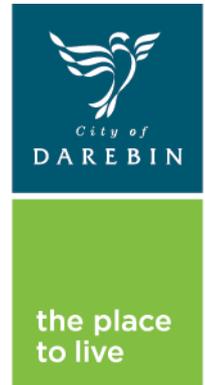


13 April 2015

In reply please quote reference:

Ref: A2575406



Owner / Occupier
«Property_Address»
«Suburb»

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: PROPOSED SUPERVISED RAISED SCHOOL CROSSING ON CLYDE STREET

This letter provides an update of the project, following the recent community meetings on 19 March and 26 March 2015 regarding the proposed raised school crossing on Clyde Street in Thornbury. This letter also provides a response to the outstanding items of correspondence and provides information as committed to by Council officers at the two community meetings.

In terms of the project itself, given the various concerns raised by the community, any further planning or construction of the raised school crossing in Clyde Street is effectively “on hold”. The project will be considered by Council on 20 April 2015, with a focus on how to best balance the needs and expectations of the Wales Street Primary School and the local community.

Following the community meetings on 19 March and 26 March 2015, Council agreed to provide a response to a number of items raised. The majority of these items have been responded to within the attached minutes of the two community meetings, with outstanding requests for further information summarised below, followed by Council’s response:

1. Report back on school crossing counts of children crossing numbers before and after school crossing was raised.

Council has reviewed school crossing pedestrian survey data from three other primary schools, including data prior to and following the construction of a raised school crossing similar to that proposed in Clyde Street -

- Scotia Street (Bell Primary School) – new raised school crossing constructed Jan 2014:
 - o 26 pedestrians in busiest hour on 21/10/2011
 - o 43 pedestrians in busiest hour on 9/05/201465% increase in children using the crossing

- Oakover Road (Bell Primary School) – existing school crossing raised Jan 2012:
 - o 43 pedestrians in busiest hour on 21/10/2011
 - o 89 pedestrians in busiest hour on 18/10/2013

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107% increase in children using the crossing

- St Vigeons Road (Reservoir Views Primary School) – new raised school crossing constructed 1st half 2013:
 - o 24 pedestrians in the busiest hour on 21/10/2011
 - o 36 pedestrians in the busiest hour on 22/10/2013

50% increase in children using the crossing

- Jessie Street (Preston West Primary School) – No changes to the un-raised school crossing
 - o 148 pedestrians in the busiest hour on 9/09/2009
 - o 129 pedestrians in the busiest hour on 11/09/2012

15% decrease in children using the crossing

2. Council to investigate raised school crossing that does not have a kerb build-out on the northern side of Clyde Street at the Council preferred location.

The benefits of the kerb build-out include maximising sight lines for drivers on approach to the school crossing, as well as reducing the distance required for pedestrians to cross Clyde Street. Removing the kerb build-out would diminish sight distances; as well as resulting in greater crossing times, traffic being held up for longer, and children being within the road space for a greater period. If this suggestion were adopted, the remaining kerb alignment on the Wales Street side of the school crossing would result in an unexpected road layout and a poor design outcome in terms of road safety. Removing the kerb build-out on the northern side from the council preferred design is therefore not supported.

3. Council to investigate the introduction of an inset parking bay between the location of the Council preferred proposed raised school crossing and Wales Street.

Council's arborist has investigated this proposal and confirmed that an inset parking bay could not be provided at this location without impacting on the existing street tree. Further, the safety of pedestrians walking along Wales Street would be put at risk as they would be stepping out from behind a parked car. The introduction of an inset parking bay between the location of the Council preferred proposed raised school crossing and Wales Street is therefore not supported.

4. Council to investigate a combination of the two suggestions above.

On consideration of the combined issues associated with the safety of the school crossing and the impact on the existing street tree, the proposal is not supported.

5. Council to investigate the introduction of on-street parking spaces at the redundant vehicle entrance of Wales Street Primary School opposite property 43 Clyde Street.

Preliminary investigations indicate that three on street parking spaces could be constructed at this location. Council is currently seeking confirmation from Wales Street Primary School that they support this.

6. Provide a response to the traffic assessment prepared by EB Traffic Solutions.

A Traffic Assessment report has been prepared by EB Traffic Solutions (dated 25 February 2015) in relation to the proposed raised school crossing in Clyde Street. It is limited to a review the appropriateness of Council's proposed option and its impact on the adjacent area. The conclusions of the report are summarised as follows, and are followed by Council's response:

- 1. The basis for the proposed school crossing and raised platform and the proposed pedestrian refuge islands at this location has not been satisfactorily justified.***

The justification for the school crossing has been based on the number of children crossing at this location as detailed in surveys undertaken by council officers and residents, and best practice design standards. There is no requirement for pedestrian refuge islands following the construction of a raised school crossing.

- 2. Signage being insufficiently proposed to accord with Figure 4.2 of VicRoads' Traffic Engineering Manual.***

The 'Standard Layout' referred to is for a mid-block crossing, located away from intersections. Warning signage is to alert drivers of the crossing so they can change their behaviour accordingly.

In the case of Clyde Street, the Council preferred location for the crossing is near an intersection, approaching from the east vehicle speeds will already be sufficiently low to react to the school crossing as designed. Adding warning signage on the three other approaches to the intersection of Clyde Street and Wales Street would result in confusion over the actual location of the school crossings because of the existing Wales Street school crossing in close proximity.

