

Great North Road traffic lights

Public feedback report



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Summary

To improve safety for pedestrians, the Albert-Eden Local Board and Auckland Transport plan to install a set of traffic lights outside 1601-1605 and 1600-1602 Great North Road in Waterview. We consulted on this proposal from 5 March to 25 March 2020 and received 19 submissions.

Overview of feedback

Sentiment	Summary
Dislike proposal	Nine submitters disliked the proposal. Typically, these people disliked the proposal because they felt it would result in more traffic congestion on Great North Road. Other reasons given included that it would make it harder for a resident to turn into their driveway and some felt the cost was too high to justify the project.
Like proposal	Five submitters liked the proposal. These people stated they liked the project because it would improve safety for pedestrians by creating a safe place to cross the road, and traffic by slowing vehicle speeds.
Mixed	Five people provided mixed submissions - acknowledging that the proposal would improve conditions for pedestrians but worried about potentially creating congestion on Great North Road, especially at peak times.

Submissions counted in one category only

Consultation outcome

We have read and considered all of the feedback we received as part of the consultation process. Each submission has been taken into account alongside the objectives of this safety initiative. The decision has been made to proceed with the project – subject to funding approval.

To address some submitters' concerns about congestion, we will ensure the new signalised pedestrian crossing is linked to the adjacent intersections and doesn't function as an isolated signalised pedestrian crossing on demand. Having the signalised pedestrian crossing linked optimally will minimise the impact on the surrounding motorway and regional/arterial network.

We now also plan to extend the skid resistant surfacing leading up to the traffic lights, on the eastern side of the road, up until 1594 Great North Road. Please refer to [Attachment 3: Updated design plans](#) for more information.

Next steps

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on AT and the wider Auckland Council whānau. As a result, Auckland Council is implementing an Emergency Budget which will reduce AT's capital and operating budgets. It could also impact the Albert-Eden Local Board's transport capital fund which was going to fund this project.

This could mean this project is delayed. We will be in touch with you once we know more about how this project will be impacted by the current budget constraints. We thank you for your patience and understanding during this time.

Background

What did we seek feedback on?

To improve safety for pedestrians, the Albert-Eden Local Board and Auckland Transport plan to install a set of traffic lights outside 1601-1605 and 1600-1602 Great North Road in Waterview.

It is important that a safe crossing location is provided at this location as there are currently high volumes of pedestrians crossing this section of road in what is a high crash area. Providing safe crossing locations is important to the Albert-Eden Local Board and Auckland Transport, as we work to make our communities safer for all road users. This project is funded by the [Albert-Eden Local Board](#)'s transport capital fund.

In addition to the traffic lights, we also plan to:

- Install skid resistant surfacing leading up to the traffic lights - outside 1607 and 1605 on the northbound lane and outside 1596 and 1598 on the southbound lane.
- Install new 'traffic signals ahead' warning signs outside 1580-1584 Great North Road as well as 1611a – 1613 Great North Road. In addition, we also propose a 'traffic signals ahead on right' sign outside 1 and 1b Fairlands Avenue.
- Where required, trim some of the lower branches of some trees outside your properties to ensure road signs are visible, in particular the tree at 1602 Great North Road which is currently obstructing the 'high crash risk enforcement area sign'.
- Upgrade the street lighting at and leading up to the traffic lights.

See [attachment 1](#) at the end of this report for the plans.

Consultation

We consulted on the proposed traffic lights from 5 March to 25 March 2020.

What we asked you

We asked: *Do you have any feedback on the proposed changes? If you have any feedback, issues or concerns, please share them with us below.*

Activities to raise awareness

To let you know about the opportunity to provide feedback, we:

- Posted letters, the plans and freepost feedback forms to local properties.
- Set up a project webpage and an online feedback form on our website.
- Emailed local and wider stakeholders inviting feedback.

How people provided feedback

You could provide feedback via:

- An online survey – available on the [project page on the AT website](#), also available via AT's [Have Your Say website](#)).
- A freepost feedback form sent to local properties. See [attachment 2](#) at the end of this report for a copy of the feedback form.
- Emailing ATengagement@AT.govt.nz.

Your feedback

Overview

We received 19 submissions on the proposed traffic lights.

- 14 people submitted online, 2 people made submissions using the freepost feedback form and 2 people submitted via email.

