

Living Streets Aotearoa



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Living Streets Otautahi/Christchurch Submission on Northern Arterial Extension and Cranford Street Upgrade

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Living Streets Otautahi/Christchurch (LSO/C) is the Canterbury Branch of Living Streets Aotearoa. This is a volunteer group with interest in fostering greater access to safe, and active transport. We have a particular focus on walking, walking infrastructure and the creation of walking destinations and building social capital. We also support sustainable transport options such as public transport and cycling.

We represent both the mobility and visually impaired, the very old and the very young, people who have no other forms of transport, as well as the thousands of other New Zealanders who walk by choice or who would like to walk. We are the voice of anyone who uses the foot path -or would use a foot path if there was one - at any stage of their journey. This includes public transport users and people who travel by car.

Living Streets Otautahi/Christchurch recognises the significant health, economic and environmental benefits to be gained from more people walking and cycling more often. Facilities to provide for pedestrians and people who cycle are relatively cheap and have cost benefits that building more and wider roads simply does not offer.

Using active transport for short or medium trips goes a long way towards reducing congestion and air pollution, improving health (with regard to both physical and mental health) and creating more disposable income. These factors are beneficial for both the individual as well as the general population.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this important area.

General Comments

Living Streets Aotearoa is apposed to major roading projects designed to enhance and encourage private vehicle use. There are substantial benefits to all road users and the community when sustainable transport options such as public transport and active modes

are supported and improved. Many town planners throughout the developed world are disestablishing urban motorways and overpasses as the negative social, health and environmental impacts of these on communities become apparent.

Living Streets Aotearoa often support the “do nothing or do minimal” option, as outlined in the June 2013 “Have your Say” document regarding this project. However, since your team has selected the Cranford Street option, our local branch, Living Streets Otautahi/Christchurch, (LSO/C) is grateful for the opportunity to provide some feedback and suggestions to enhance the project for those who travel on foot.

OPUS’ social impact assessment report estimates that this project will lead to a 73% increase in vehicular traffic volume on Cranford Streets north of Innes Road and 36% increase south of Innes Road by 202. This increase will lead to greater noise and particulate emissions and will adversely affect accessibility, safety and amenity along Cranford Street and the adjacent areas. This is of great concern to LSO/C.

Specific comments

Christchurch Northern Arterial & QEII Drive Four-Laning

LSO/C supports the provision of footpaths and cycleway that are separated from the motorway. However, we do not support shared paths. Neither safety nor access is improved for pedestrians where 'shared paths' are newly created or in place of existing footpaths. This is clearly set out in the New Zealand Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide (NZTA Dec 2007)¹ and cycle design guides. We suggest that dedicated footpaths are created and maintained as part of this development to maintain the existing level of service for pedestrians.

We note that there is no improvement work planned on the existing underpasses at Hills Road and Grimseys Road as part of this project. LSO/C would appreciate some day lightening at the very minimum to make these routes more attractive for users.

Cranford Basin Wetland Enhancement

We support the development of the wetland area for the Cranford Basin as a recreation area/natural reserve. Attractive green and blue destinations encourage more walking and accordingly safer communities and healthier populations.

Northern Arterial Extension and Cranford Street Upgrade

We note that the crossing from the west side of the Northern Arterial to the south side of Cranford Street requires crossing traffic lanes in three places. Those with poor mobility and/or vision will not be able to cross the road safely or comfortably and we recommend that an underpass is put in here. Footpath gradients, lighting and other Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principals need to be given high priority.

¹The Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide is New Zealand's comprehensive official guide to planning and design for walking. It sets out ways to improve New Zealand's walking environment.

LSO/C does not support the over pass option as this is difficult to access for people with mobility problems, including mothers with prams.

Despite the Pedestrian Planning and Design Guide recommending that there be pedestrian crossing points every 90m, there are no crossing points for almost 400m on Cranford Street between McFaddens Road and Innes Road. As the motorway feeds into Cranford Street, there is the potential for traffic to bottle neck and for pedestrians to be tempted to cross between the queued cars. Therefore we recommend that another signalised crossing be installed at an appropriate point half way between these roads. We support the provision of pedestrian-demand lights near McFaddens Road. As there are a number of schools and preschools in the area, we request that crossing times be adequate at all crossing points.

LSO/C support the inclusion of cycle path along Cranford Street to give residents a choice with the proposed Grassmere route and recommend that the Grassmere route is well connected with Cranford Street so that people on bikes can easily access the cycle path along the Northern Arterial route.

LSO/C request that planners allow for traffic coming from the Northern Arterial to be adequately slowed down to 50km before they reach the residential zone to lessen the risk of accidents occurring. We recommend that the carriageway for car lanes be reduced to 3m between McFaddens Road and Innes Road to increase the space for the buffer zone for active transport, making a more pleasant and safer for non motorised users. Further information into speed management is needed especially in regards to where the 100km zone meets the existing 60 km zone.

Final Comments:

This project is extremely car-centric. The proposed District Plan (3.4.2) aims to 'reduce future congestion and improve public health by creating a transport network that supports and enhances provision for walking, cycling and public transport, improving both public health and the efficient of the network.' LSO/C recommends that the rail network is considered alongside the Northern Arterial route to give non-car drivers another transport option and to alleviate congestion on this part of the network.