branston Street intersection and South Hornby School

We recommend:

- Installation of speed bumps or a speed table at the location of the Kea crossing outside the school;
- Integrating the Kea crossing's kerb buildouts into the road design, and continued around to narrow the corner radius of the turn into Branston Street;
- Widening and making continuous the footpath on both sides of the Kea crossing to create ample space for pedestrians waiting to cross the road;

- Extending No-Stopping restrictions at least 20 metres east of the Kea crossing to improve visibility of pedestrians, and also visibility of parents pulling out of the school's drop-off loop;
- Upgrading and widening the footpath immediately outside the school to a shared path, including painted markings to indicate that it is a shared space and those on bicycles or scooters should give way to pedestrians; and
- Considering lengthening the P3 drop-off areas outside the school.

2.5 Tower Street intersection

We recommend:

- No Stopping restrictions are introduced on the north side of Amyes, for at least 10 metres either side of Tower Street. This would improve visibility for turning vehicles;
- The Tower Street intersection should be upgraded to a full Stop Sign control;
- Kerb buildouts should be introduced at this intersection to tighten the corner radius for turning vehicles; and
- A bench, shelter, rubbish bin and raised kerb should be installed at the bus stop opposite Tower St (38262).

2.6 Shands intersection

We recommend:

- Discussing options with Kiwirail to close this rail spur, as it is poorly used and makes the design of this intersection needlessly complex and dangerous;
- Introducing an additional pedestrian crossing point on Amyes Road, on the eastern side of the train tracks;
- Adding speed bumps on Amyes Rd to the east of the train track, in order to require drivers to reduce speed as they approach the tracks from the east. This would also force drivers to reduce speed as they come down the slope from the train tracks; and
- Upgrading the bus stop outside the medical centre to include a shelter, a bench, a rubbish bin, and a raised kerb for easier boarding.
 - The necessity of these upgrades is demonstrated by Google's Street View imagery, showing an older person with a walking stick standing waiting for a bus (figure 1); this is woefully inadequate public transport infrastructure for a stop so close to a medical centre.



Figure 1: older person, with walking stick, at bus stop