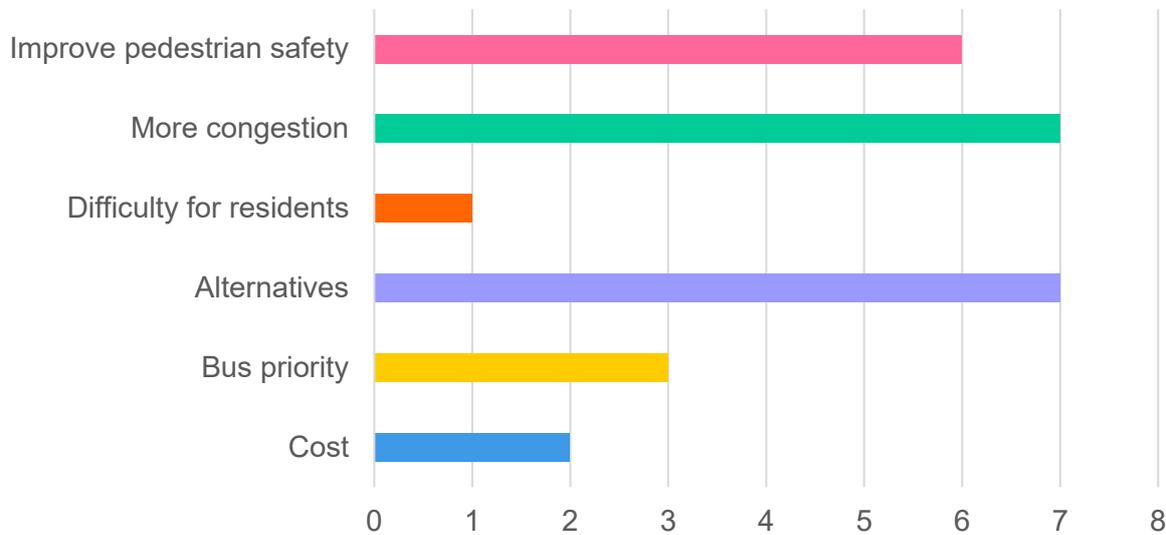
The issues, concerns and design suggestions raised in the consultation feedback have been summarised and responded to in the [design suggestions](#) section of this report.

Sentiment towards proposal

Sentiment	Summary
Dislike proposal	Nine submitters disliked the proposal. Typically, these people disliked the proposal because they felt it would result in more traffic congestion on Great North Road. Other reasons given included that it would make it harder for a resident to turn into their driveway and some felt the cost was too high to justify the project.
Like proposal	Five submitters liked the proposal. These people stated they liked the project because it would improve safety for pedestrians by creating a safe place to cross the road, and traffic by slowing vehicle speeds.
Mixed	Five people provided mixed submissions - acknowledging that the proposal would improve conditions for pedestrians but worried about potentially creating congestion on Great North Road, especially at peak times.

Submissions counted in one category only

Themes in feedback



Submissions may be counted in more than one theme.

Improve pedestrian safety

This group of people mentioned that they felt the proposed traffic lights would improve safety for pedestrians wanting to cross the street. Many of these people pointed out that GNR is currently very difficult to cross.

“Great idea, - GNR is such a beast for pedestrians, well done.”

“Motorist = more flaming lights. Regular bus users, pedestrians = hurrah, no more dodging traffic. Can cross the road using the pedestrian lights. Thanks AT.”

More congestion

These people felt that proposed traffic lights would increase traffic congestion on Great North Road. Several of these people pointed out that there are already 3 sets of traffic lights within a 1 km stretch and did not think that the numbers of pedestrians in this area warranted another set of lights.

“2 new sets have gone into that stretch in the last year and you are blocking up the roads more and more.... Is there no other option here - surely more traffic lights are not the answer here??”

Difficulty for residents

This person, who lives on Great North Road, felt that the proposed traffic lights would make it difficult to enter their driveway.

“My biggest two concerns are: inability to access my driveway if southbound. Usually we are able to use the median strip. However, with the lights there it looks like this won’t be possible.”

Alternatives to proposal

These people suggested alternatives to the proposal that they thought would improve deliver better outcomes. One person suggested moving the lights to the intersection of Great North Road and Fairlands Avenue to allow better traffic flow on GNR and to allow safer access for those crossing Fairlands Ave which can be difficult to cross safely especially with children.

Two people suggested that rather than adding another set of lights to Great North Road bus stops should be moved to allow safer pedestrian crossings.

