



HORNSBY SHIRE LOCAL TRAFFIC COMMITTEE

MEMBER FOR HORNSBY – Mr Matt Kean MP
HORNSBY POLICE – Snr Const Narelle Tomich
EASTWOOD POLICE – Sgt Leonie Abberfield
TRANSPORT FOR NSW – Mr Zakaria Ahmad
COUNCILLOR MICHAEL HUTCHENCE – Council’s representative
THE MAYOR AND ALL COUNCILLORS – For your information
GENERAL MANAGER – For your information
DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER INFRASTRUCTURE & MAJOR PROJECTS –
For your information
NSW FIRE SERVICE – For your information
NSW AMBULANCE SERVICE – For your information
TRANSDEV NSW BUS SERVICE – For your information
CDC NSW BUS SERVICE – For your information
NSW TAXI COUNCIL - For your information

Road: Chilvers Road, Duffy Avenue, The Esplanade
Suburb: Thornleigh
Location: Intersection of Chilvers Road, Duffy Avenue, The Esplanade
File Ref: F2004/09774-002 LTC No: 28/2020
Electorate: Hornsby UBD Ref:
Google Map: <https://www.google.com/maps/@-33.7242955,151.08086,19z>
Subject: Proposed Upgrade of Signalised Intersection
Date of Circulation: 21 October 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 upgrade and reconfiguration of existing signalised intersection of Chilvers Road, Duffy Avenue, The Esplanade in Thornleigh.

SUBJECT

Council, in partnership with Transport for NSW, has identified the intersection of Chilvers Road, Duffy Avenue, The Esplanade at Thornleigh, as a location that requires traffic improvements, to ensure the safety of road users. The State Government has offered Council funding assistance, under the 'Safer Local Government Roads Program' to upgrade the intersection to address the present safety issues.

Road crashes are a major cost to Australians every year. 'Safer Roads' projects target those road locations where crashes are occurring. By funding safety improvements at dangerous locations, the program reduces the risk of crashes. Programs of this sort are very effective, saving the community many times the cost of the road improvements that are implemented. The Safer Roads Program makes an important contribution in reducing the state road toll. The design has been developed in accordance with Austroads 'Guide to Road Safety Part 8: Treatment of Crash Locations' and RMS traffic signal design guidelines.

The proposal

Key features of the proposal are:

- Realignment of the intersection to remove the 'dog leg' between The Esplanade and Chilvers Road.
- Provision of dedicated right turn lanes on all approaches to remove traffic conflict.
- Installation of bicycle lanterns at the signalised pedestrian crossings.
- Construction of roadway and shared paths to connect with existing on-road cycle network.
- Improved traffic signal phasing.
- Relocation of utilities where required to achieve new alignment.
- Removal of large triangular traffic island in Chilvers Road.
- Upgrade of street lighting at the intersection
- Changes to the existing parking arrangements.

Plans of the proposed traffic signals, parking arrangements and associated works are attached.

CONSULTATION

Initial public consultation for the proposal was undertaken in June 2019. Ninety-five (95) letters to affected residents and retailers were sent. Twelve (12) letters to authorities and bus operators were sent. The proposal was exhibited on Council's website and advertised by Variable Message Signs (VMS) placed in The Esplanade and Duffy Avenue for the duration of the exhibition. A site meeting was held with representatives of the Westleigh Progress Association on 6 August 2019.

Further consultation was undertaken in September 2020 outlining changes to the parking restrictions in the area to improve the operation of the realigned signalised intersection. The parking management proposal was exhibited on Council's website from 25 September to 8 October 2020. Forty-one (41) additional letters were posted to affected residents and twelve (12) letters to authorities and bus operators were sent.

Forty-five (45) 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 Traffic Signals Upgrade		
Support	Object	Support with Suggested Changes
26	6⁽¹⁾	13

Note 1:

Majority of the objectors and supporters who provided suggestions and comments thought that traffic in the wider area would improve if the merge from two lane into one for southbound traffic towards Pennant Hills on The Esplanade was modified. Changes to the southbound merge on The Esplanade are outside the scope of the projects and generally will not improve the traffic congestion in the wider area. During morning and afternoon peak periods, traffic is queued along Bellamy Street, Yarrara Road, The Esplanade, Chilvers Road and Sefton Road. The route is a sub-arterial connection and is designed to carry significant traffic volumes. The speed limit has been reduced from 60 km/h to 50km/h. A 3-tonne load restriction has been installed along The Esplanade to deter trucks using this route and direct trucks to use Pennant Hills Road. It is anticipated that once the NorthConnex tunnel is operational the traffic volumes along this route will decrease as additional capacity will be available along Pennant Hills Road.

CONSULTATION continued**Comments and responses summary:**

Comment – Concerned with reduction in landscaped green area, intersection layout will be confusing for drivers.

Response – The intersection geometry will be simplified by removal of the dog-leg alignment. Nature strip and turf will be provided where possible but limited due to requirements for shared paths. The traffic islands are too small to cater for landscaping. Landscaped areas near major intersections require ongoing maintenance which is costly and difficult to maintain due to requirements of major traffic control to ensure safety of workers.

