

Background

1. The Mt Albert town centre upgrade project is an Auckland Council-led project that looks to uplift the town centre to better reflect an activity centre in accordance to the Auckland Plan. As such, and together with Auckland Transport, there was a need to improve general amenity and access, which included improving access for active modes. To do so meant the need to widen footpaths and provide for cycling through the town centre.
2. Desired transport outcomes for the immediate road network and therefore the signalised New North Road/Mt Albert Road intersection are:
 - a. Enable adequate through movement on all approaches given that New North Road, Mt Albert Road and Carrington Road are important links on the wider general traffic network. Given the town centre/place context, this broader general traffic functionality is to be managed to facilitate safe mobility and access, as appropriate for town centres.
 - b. Bus movements are to be well catered for, and appropriately moderated to better support the town centre environment.
 - c. Pedestrian access is to be safe and well provided for, particularly given the town centre location and close proximity to the train station.
 - d. Cycling access is to be safely provided. These routes form part of the strategic cycle network.
3. The result has been the provision of two general traffic lanes for traffic on each approach, with the exception for New North Road westbound, which has a third short lane for right turning. Mt Albert Road and Carrington Road approaches both comprise a single shared through and left lane, with short right turning lane and cycle facilities.
4. Related to the above, it was anticipated that there would be reduced general traffic demand associated with the introduction of the Waterview Tunnel, which would further enable the introduction of the town centre improvements.

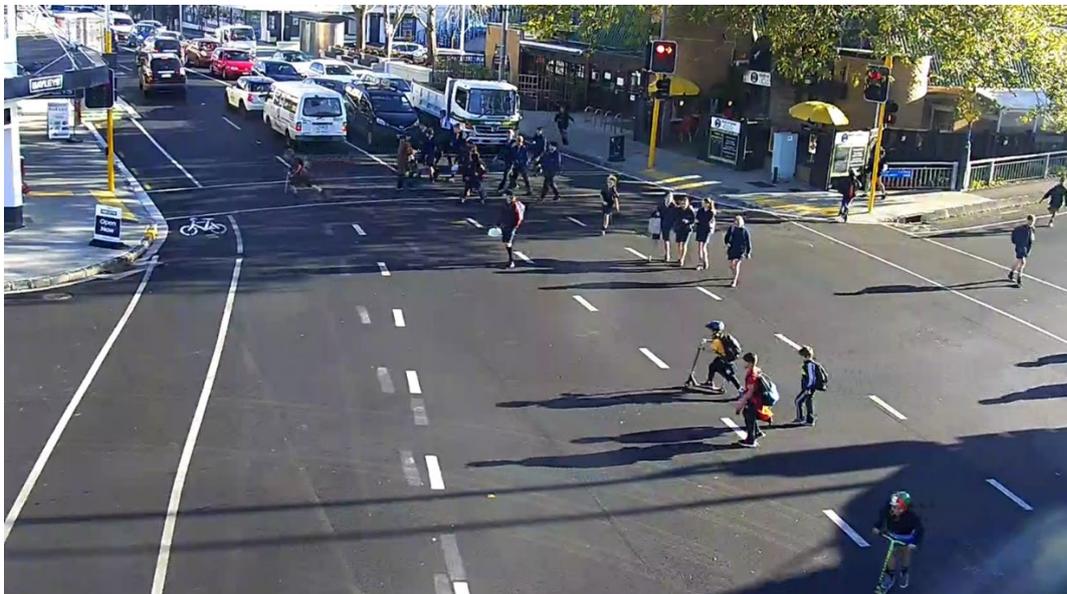
Current Performance

5. Initial traffic signal detection issues hindered the optimal operation of the traffic signals, resulting in significant delays to New North Road. This was rectified together with simplified traffic signal phasing, resulting in some improvements to New North Road operations, but with adverse impact on Carrington Road and Mt Albert Road, which was until then enjoying disproportionately long green phrase times.
6. A lingering critical element of the project is the poor compliance to the clearway arrangement on New North Road within the town centre. Refined signage and supplementary enforcement will be introduced in early July. Improved compliance is expected to improve vehicular flows on New North Road and further enable improved proportioning of traffic signal green times for the four approaches.



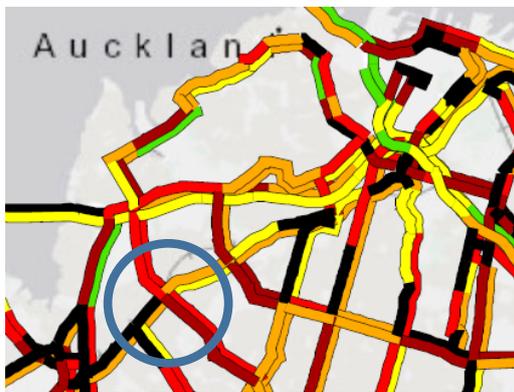
Poor compliance to Clearway during the afternoon peak period

7. The exclusive pedestrian phase has several benefits including providing a good, safe user experience for pedestrians, very appropriate for town centres.



Exclusive pedestrian phase in operation during the afternoon.

8. The Auckland Traffic Operations Centre (ATOC) who actively manage the operation of traffic signals in Auckland, are continuing to monitor the intersection, with a view to ensure the best operational outcome in terms of the strategic intent for this intersection.
9. It is important to note that general traffic conditions are likely to be reasonably busy during commuting peak periods, as would be expected for key routes through a town centre.
10. Outside of the peaks, the intersection operates well and appropriately for key modes including cycling and walking.
11. Following the introduction of the Waterview Tunnel connection, there has been a reduction in general traffic through this intersection of appropriately 25%. This confirmed expectations and would thereby support and facilitate the town centre improvements.
12. Daily traffic flows through the intersection have however continued to remain at similar levels following the introduction of the town centre upgrade, at approximately 22,000 vehicles per day.
13. During the commuting peak hours, traffic flows through the intersection are a further 10% lower compared to last year. There are now approximately 1,750 vehicles per hour compared to nearly 2,000 vehicles following the introduction of the Waterview Tunnel.
14. Consequently, current general traffic congestion data for all approaches leading into the intersection is effectively similar, even slightly better, compared to prior to the introduction of the Waterview Tunnel connection. Congestion mapping for the immediate area is provided below.



May 2017 am peak hour congestion levels



May 2018 am peak congestion levels

LEGEND

Level of Service	
█	A
█	B
█	C
█	D
█	E
█	F

LOS related to median speed as proportion of posted speed limit

Summary

- The Mt Albert town centre upgrade project is an Auckland Council-led project that looks to uplift the town centre to better reflect an activity centre in accordance to the Auckland Plan.
- Desired transport outcomes for the immediate road network and signalised intersection are largely being achieved, namely:
 - a. Safe and adequate through movement on all approaches is being achieved. Congestion levels for general traffic are comparable, if not slightly better, to prior the introduction of the Waterview Tunnel connection.
 - b. As per general traffic, congestion levels for buses are comparable, if not slightly better, to prior the introduction of the Waterview Tunnel connection. Ideally, further improvement for bus movement would be more desirable.
 - c. Pedestrian access has improved and better compliments the town centre and close proximity to the train station.
 - d. Cycling access has been improved.
- The town centre upgrade fits well in terms of strategic outcome and the Auckland Plan aspirations.
- Some additional fine-tuning of the traffic signal phasing and improved Clearway compliance will facilitate better operation.
- There is still some settling of travel patterns taking place, and active monitoring will continue.