The advanced warning sign in Clyde Street on the west approach will be adjusted to a suitable location, away from the proposed school crossing as per figure 4.2 of VicRoads Traffic Engineering Manual.

- 3. The setback from Wales Street may result in a second vehicle queued at the school crossing extending into Wales Street.***

Parking on the western side of Wales Street to the south of Clyde Street will require drivers to travel away from the kerb line of Wales Street. This, coupled with Wales Street being over 9m wide, allows sufficient space for two vehicles to store between the active traffic lane of Wales Street and the STOP line at the proposed school crossing.

As has been presented previously, School Crossing Supervisors are trained to be aware of the surroundings including vehicle queuing, and would operate the crossing in a safe manner.

- 4. Existing vegetation at the corner of Clyde Street and Wales Street impacts on sight lines between vehicles on Wales Street and the proposed crossing location.***

The low level planting on the corner of Wales Street has been specifically selected to maximise sight lines around the corner of Wales Street into Clyde Street.

- 5. Concerns regarding the potential speed of vehicles approaching the crossing from Wales Street given the lack of traffic management at the intersection.***

Drivers travelling from Wales Street into Clyde Street are required to slow down when making this manoeuvre. Turning speeds from Wales Street into the road narrowing of Clyde Street will be sufficiently slow for the proposed raised school crossing to operate safely as intended.

- 6. The pedestrian desire line being along the western side of Wales Street rather than at the proposed raised crossing location.***

The highest proportion of school children will be serviced at a school crossing situated at the location proposed in the Council preferred location. Given the proximity of the proposed crossing to Wales Street, it is anticipated that the preferred pedestrian route would relocate to the crossing point.

7. The location of the school gate some 30m west of the proposed crossing location and therefore consideration should be given to locating the crossing facility closer to this location.

As above, a crossing located further west would not service as many school children as it would be inconveniently away from the existing desire lines, and not 'capture' the existing pedestrian flow along the western side of Wales Street.

7. Work with the school to ensure teachers arriving at the school intending to park in Clyde Street for the day, do so on the southern side first from the Wales Street end.

Council will work with the school in arranging this type of behaviour by their teachers. Preliminary advice from Wales Street Primary School supports this behaviour change.

8. A wider, holistic assessment is needed of Clyde Street traffic, parking and pedestrian movements for the northern side of Wales Street Primary School, including traffic and pedestrian movements at the Clyde Street intersections with both Wales and St David Streets.

Council is preparing the Darebin Traffic Management Strategy which has divided Darebin into 29 precincts in order to prioritise area-wide works such as that which has been suggested. This Strategy for future works and area wide assessment/design is expected to be adopted soon by Council.

However, if a school crossing was constructed at any other location along Clyde Street, students would still cross and be at risk near the Clyde Street intersection with Wales Street. Council will not accept this known risk, which would not be mitigated through an area-wide assessment.

9. Residents request that Council gives further consideration to the visual impact of the proposed crossing design, with respect to the quantity of signage and construction materials proposed to ensure that any works are in keeping with the existing character of the street, for example retaining the bluestone kerbing.

Bluestone kerbing will be retained where possible, and Council will seek to provide additional planting adjacent to the proposed school crossing.

10. Residents request that any proposal to remove trees associated with proposed works be undertaken in consultation with affected residents, and includes the replacement of those trees in a suitable location and with a suitable species, to an equivalent or greater value both in number and in contribution to the amenity of the streetscape.

If tree removal/replacement forms part of the final design, this will be accommodated as confirmed in the minutes of the community meetings.

11. Council's consultation / work notification process

The consultation approach adopted by Council has collected as much information from the community as possible to try and reduce the impact of the current design on immediately effected residents. The project was progressed in a way that provides current and continual information flow and maintained the momentum of the project. The duration of the consultation process was extended to ensure all information was collected and the views of all concerned residents were heard. The

majority of those residents with concerns about how the project would impact them made it to a follow-up community meeting.

At the third community meeting, every effort was made to reflect on discussion points from the second community meeting in order to provide continuity of constructive thinking in identifying a solution that suits both residents of Clyde Street and the wider community.

Council prefers to construct road infrastructure in the vicinity of schools during school holidays as it provides less disruption to the community. However, due to the limited time available between the close of the second community meeting, all the items that need investigating, required discussions with senior management and the time it will take to communicate results back to residents, the project has been put on hold and a construction date during the end of first semester school holidays in 2015 will not be possible.

As the project has now been scheduled for review at the next Council meeting further consultation is on hold until Council has resolved on how the project will proceed.

As confirmed in the second and third community meetings, there will be time between the work notification letter being received and the planned construction commencement date for any further concerns to be considered.

Once again, we would like to thank you for providing your feedback on the project and wish to advise that the matter is scheduled to be considered by Council at its ordinary Council meeting on 20 April 2015.

If you have any further queries please contact me via e-mail on allan.middlemast@darebin.vic.gov.au or via phone 8470 8286.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Allan Middlemast". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line through the middle of the name.

Allan Middlemast

Acting Team Leader - Transport Engineering

Cc: Mayor and Rucker Ward Councillors

Cc: Wales Street Primary School Assistant Principal