Comment – Dedicated right turn from Duffy Avenue to Chilvers Road will force traffic bound for Westleigh into the kerbside lane, thereby blocking the ability of vehicles turning left into The Esplanade on a green left arrow. This is a worse outcome than the status quo. Why not have dedicated left turn lane?

The proposed re-alignment may well make crossing Duffy Avenue easier, but it comes at the considerable cost of making right hand turns from Chilvers Road into Duffy Avenue and The Esplanade into Duffy Avenue extremely acute, difficult to negotiate and potentially increasing the risk of accidents.

Rejects the claim that this intersection has been identified as a location having a significant number of crashes. The current ‘dog-leg’ serves to slow traffic down, consistent with the recent 50km/hr speed restriction and concrete blister islands placed along The Esplanade. The benefits of the proposal are outweighed as much by its downsides. Therefore, the proposal is not a prudent use of public funds.

Response – The improvements have been developed in accordance with the Crash Reduction Guide. Council has received funding from the NSW State Government’s Safer Roads Program for this project. The crash history between 2012 - 2017 (5 years), saw 28 accidents with 12 injury crashes. Accidents at this location causes major delays for all road users especially for residents in Westleigh. The speed limit in the area has been reduced from 60 km/h down to 50 km/h.

The route along Sefton Road / Chilvers Road and The Esplanade is a main road for residents and businesses on the western side of the railway line linking Pennant Hills to Hornsby, and is a sub-arterial connection designed to carry significant traffic volumes. It is anticipated that once the NorthConnex tunnel is operational the traffic volumes along this route will decrease as additional capacity will be available along Pennant Hills Road.

CONSULTATION continued**Comments and responses summary:**

Comment – I am appalled at the proposed changes posted on the Council website. I appreciate accidents happen there, but deaths happen further down The Esplanade and the proposed changes surely will increase the speed of vehicles and number of vehicles, unless additional measures are taken along The Esplanade to slow or reduce traffic. Changing the speed limit to 50 km/h was a fine idea, but without any visible enforcement, it has had no effect. Please think more strategically in considering the flow-on effects of changing the intersection of Duffy and Chilvers.

Response – The crashes reported by the resident have occurred a significant distance from the intersection and are not considered to be related to the operation of the intersection. The new geometry of the intersection is aimed at reducing the number of crashes occurring at this location due to poor alignment and signal phasing which will be addressed by this project. Enforcement of speed limits is a matter for NSW Police and Council works closely with the police to ensure that problem locations are targeted.

Comment – From my personal experience the problems stem from two lanes in Chilvers Road merging into a single lane a short distance into The Esplanade. The cheapest trial would be to put up left turn only for the left lane in Chilvers Road. If necessary physically separate the lanes in Duffy Avenue to prevent turning right into the Esplanade from left lane in Chilvers Road.

Response – Comments noted, the current proposal has been reviewed and accepted by TfNSW and is backed by a traffic modelling report as per the attachment.

Comment – For more than 20 years the residents of Westleigh have been asking for a double lane roundabout to be built at this intersection. These roundabouts are great and work extremely well in Castle Hill especially with busy traffic. The proposed intersection will just cause further congestion and slow the traffic even more. I doubt that it will be any safer. There is enough room for the roundabout and will keep the traffic moving. I hope that you will give it your consideration.

Response – Roundabouts are generally not suitable for pedestrians and cyclists. A roundabout would prioritise traffic using Chilvers Road and The Esplanade. The uneven traffic flows at the intersection would result in significant delays for residents of Westleigh. The current proposal utilises the existing infrastructure. The intersection is part of Council's long-term walking and cycling strategy to promote active transport along the rail corridor and within the Shire.

CONSULTATION continued**Comments and responses summary:**

Comment – Long term resident of Goodlands Avenue. Concerns with the removal of a lane from Chilvers Road to The Esplanade. This lane removal will increase through traffic on Sinclair Avenue, Kentwell Avenue, Oakleigh Avenue and Goodlands Avenue via Nicholson Avenue to access Pennant Hills. Vehicles are travelling upwards of 70km/h in a 50km/h zone, road-rattling to avoid traffic. Goodlands Avenue is a bus route.

Response – No traffic lane is being removed. The existing lane configuration is being adjusted to suit the new configuration and better align Chilvers Road and The Esplanade. The speed limit has recently been reduced to 50 km/h. Enforcement of speed limits is a matter for NSW Police.

Comment – I fully support the proposed parking restrictions. Can you also investigate parking restrictions in Bellevue Street between Pennant Hills Road and Wood Street. Also request RMS to paint 'keep intersection clear' hatching at the Bellevue Street and Pennant Hills Road intersection.

Response – The request to investigate parking restrictions in Bellevue Street is outside the scope of this proposal and will be investigated separately. Pennant Hills Road is a state road under the care and control of TfNSW. The request for painting of 'keep intersection clear' on Pennant Hills Road at the intersection of Bellevue Street will be referred to TfNSW for consideration and determination. It is also outside the scope and funding of the project.

