



HORNSBY SHIRE LOCAL TRAFFIC COMMITTEE

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TRANSDEV BUS SERVICE - For your information
CDC NSW BUS SERVICE – For your information
NSW TAXI COUNCIL - For your information

Road: Yarrara Road, Ramsay Road, Hillcrest Road,
Fisher Avenue, Railway Street, Shields Lane
Suburb: Pennant Hills
Location: Pennant Hills CBD
File Ref: F2018/00172 LTC No: 08/2020
Electorate: Hornsby UBD Ref: 172 M1
Subject: Proposed 40km/h High Pedestrian Activity Area (HPAA)
Date of Circulation: 26 March 2020

REFERRAL OF TRAFFIC MATTER FOR COMMENT OR OBJECTION, IF ANY

SUMMARY

This report details the traffic implications, design and outcome of public consultation, for the proposed 40km/h High Pedestrian Activity Area (HPAA) in Pennant Hills CBD.

SUBJECT

Council, in partnership with Transport for NSW, has identified Pennant Hills CBD as a location that requires traffic improvements to ensure the safety of pedestrians. In addition, the public domain of the area will be improved by planting trees which will provide the benefits of cooler places and improved street appeal. These improvements to public domain are a contribution from Council's *25,000 trees by September 2020* initiative.

General principles of 40km/h High Pedestrian Activity Area (HPAA)

These are areas of high pedestrian activity, near shopping strips, railway stations, bus interchanges, beach-sides and services such as medical centres. Two HPAA's are currently in operation in Hornsby Shire; at Hornsby Westside and Waitara Station. The maximum speed limit is 40km/h at all times. The different road environment helps to alert drivers to the lower speed limit and makes them aware of the presence of pedestrians moving about or near the road. This creates a safer road environment for all road users, particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and children.

Managing speed, in accordance with safe system principles, is a key component in managing pedestrian safety. Research and scientific analysis show that a pedestrian hit by a car travelling at 40km/h has twice the chance of surviving the collision than if the car was travelling at 50km/h. Travelling at speeds higher than 40km/h greatly increases the risk of injury and death to pedestrians.

Hornsby Shire Council and Transport for NSW are strongly focused on pedestrian safety. It is recognised that everyone is a pedestrian at some time and should be able to walk safely. 40km/h High Pedestrian Activity Areas are part of a strategy to reduce the number and severity of crashes. They have been introduced since 1991 as part of Local Area Traffic Management schemes. Changing the way streets are used in town centres improves the quality of life. They become places for people, not just traffic. The treatment has been developed in accordance with Transport for NSW guidelines for High Pedestrian Activity Areas.

The Proposal

The proposed treatment is aimed at improving pedestrian amenity by providing a self-enforcing low speed environment consisting of the following devices:

- 40km/h High Pedestrian Activity Area in parts of Yarrara Road, Shields Lane, Ramsay Road, Hillcrest Road, Fisher Avenue and Railway Street
- Raised threshold entries with landscaped blister islands in Yarrara Road, Ramsay Road, Hillcrest Road and Fisher Avenue
- Median traffic island in Yarrara Road at Hillcrest Road
- Pedestrian refuge islands in Ramsay Road
- Landscaped kerb blister islands in Hillcrest Road
- Pedestrian refuge islands in Fisher Avenue near Pennant Hills Road
- Associated pavement delineation and traffic signs

Plans of the proposed improvements are attached.

CONSULTATION

Public Consultation for the proposal was undertaken in February and March 2020. 125 letters to affected retailers and residents were delivered. 12 letters to authorities and bus operators were sent. The proposal was exhibited on Council's website for 18 days and advertised by Variable Message Signs (VMS) placed in Yarrara Road for the duration of the exhibition.

Ninety Six (96) written responses were received. A table summarising the responses is provided below with detailed summary of the issues raised and responses. Similar issues raised have been compiled into a single comment. Copies of submissions are available upon request:

| Overall proposal Pennant Hills HPAA | | Speed reduction 40km/h | | Speed humps and kerb blisters | | Hillcrest Rd / Yarrara Rd median | |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Support | Object | Support | Object | Support | Object | Support | Object |
| | | | | | | | |
| 49 ⁽¹⁾ | 36 ⁽²⁾ | 44 | 23 | 27 | 13 | 11 | 6 |

Notes:

1. A number of submissions have been received which were neither in favour of, nor against the proposal. These submissions offered constructive comments which have been taken into account. The overall for and against numbers in above table therefore do not add up to the 96 submission in total.
2. Indicates total number of objectors (36). Further analysis of the objections shows that (19) objectors are motorists who do not live in the immediate area. Their concerns relate to additional delays on their journey through Pennant Hills.

