



Thursday, 26 February 2009

NZ Transport Agency
C/o Opus International Consultants Limited
PO Box 1482
Christchurch
Attention: Alisa Wood

Dear Alisa

**RE: RUSSELY ROAD (SH1) & MEMORIAL AVENUE INTERSECTION
IMPROVEMENT INVESTIGATION**

SUBMISSION FROM SPOKES CANTERBURY

Thanks for the opportunity to make this submission. Spokes Canterbury is a local cycling advocacy group with approximately 1200 members that is affiliated with the national Cycling Advocates Network (CAN). Spokes is dedicated to including cycling as an everyday form of transport in the greater Christchurch area.

Spokes considers that the consultation material is deficient in not discussing cycling and walking needs over this important route, and that most of the improvement options proposed will further compromise the safety and accessibility of the Russley Road/ Memorial Avenue intersection for pedestrians and cyclists.

A. EXISTING SITUATION

This intersection, as with all roundabouts along this section of SH1 (Johns/ Russley Roads) is intimidating and difficult for cyclists and pedestrians to cross. A large number of people work in or around the airport and a proportion walk or cycle to work. People also access the airport by bicycle for flight connections, and some overseas cycle tourists also depart and arrive at the airport by bicycle. This intersection is the worst barrier for cyclists travelling between the airport and the centre of Christchurch.

B. INTERIM OPTIONS

Options 1 and 3 of the proposed interim options significantly worsen conditions for walkers and cyclists. These options both involve either adding lanes to speed up traffic through the intersection or eventually putting in an over bridge with associated on and off ramps. High-speed slip lanes for left turning traffic would be dangerous

for pedestrians and cyclists. The report assumes that pedestrians and cyclists will be dealt with off-road but fails to show how this would happen. Looking at the designs for each option it is difficult to see how this will happen - especially when the report is very concerned about how much extra land would be needed for each option.

The interim options of traffic signals (Option 2) or a signalised roundabout (Option 4) are our preferred solutions. As noted, since the previous traffic signal installation, the speed limit on Russley Rd has been reduced to 80 km/h. A further reduction to 70 km/h would improve safety for all road users, not just pedestrians and cyclists, and should be considered if safety concerns exist about signalising the intersection (or the roundabout).

C. LONG TERM OPTIONS

In the light of Peak Oil, climate change, the NZTS and the GPS, these long-term options fly in the face of reality. They are all counterproductive in reaching most of the objectives of the NZTS.

D. ENVIRONMENTAL/CULTURAL/SOCIAL VALUES

Unusually for a major city, Christchurch airport is within reasonable cycling distance of town, and much of the journey either has a good shoulder (Memorial Ave), cycle lanes (Fendalton Rd) or a quiet alternative route (the Arlington-Burnside High path). The lack of cycle parking at the airport was an issue for travellers but there is now a covered stand under the new parking building (Air NZ workers have had their own for a while). The Russley-Memorial Ave intersection is the only major obstacle on the route, and the proposed interim options will make the situation worse for cyclists and walkers. All the options would result in a very unfriendly gateway for visitors, especially those who choose to walk or cycle into the city.

In conclusion, we consider that the lack of provision for cyclists and pedestrians in the proposed options is inequitable, and does not appear to be consistent with the NZ Transport Strategy, the Government Policy Statement on Land Transport Funding, or NZTA's own criteria and guidelines.

As part of any option development or further analysis, we request that comprehensive pedestrian and cycle counts be undertaken at this intersection.

Thanks again for the opportunity to make this submission. We request the right to speak to the submission at a suitable hearing. If there are matters requiring clarification, please contact our Submissions Co-ordinator Robin Delamore in the first instance. His contact details are:

274 Highsted Road

Casebrook

Christchurch 8051

Phone: 3599746

Email: robind@actrix.co.nz

Paul de Spa
Chairperson, Spokes Canterbury