Comment – Hours of 'No Stopping' total 9 hours per day. People live in The Esplanade. They need access at all hours of the day. Not just 4 hours from 10am to 2pm Suggest 6am to 8:15am and 4:30 to 6:30pm Mon-Fri as a trail. Better still would be continuous left hand turns after stopping to improve efficiency at the intersection.

Parking needs to be available outside 20 and 22 The Esplanade as patients park and are pick up and dropped off throughout the day. Also ambulance access is necessary.

Response – The route along Sefton Road / Chilvers Road and The Esplanade forms part of the sub-arterial road network and as such is designed to carry a significant amount of traffic. It is anticipated that once the NorthConnex tunnel is operational the traffic volumes along this route will decrease as additional capacity will be available along Pennant Hills Road.

CONSULTATION continued**Comments and responses summary:**

The existing timed 'No Stopping' between 6am-10am, 2pm-7pm Mon-Fri restriction is being extended on the western side of The Esplanade to Oakleigh Avenue approximately 130 metres and ten (10) on street parking spaces are being adjusted during peak travel times, to provide network efficiency at the intersection, safety for on road cyclists, minimise congestion and to deter drivers using Oakleigh Avenue and Goodlands Avenue as an alternative route.

The operation times proposed are standard clearway restrictions used throughout the road network where traffic flow is considered a priority over on-street parking. Parking will continue to be available between 7pm-6am and 10am-2pm and on neighbouring side streets connecting to The Esplanade.

The predominant movement for northbound motorist is from The Esplanade to Chilvers Road, with very little left turning traffic into Duffy Avenue. The site constraints at the traffic signals only allows for a combined left turn / through lane and a dedicated right turn lane. The signposting 'left turn on red' is not possible due to vehicle and pedestrian conflict at the intersection.

The Medical Centre on the corner of The Esplanade and Oakleigh Avenue has a number of off-street parking spaces. An existing 'No Parking' zone has been installed in front on the medical centre on Oakleigh Avenue, to allow Medical Centre patrons and Ambulance easy access to the Medical Centre. Emergency vehicles are exempt from regulatory signs such as 'No Stopping' when responding to emergencies.

Comment – We would like to have the centre lanes of Duffy Avenue running both east and west marked as "right turn only" and have the lights programmed to allow those lanes to operate safely.

Response – The upgraded traffic signals include dedicated right turn lanes for traffic turning right from Duffy Avenue into Chilvers Road and Duffy Avenue into The Esplanade. The traffic signals will be programmed to ensure network efficiency and safe movement through the intersection according to Australian Standards.

CONSULTATION continued

Comments and responses summary:

Comment – Request for protected bicycle path with a concrete barrier 150mm high and 200mm wide to ensure the safety for people who cycle, similar to the effective and efficient King St cycle path that Sydney City Council has installed.

Response – The upgraded traffic signals remove the existing north and south travel ‘dog leg’ approach on Duffy Avenue and improve the road alignment to resemble a more conventional type traffic signal intersection. The upgraded intersection removes the short vehicle storage bay on Duffy Avenue for northbound vehicles and reduces the safety risk for on road cyclists storing or travelling from The Esplanade to Chilvers Road. The traffic lanes width is designed to a minimal standard due to site constraints which do not allow for additional space to install a concrete barrier to separate cyclist and would significantly add to the cost of the intersection upgrade making the project unviable. The separated cycle facilities with raised medians can create safety concerns for pedestrians who may attempt to store on the narrow concrete island to cross The Esplanade and Chilvers Road.

Additional off-road shared paths and signalised shared bicycle and pedestrian provisions on all crossings have been included in the project to assist less experienced cyclists to safely cross the intersection in all directions, especially during peak travel time. The proposed on-road cycle provision is a standard treatment used by most urban councils and complies with Australian Standards. It caters for professional and less experienced cyclists, both on and off road.

CONCLUSION

The submissions from community groups, residents and retailers have been addressed in the report. The responses to the public consultation show that residents generally are supportive of the project and are concerned with increased traffic in the area. The increase in traffic volumes is unavoidable given increased population forecast for the Hornsby Shire and background traffic growth across Sydney. The design has been developed in accordance with Austroads ‘Guide to Road Safety Part 8: Treatment of Crash Locations’ and RMS traffic signal design guidelines.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Traffic Modelling Report - Proposed Upgrade of Traffic Signals at Intersection of April 2018.
2. Preliminary Traffic Signal Plan - TCS 1737
3. Parking Restrictions Plan – HSC
4. Proposed Upgrade of Traffic Signals - Duffy Chilvers The Esplanade - Civil Plans

RECOMMENDATION THAT

1. The proposed intersection and traffic signals upgrade, associated parking restrictions at the intersection of Chilvers Road, Duffy Avenue, The Esplanade in Thornleigh be recommended for construction subject to Transport for NSW requirements and relevant Traffic Control Signals (TCS) approvals.
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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
Chairman



Issued Date: Wednesday, 21 October, 2020

Comments Close Date: Thursday, 5 November 2020, at 5:00pm