Comments and responses:

Comment – Concerned with impact on cyclists at entry treatments. Provision should be made for dedicated path for cyclists' so that they are not forced to mix with cars at the squeeze points and along the route.

Response – Council's bike plan and the State Government's Bicycle Network Blueprint identify Yarrara Road as a future Tier 1 cycle route. Plans for a dedicated shared path along this route will be developed and will be included in Council's funding submissions under the Active Transport Program. As an interim treatment, bicycle logos will be incorporated into the road markings on the approaches to the devices. The entry treatments along Yarrara Road will have sufficient lane width for shared use by cyclists. The 40km/h speed limit will allow a reduction in the speed differential between cyclists and other vehicles making the road environment safer for all road users.

Comment – Proposed kerb blisters in Hillcrest Road and traffic median in Yarrara Road are not practical and will impact on traffic flow. Current setup allows for two cars to leave Hillcrest Road. One turning right into Yarrara (usually waiting for traffic lights to change) and one car able to turn left and continue down Yarrara.

Response – The traffic median and kerb blisters at the intersection of Yarrara Road and Hillcrest Road are aimed at restricting the conflicting traffic movements at this intersection. Traffic data obtained at the intersection shows that the combined right turn movements (that will be banned) are relatively low with 30 vehicles in the AM peak 34 vehicles in the PM peak making the right turns. These movements will be reassigned to Fisher Avenue and Ramsay Road representing less than one additional car per minute at these locations. The impact on the level of service at adjacent intersections will be negligible. It is noted that the approval of the "No Right Turn" restrictions is not delegated to Council and that a Traffic Management Plan will need to be submitted for consideration and approval by Transport for NSW.

Comment – Install additional pedestrian fencing to prevent pedestrian from crossing Yarrara Road and force them to use existing crossings.

Response – The extent of fencing proposed near key locations is aimed at managing access at unsafe crossing locations such as near busy intersections or near traffic signals. Further extension of fencing near Pennant Hills Road has been included in the revised plans presented to LTC. Additional 16 metres of fencing will be provided in Fisher Avenue near the intersection with Pennant Hills Road and additional 25 metres of fencing in Yarrara Road opposite Hillcrest Road intersection. Providing fencing along the entire length of Yarrara Road would prevent operation of buses and also prevent drivers from accessing parked cars from the kerb side.

Comments and responses continued:

Comment - This proposal will worsen congestion along Yarrara Road, all parking should be removed along Yarrara Road to open the road to uninterrupted through traffic.

Response - Yarrara Road is classified as a Sub-Regional road and as such designed to carry significant traffic volumes. Notwithstanding, it is anticipated that the NorthConnex tunnel will result in some reduction in through traffic via this regional route. Installation of the HPAA scheme will encourage non-essential traffic to use Pennant Hills Road. On-street parking available along Yarrara Road benefits the retailers in Pennant Hills.

Comment – Install a pedestrian crossing on Yarrara Road near Hillcrest Road.

Response – A marked pedestrian crossing cannot be installed at this location for the following reasons:

1. Crossings with two or more lanes in the same direction are prohibited in NSW. Installation of a crossing would require the removal of the southbound kerbside traffic lane. This would have adverse implications on the southbound capacity of Yarrara Road.
2. A crossing at this location would create an inappropriate balance between the needs of pedestrians and traffic.

Comment – Install a pedestrian bridge over Yarrara Road.

Response – Grade separated facilities require significant land acquisition for lifts, staircases or ramps. Such a project is beyond the scope of the TfNSW funding allocation for the current proposal.

Comment – This proposal will create three separate speed limits along Yarrara Road and The Esplanade within 2 kilometres. The existing 60km/h speed limit along Yarrara Road should be changed to 50km/h to be consistent with the speed limit recently applied to The Esplanade.

Response – Changing the speed limit along Yarrara Road from 60km/h to 50km/h is supported. This will provide a consistent 50km/h speed zone from Sefton Road up to the new 40km/h HPAA in Pennant Hills. Council will request TfNSW to consider making this change in conjunction with the HPAA proposal.

Comments and responses continued:

Comment – Consideration should be given to make Geeves Lane and Pennicook Lane One Way.