One person had sent emails to AT asking for a set of lights on the intersection of Saltaire Street, Robertson Street and Great North Road which they felt desperately needs traffic lights.

Two people asked that the proposal be moved to the north to be in the middle of the two bus stops.

Bus priority

These people felt that bus priority should be put in place on Great North Road as bus services are often delayed by congestion.

“Bus priority could also be given at the lights to allow buses to proceed ahead of general traffic.”

Cost

These people felt that the cost of the proposal is too high to justify improvements it would deliver. They felt that some of the alternatives to the proposal discussed above would have similar results with a much lower cost.

“Maybe they could just leave 1 min earlier and not cost the millions of cars that go through the area every year millions of dollars in lost productivity and therefore the economy.”

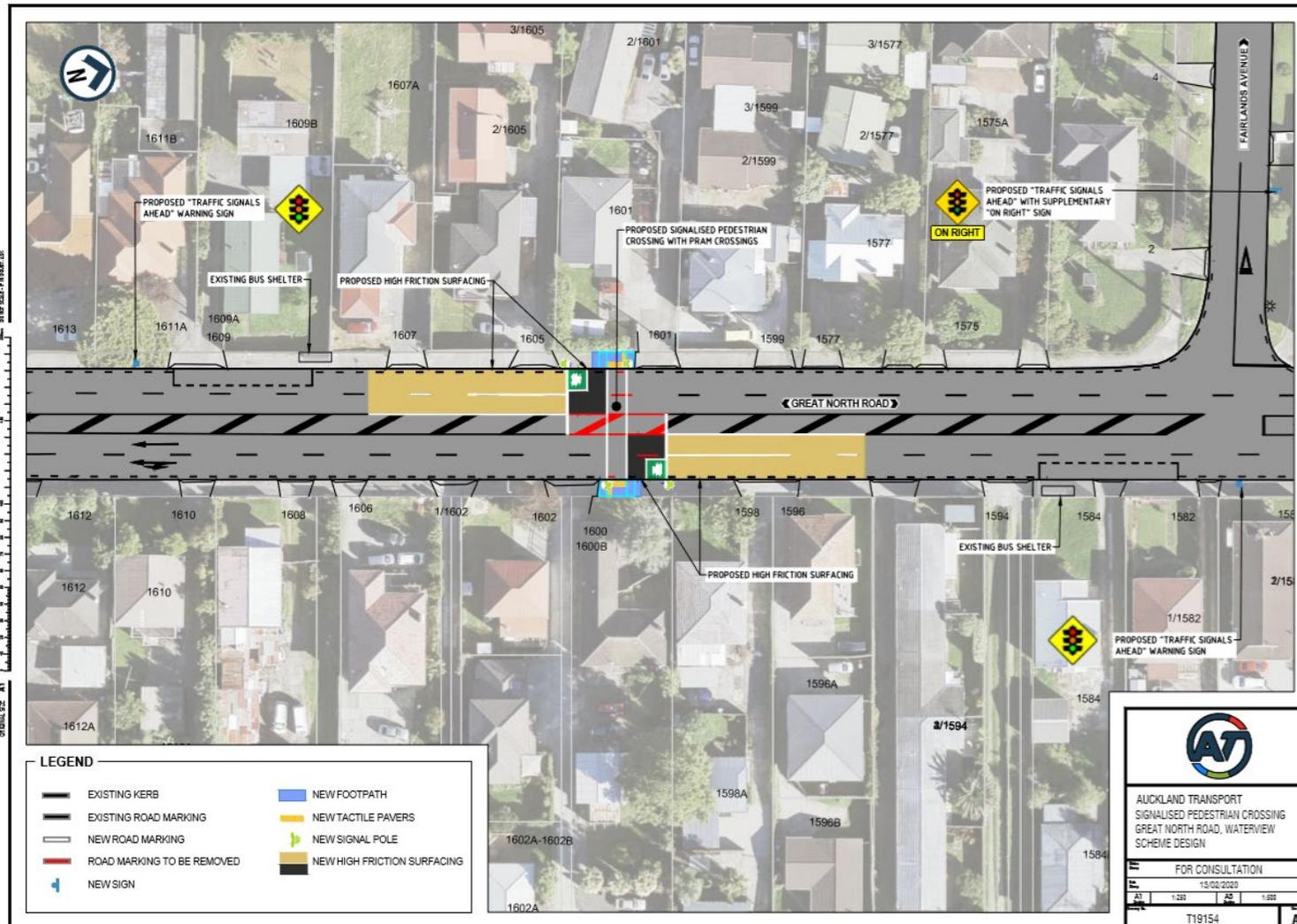
Design suggestions in feedback and AT responses

In the feedback received, submitters raised a number of concerns and provided some suggested changes to the proposal. We have collated and responded to all design suggestions identified in the feedback.

