

Living Streets Aotearoa



20 September 2015

The national New Zealand organisation for people on foot, promoting walking-friendly communities.

Living Streets North Shore submission on Victoria Rd/Calliope Rd intersection

Living Streets North Shore is the North Shore branch focusing on walking issues in the North Shore ward area.

Living Streets North Shore welcomes Auckland Transport's attention to the Victoria Road / Calliope Road, Devonport intersection and the intention to create a safer environment, more conducive to walking and cycling.

While the proposed treatment of the intersection appears to offer some improvements for all road users, the plans provided are not sufficiently detailed to be sure that all aspects of the design will benefit pedestrians. The lack of a key and dimensions means that some aspects cannot be fully interpreted. Living Streets North Shore would like the opportunity to meet with Auckland Transport to gain a better understanding of the plan detail.

Comments on the proposed changes:

A new concrete roundabout island

We **support** this as a traffic calming measure, however we have some concerns related to the location and design of the associated zebra crossings and off-road cycle facilities. These concerns are outlined below.

A new zebra crossing on Calliope Road

We **support the** installation of a marked pedestrian crossing at this point which is an improvement for pedestrians. However the proposed design needs to address these issues:

- A limit line for vehicles approaching the crossing from Devonport appears to be missing. It should be directly in front of the crossing. There appears to be sufficient room for a car to turn into Calliope Rd and then stop.
- This crossing should be a continuous raised zebra crossing platform, as proposed on Victoria Rd, sending a clear signal that all of the roundabout should be treated as a slow speed zone.
- If a median refuge is retained in the design it must be able to accommodate a person with a pram and children. We note the proximity of Devonport and St Leonards School and a preschool facility being developed on Victoria Rd. The safety of children, including pre-schoolers must be a priority in this area.

A raised zebra crossing platform on Victoria Road

We **support** a raised zebra platform crossing at this point. It appears that this will be designed in a similar way to those on neighbouring Clarence St and Fleet St ensuring water does not pool at the kerbs. However the following issues should be addressed:

- This crossing needs to be designed so that it is clear whether it is a divided crossing or not. At present drivers appear to consider it is divided because of the small central islands, even though this is a totally inadequate median refuge for pedestrians and could not accommodate a caregiver with children. As noted above the safety of children must be a priority in this area.
- Moving this crossing closer to the roundabout, and closer to the corner of Calliope Rd should be considered, as this would better match pedestrian desire lines, particularly for those coming from Calliope Rd.
- We support the provision of tactile markings at both crossings. These should comply with current standards and be audited by a mobility adviser from the Blind Foundation before and after installation.

An on-road cycle lane on Victoria Road

We **support** the provision of on-road cycling facilities. We are not in a position to comment on whether they meet the needs of cyclists.

Re-marking the footpath along the South side of the intersection as a shared cycle and pedestrian path.

Living Streets North Shore does not support the provision of cycling facilities on footpaths.

Where these must be installed they should be at least 4m wide and take account of the number and ability of pedestrians in the area, street gradient and any other issues which may pose additional hazards to pedestrians. Any shared facilities installed in this area should be of the same standard as those recently installed in Phase 2 of the Beach Rd project. We make the following comments on the proposed design:

- This proposal only notes new shared marking on the south side of Victoria Rd, continuing the current shared path arrangement on Calliope Rd. It is not clear where this is to end on Victoria Rd. The footpath would need to be widened and appropriately marked to accommodate this.
- Shared path markings are also shown on the North side. This is not currently marked as a shared path as the footpath is very narrow and relatively steep and curved reducing sight lines. There is a high volume of pedestrians, including children and people with mobility issues using this area.
- While it appears that the footpath may be widened at this point, the width is not shown. We consider that the **North side of Victoria Rd at this point is not suitable for a shared path.**
- Provision needs to be made for cyclists to leave the shared space at an appropriate point to continue on road should they wish to do so.
- Shared paths, as proposed, would send the message that cycling on the footpath may also be acceptable further down Victoria Rd and through the town centre. This is not currently permitted and should not be, due to the volume and variety of pedestrian traffic and the amount of street furniture associated with on-street

dining and business trading. Clear and consistent signage and path marking that indicates where shared path facilities begin and end is essential.

We recommend that the current provision of shared path cycling, on both Calliope Rd and Victoria Rd end, with appropriate signage, at the Victoria Rd / Calliope Rd intersection, effectively at the pedestrian crossings. Provision should be made to enable cyclists to choose whether to continue on road. Beyond these points there are high volumes of pedestrians and it is not appropriate for cyclists to be on the relatively narrow footpaths through the Devonport town centre.

Recommendations for improvements beyond the scope of the proposed project

Living Streets North Shore would like to see additional matters addressed in the vicinity of this intersection to further enhance pedestrian experiences and signal that this intersection is the gateway to the Devonport town centre. These would include:

The introduction of a 30kph speed zone throughout the Devonport town centre from just north of the proposed roundabout right through to the ferry terminal.

- This would create a much safer and more pleasant environment for all the people who shop, dine and work in Devonport. A slower speed zone from this point would also improve the safety of the Kerr St/Victoria Rd and Victoria Rd pedestrian crossing outside the Victoria Theatre. The intersecting side streets, including Kerr St, should be included in the 30kph zone.

Safety improvements at the Kerr St/Victoria Rd intersection.

- There should be a stop sign at the bottom of Kerr St to stop downhill traffic from crossing the intersection at speed.
- There should be at least a raised platform courtesy crossing at the intersection. A courtesy crossing would be sufficient if this area was included in a 30kph zone, otherwise a raised zebra crossing would be preferred as vehicles currently approach this intersection at speed from three directions.
- Pram crossings are also needed at this intersection.
- Consideration should be given to realigning the paths at this intersection which may include better accommodation of on road cycling at this point.
- The issues at this intersection should be addressed in conjunction with the proposed roundabout installation because the current proposal will not reduce the hazards posed by continued high speeds at the Kerr St / Victoria Rd intersection.

Resurface the footpaths adjacent to the pedestrian crossings.

- This is particularly needed on the South side in the vicinity of the proposed Calliope Rd crossing. This footpath has been poorly patched and includes badly fitted manhole covers. The footpath should join seamlessly with the footpath from Calliope Rd/Victoria Rd to Fleet St. If shared path facilities are installed these should use the same design as is being adopted in the CBD (Beach Rd) to ensure consistency of visual messaging about shared path areas.

Summary

Living Streets North Shore supports the installation of a roundabout and the installation of improved pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

We have concerns with some design detail, as outlined above.

Living Streets North Shore would welcome any further opportunity to provide input into the proposed changes in this area, including the opportunity to audit the new installations, to ensure they meet the needs of pedestrians.

Please continue to regard Living Streets a key stakeholder in this project.

About Living Streets Aotearoa Inc.

Vision We want more people walking **and enjoying public spaces be they young or old, fast or slow, whether walking, sitting, commuting, shopping, between appointments, or out on the streets for exercise, for leisure or for pleasure.**

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