Response – One-way traffic in lanes can often lead to higher speeds which is undesirable in high pedestrian areas. The crash history shows that the lane way is operating safely under the current two-way arrangement. The introduction of the median in Yarrara Road and Hillcrest Road will require minor additional movements through the lane. Making the lane one way could also force traffic to drive through the Pennant Hills Marketplace carpark which is undesirable.

Comment – 40km/h Zone in Shields Lane should be extended to include the intersection with Willis Avenue.

Response – The extent of the speed zone has been determined following an assessment in accordance with the HPAA guidelines and adopted in principle by TfNSW. Extending the zone to include the intersection would result in a significant number of additional signs near the intersection creating visual pollution and a distraction to motorists.

Comment - NorthConnex claims to be “returning local streets to local residents” - this project would be excellently suited to do exactly that, by calming down traffic in the local area.

Response – It is anticipated that the implementation of the HPAA scheme will assist in reducing the proportion of through traffic using Yarrara Road.

Comment – Stevens Street should be included in the HPAA scheme. This would assist with safety of pedestrian at crossings.

Response – HPAA schemes are intended for busy shopping strips, and transport interchanges. Stevens Street is predominately a residential street and would not qualify under the HPAA guidelines. The pedestrian refuge provided in Stevens Street is considered appropriate given the low pedestrian volumes.

Comments and responses continued:

Comment - Concerned that approximately 20 parking spaces will be lost due to the project. Also impact on length of Taxi Rank.

Response – The majority of the devices provided are within the existing 10 metre regulatory “No Stopping” zone. The total number of parking spaces lost is 8 including 2 taxi zone spaces. The proposal also includes the conversion of 5 all day spaces in Trebor Road from all day parking into 2 hour parking to offset the impact on short term parking. The loss of the 2 taxi spaces between the driveways is unavoidable due to geometric requirements of the pedestrian refuge island. In order to offset this loss, the taxi rank will be extended towards Yarrara Road by 7 metres. This will result in the existing 27 metre “No Stopping” zone being reduced to the mandatory 20 metre “No Stopping” zone on the approach to the traffic signals.

Comment – Please consider installation of pedestrian fence near the new kerb ramps in Fisher Avenue as well as “Look” symbols.

Response – Pedestrian fencing has been added to revised plans presented to LTC. “Look” symbols will be installed at all new kerb ramps within the project precinct.

Comment – The 1 hour parking near the chemist and optometrist in Yarrara Road should be made into 15 minutes or 30 minutes parking.

Response – Short term parking 30 minutes and 15 minutes is available in Hillcrest Road between Yarrara Road and Pennicook Lane. These short-term parking zones were implemented by Council in 2015 (LTC 33/2015) following extensive consultation with the local retail community. Providing short term parking along Yarrara Road near the intersection with Pennant Hills Road would result in a significant increase in undesirable manoeuvring of cars at this busy location due to the high turnover. It is noted that there will be minimal loss (1 space overall) of short-term parking spaces in the immediate area due to the landscaped islands. The islands are essentially positioned within existing “No Stopping” zones.

Comment – Recommend that zebra crossing be provided in Ramsay Road near the library instead of the pedestrian refuge.

Response - There are strict guidelines that need to be followed to ensure a marked foot crossing will operate safely. Pedestrian volumes at this location are not sufficient to ensure the safe operation of a pedestrian crossing in accordance with Transport for NSW Guidelines. Marked foot crossings provided at locations where pedestrian volumes are relatively low are known to create a dangerous situation where drivers tend to ignore pedestrians. It is recommended that a review of pedestrian movements be undertaken 6 months after the project is completed, and the location upgraded to a marked crossing if warrants are met.

Comments and responses continued:

Comment – Recommend that a zebra crossing marking be provided at the driveways to Pennant Hills Marketplace.

Response - The Australian Road Rules require that a driver entering or leaving a driveway must give way to any pedestrian on the footpath that the driver crosses or enters. The onus is on the driver to follow the regulation. Installation of marked crossings at driveways is not recommended as this can lead to drivers ignoring the road rules at other driveway locations where markings are not installed.

Comment – Concerned that a “No Right Turn” is proposed for entry into Shields Lane from Yarrara Road.

Response - The sign is an existing sign that applies to the Bowling Club driveway. No new restrictions are proposed at this location.

Comment – Install red light speed camera at the intersection of Pennant Hills Road with Railway Street as motorists are often disobeying the regulations.

Response - Installation of red-light speed camera will be referred to TfNSW for consideration.

Comment – Extend the HPAA zone in Ramsay Road to the intersection with Weemala Road as this area is used by many students.