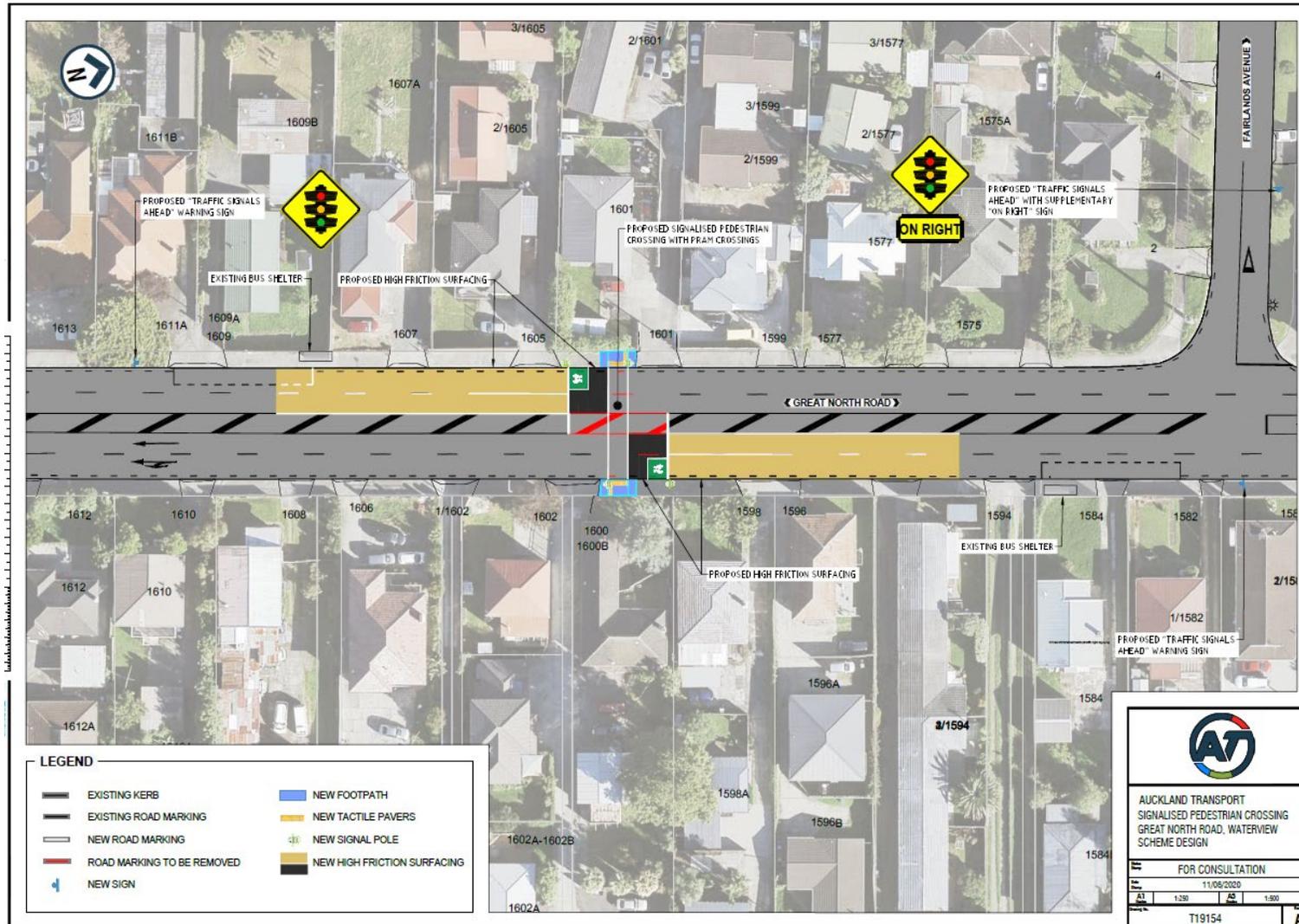
Design suggestion in feedback	AT response
Themes from feedback	
More congestion	
<p>The proposed traffic lights will increase congestion on Great North Road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are enough traffic lights on GNR adding another set will only increase congestion. • Traffic is built up in the proposal area especially at peak times. • Are there any plans to reduce further traffic congestion? 	<p>There are currently high volumes of pedestrians crossing this section of road in what is a high crash area which has also seen a pedestrian hit.</p> <p>After considering the objections to the proposal, the decision has been made to ensure the crossing is linked with the nearby signalised intersections on Great North Road. Hence the pedestrian phase at the crossing will take place during the corresponding red phasing of the nearby signalised intersections. This will prevent 'spillback' of traffic and prevent the blocking of upstream intersections. Subsequently, there will be minimal impact on the regional arterial and motorway network.</p>
Difficulty for residents	
<p>The proposal will make it difficult to turn into my driveway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lights will make it difficult or impossible to turn into my driveway (adjacent to the proposed traffic lights) using the median strip when travelling South on Great North Road. 	<p>We have considered the scheme design and have tested it to make sure residents will be able to safely enter and exit their driveways. The tracking modelling shows residents will be able to safely enter and exit their driveways around the traffic signals. See tracking curves at the end of the report – attachment 4.</p> <p>In addition, the proposed crossing will create gaps in the traffic, giving vehicles more time to exit/enter their driveways, improving their safety.</p>
Alternatives	
<p>The traffic lights should be put on the intersection of Great North Road and Fairlands Avenue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would provide greater distance from the Blockhouse Bay Road lights and bus shelter, meaning less impact on traffic • It would also allow safer access for those crossing Fairlands Ave which can be difficult to cross safely especially with children. 	<p>The proposed position of these traffic lights is considered optimal because pedestrians are already crossing the road at this location.</p> <p>Locating the pedestrian crossing at the Fairlands Avenue/Great North Road intersection was investigated, however, the location conflicted with the right turning lane into Fairlands Avenue.</p>

Design suggestion in feedback	AT response
<p>The bus stops on Great North Road should be moved closer to existing crossings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This would be easier and costs less than installing the proposed traffic lights 	<p>Providing a mid-block crossing will be considered by Auckland Transport as part of future public transport optimisation projects.</p> <p>Re-locating bus stops closer to intersections is not preferred because it will increase congestion and will reduce safety for motorists if they attempt to overtake stopped buses.</p>
<p>The intersection of Saltaire Street, Robertson Street and Great North Road needs traffic lights more urgently than the proposed area.</p>	<p>Thank you for sharing this with us. Our assessments found a more pressing need for road safety improvements at this location on Great North Road. We continually review the safety of intersections across the more than 7,300km of road network we control around the region. New traffic lights will be provided in locations assessed to have the highest priority.</p>
<p>Would it be possible to move the proposed crossing to the middle of the two bus stops?</p>	<p>Positioning the crossing in the middle of the two bus stops was investigated, however, driveways limited the options available.</p>
Bus priority	
<p>Bus lanes are need on Great North Road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic backs up at peak times which delays busses Bus lanes would speed up public transport 	<p>Thank you for your suggestion. Bus lanes on Great North Road are not being considered at this time.</p>
Cost	
<p>There are already crossings close to where you are proposing to install traffic lights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People should be directed to use those traffic lights instead of spending millions lots of money on another set of traffic lights 	<p>Our investigations found there are currently high volumes of pedestrians crossing this section of road in what is a high crash area. To improve safety for pedestrians, it is important provide safe crossing locations in the places the people want to cross.</p> <p>The cost of the midblock crossings is cost effective and will improve pedestrian safety on this road.</p>
<p>The proposed traffic lights will cost millions of dollars in lost productivity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The increased congestion from installing another set of traffic lights in a small area will cost the economy millions of dollars in lost productivity as people are stuck waiting in traffic. 	<p>We have considered the traffic impacts on Great North Road and are proposing to optimise the signal operation and linking to the surrounding signals to minimise impact to the operation of the Great North Road and the Motorway Network.</p> <p>The proposed crossing will be linked with the adjacent signalised intersections on Great North Road. We have modelled the proposed signalised crossing it and will operate efficiently and will not block upstream signalised intersections.</p>