Response – The extent of the speed zone has been determined following an assessment in accordance with the HPAA guidelines and adopted in principle by TfNSW. HPAA schemes are intended for busy shopping strips, and transport interchanges. Hillcrest Road beyond the retail area is a predominately a residential street and would not qualify under the HPAA guidelines.

Comment - concerned with safety at the intersection of Weemala Road and Ramsay Road where vehicles often fail to give way.

Response - The existing Give Way signs on the approaches to the intersection provide sufficient warning of the changed priority. There is a minority of drivers who have a disregard for traffic regulations, including disobeying Give Way traffic signs. This is a driver behaviour issue that can only be addressed through enforcement by NSW Police. A review of the crash data indicates the intersection is operating safely with no crashes recorded in the past 5 years. The current treatment is considered appropriate for the intersection as it promotes lower speeds along Weemala Road.

Comments and responses continued:

Comment – Only install works in Yarrara Road, the side streets don't require treatment.

Response - The extent of the speed zone and the inclusion of side roads is essential as parts of these roads are also subject to high pedestrian activity. The boundaries of the HPAA are in accordance with TfNSW guidelines.

Comment – Only install works in side streets, leave Yarrara Road as is at 60km/h.

Response - The extent of the speed zone and the inclusion of Yarrara Road is essential due to its high pedestrian activity and interaction between the train station and the retail area.

Comment – This project is a waste of ratepayer's money. Leave Pennant Hills as it is.

Response – The works will be funded by the State Government's 2018-19 40km/h High Pedestrian Activity Program. Proactive road safety funding programs such as this deliver significant long-term savings to the NSW community by reducing the cost of injury and trauma to pedestrians on NSW roads.

Comment – Reduce the speed to 30km/h, overseas studies and practice demonstrate that 40km/h is too fast for pedestrians if they are hit by a vehicle.

Response – The adopted speed limit on NSW roads within HPAA's is 40km/h.

Comment – Concerned with noise and loss of parking created by the entry treatment in front of number 17 Hillcrest Road, move the device closer to the shops.

Response – Relocation of the device would impact on existing drainage structures and parking dedicated for NSW Police Highway Patrol vehicles. Given the site constraints the location is considered appropriate. Residents have access to off street parking within the sites which are mostly single dwellings.

Comment – Remove the trees from the scheme as they will block vision.

Response – The species of the trees selected will ensure that clear vision is maintained at driver and pedestrian eye height. Sightlines at intersections and crossing locations have been checked and found to be appropriate for the prevailing road conditions.

Comments and responses continued:

Comment – Concerned that the relocation of ramps away from Pennant Hills Road near Fisher Avenue will impact sight lines as the Impala Kitchens building blocks vision.

Response – The design has been reviewed and kerb ramp on the south western corner will be positioned closer to its original location. This will however require the relocation of the State Survey Mark and may result in increased cost for the project.

CONCLUSION

The submissions from residents and retailers have been addressed in the report. The responses from the community show majority support for the introduction of a HPAA in Pennant Hills. A number of changes have been made to the plans presented to LTC to accommodate suggestions where possible, as detailed in the report.

RECOMMENDATION THAT

1. The proposed 40km/h High Pedestrian Activity Area in Pennant Hills (Plan No 100-569) including associated devices and parking restrictions be approved for construction subject to:
 - a. TMP being lodged with TfNSW for the installation of a traffic median island in Yarrara Road at the intersection with Hillcrest Road.
 - b. That the traffic median in Yarrara Road be constructed as semi mountable to accommodate NSW Police Highway Patrol response with “No Right Turn - Police Vehicles Excepted” signs posted.
 2. Council develop plans for a dedicated shared path along Yarrara Road in accordance with State Government’s Bicycle Network Blueprint.
 3. A review of pedestrian movements in Ramsay Road be undertaken 6 months after the project is completed and the matter referred to LTC for consideration of a marked crossing if warrants are met.
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Note for voting Local Traffic Committee members.

Under Transport for NSW 'Delegation of Functions to Regulate Traffic' (operation of local traffic committees) you are required to comment or indicate your acceptance or objection to the recommendation of this report. Your response must be submitted in writing within 14 days of the date of this notice.

Please send your response via return email for the item, or email trafficbranch@hornsby.nsw.gov.au.

For further information please contact Radek Zarzycki on 9847 6524.

Upon receipt of your comments the matter will be referred to Council for action.

Radek Zarzycki
Acting Chairman



Date: 26 March 2020