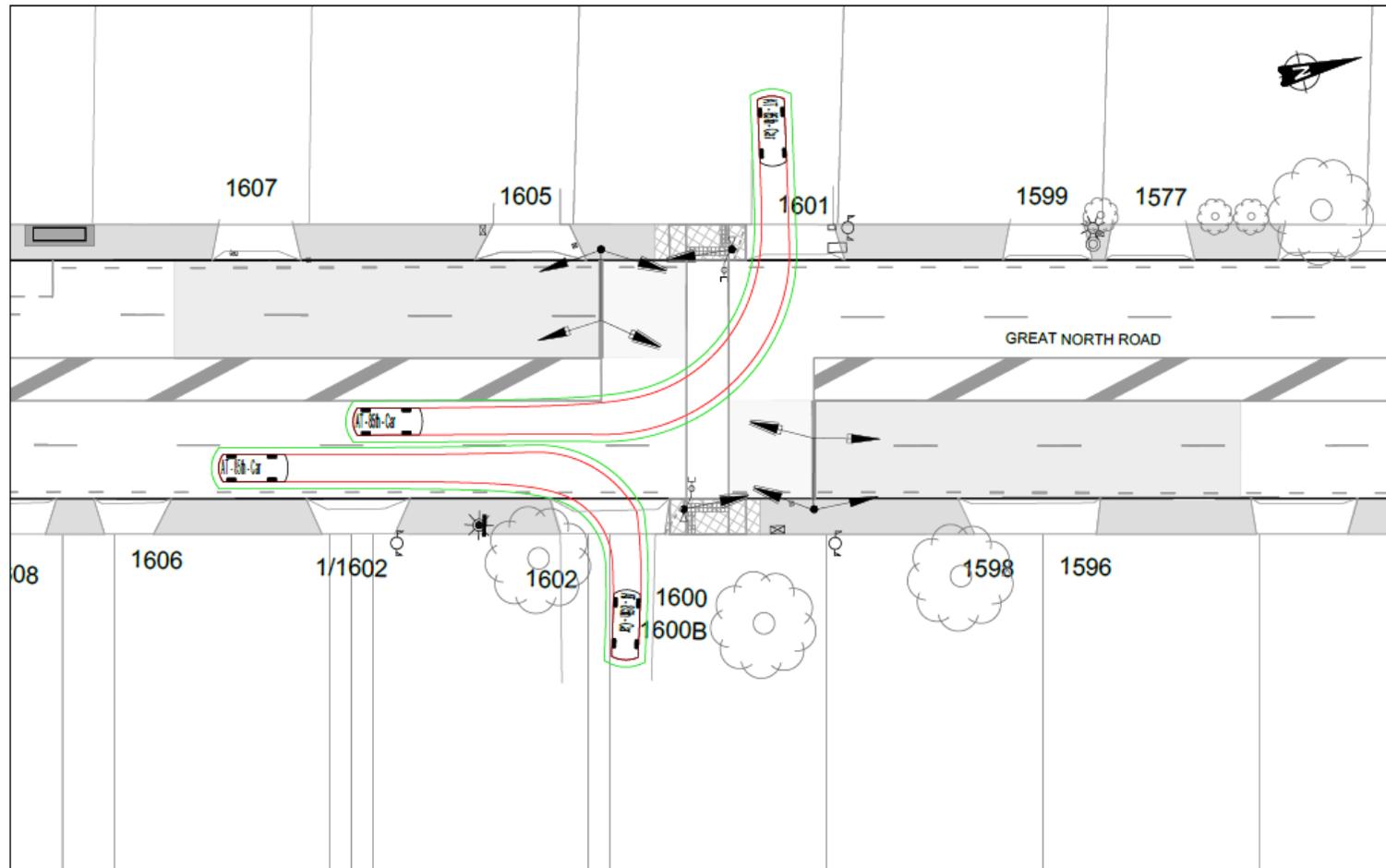
Attachment 1: Proposed design



Attachment 3: Updated design plans



Attachment 4: Tracking curves



SCHEME DESIGN

				<h1 style="color: red;">DRAFT</h1>	Drawn: CL Checked: UC Approved: [Signature] Date: 18/02/2016 Scale: 1:200 @ A3 9025	Client: AUCKLAND TRANSPORT Project: MID-BLOCK SIGNALISED CROSSING GREAT NORTH ROAD TRACKING PLAN - 85TH PERCENTILE CAR Signature: A3 Project No: T19154 Drawing No: 102 Rev: A
FIRST ISSUE Revision: Note: *Indicates signature on original issue of drawing or last revision of drawing. Drawn: [Signature] Checked: [Signature] Approved: [Signature] Date: [Date]	CL TF LJ 1:00					