

Auckland Transport's responses to feedback on proposed upgrades to the intersection of Mercari way and Don Mckinnon Drive

Points raised through feedback process			Auckland Transport's response
1	Congestion	The proposal will improve traffic flow through the intersection and reduce congestion.	Yes that is correct, thanks for your comments in support of the project.
2	Congestion	Lights not a good idea will create more congestion, keep roundabout.	<p>Traffic lights are considered the best treatment for this intersection for several reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The roundabout may work currently (although it suffers from congestion at peak travel times) but traffic forecasting based on development already approved for the area indicates that in the near future the roundabouts will no longer be suitable and will contribute to unacceptable levels of traffic congestion. • The traffic light signal phases (green time allocated to each traffic lane) will be timed to ensure the intersection performance is optimised. Such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allocating longer 'green phases' for the busiest approaches to the intersection to get more vehicles through the intersection and reduce congestion. ○ Coordinating the signals with the Bush Rd signals to provide better traffic flow through the area. • A signalised intersection provides greater accessibility and safety to other road users such as cyclists and pedestrians. • Once operating the lights will also be monitored and tweaks to the signal phasing (e.g. green time allocations) can be made if necessary.
3	Congestion	<p>1. This route is increasingly becoming a "rat race" to the Northern Motorway on-ramp in Oteha Valley Road with consequent rush hour pressures on State Highway 17 traffic from Tawa Drive traffic avoiding the Greville Road entrance to the motorway. This situation may be alleviated or compounded by current widening of the ramps and roads around the Greville/Tawa roundabout.</p> <p>2. Very heavy afternoon rush hour pressures from Bush Road backfills to Rosedale Road and beyond with traffic bound for the Nth Motorway and Pak'nSave at Albany.</p> <p>3. Because of (2) above during rush hour the two lanes in Mercari Way south are filled nose to tail with vehicles currently exiting two abreast into the roundabout. These two lanes will now be reduced to one lane into Mercari Way North through the roundabout and one right turn and one left turn at Don McKinnon Drive. There is less capacity to cope with traffic heading toward Pakn'Save and Westfield which is currently a tight and potentially hazardous merge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic modelling indicates that only a single through lane is required. • The single straight through lane on Mercari Way on the southern approach to the intersection is all that can be accommodated as traffic modelling shows the need to provide dedicated left and right turn lanes. There is not enough road corridor width available for an additional lane without land acquisition, which would add considerable cost to the project. • However, if in the future the intersection capacity/congestion becomes an issue, the pavement width on the northern side of the intersection has been future proofed to accommodate alterations to the intersection layout. So land acquisition would only be required to accommodate an additional lane (to create two straight through lanes) on the southern approach to the intersection. • The traffic light signal phases (green time allocated to each traffic lane) will be timed to ensure the intersection performance is optimised. Such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allocating longer 'green phases' for the busiest approaches to the intersection to get more vehicles through the intersection and reduce congestion. ○ Coordinating the signals with the Bush Rd signals to provide better traffic flow through the area.

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4	Congestion	The proposal will slow down traffic entering Mercari Way north; traffic will back up further into SH17 and Bush Road with consequent ripple effect into Rosedale and Bush Road congestion.	Traffic modelling has analysed this situation and it showed it would not be a problem.
5	Congestion	By the time this solution is implemented an upgrade scheduled for Albany Highway (North) will be progressing with a major increase in traffic diverted by choice or direction into Rosedale Road, Bush Road and SH17.	Auckland Transport assumes this relates to concerns about changes in traffic flow due to road works associated with Albany North. The upgrades to Mercari Way will <u>not</u> be carried out at the same time as the works to Albany Highway which are already underway.
6	Congestion	The pressures on Mercari Way north are particularly evident during morning and early afternoon at weekends with traffic extremely heavy into Westfield Shopping Centre and Pak'nSave. It is also evident some nights during sports events at the Stadium. Does modelling include traffic counts at these times as the pressures already outlined will be worse on these occasions?	<p>Traffic modelling has analysed this situation and it shows that the intersection will have capacity for the traffic flows anticipated during peak weekend traffic flows.</p> <p>Traffic modelling is based on typical peak traffic flows (both weekday and weekends), but has not allowed for special events such as sports events at the stadium. Special events that attract large volumes of traffic should put in place temporary traffic management plans to effectively deal with the increases in traffic volumes.</p>
7	Congestion	Access onto Bush Road from Bushlands Park Drive is an issue & getting worse. There is a restricted stopping area that is not enforced. Perhaps a widening on the Northern side of Bush Rd (extra lane) extending from the expressway back beyond the bus stop (top of the hill) would allow more traffic to exit (especial Massey University traffic). Maybe even a set of lights at Bushlands Park Drive (sequenced to other lights) would help.	<p>Thanks for your comments but this issue is outside the scope of this project. Auckland Transport does acknowledge this is an issue, but is not looking to make any changes to the Bushlands Road/Bush Road intersection for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no easy/cost effective solution to address this situation. • Bushlands Park Road is a small side road with low traffic volumes, while Bush Road has large traffic volumes. Ensuring the efficient flow of traffic on Bush Road is the greatest priority. Traffic signals at this intersection would exasperate traffic congestion on Bush Road, which would outweigh the benefits for the small number of vehicles using Bushlands Park Drive. • The Bushlands Road/Bush Road intersection is also too close to the Albany Expressway and signalisation would likely cause significant tailbacks along Bush Road and onto Albany Expressway creating traffic congestion on both roads. • The installation of a signalised intersection would have significant costs, and the benefits gained would not justify the costs. • The widening of Bush Road requires the construction of retaining walls to create enough space for an additional lane, this would have significant costs and the benefits gained would not justify the costs. <p>Please note that the signalisation of Mecari Way can be linked to the Albany Expressway/ Bush Road signals, to ensure efficient movement of traffic between the two intersections, this may help the situation for vehicles accessing Bush Road from Bushlands Park Road. Vehicles exiting Bushlands Road can also do a left turn onto Bush Road and take alternative routes to their destinations.</p>

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8	Traffic Light Phasing	Ensure phasing of traffic lights (allocation of green light time to each traffic lane) is optimised to ensure efficient flow of traffic (i.e. minimise congestion).	<p>The traffic light signal phases (green time allocated to each traffic lane) will be timed to ensure the intersection performance is optimised. Such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocating longer 'green phases' for the busiest approaches to the intersection to get more vehicles through the intersection and reduce congestion. • Coordinating the signals with the Bush Rd signals to provide better traffic flow through the area. <p>Once operating the lights will also be monitored and tweaks to the signal phasing (e.g. green time allocations) can be made if necessary.</p>
9	Albany Mall & Pak n Save - Congestion	The lanes exiting the Albany Mall should be changed. The phasing of a straight ahead from the Mall in conjunction with the Mercari to McKinnon right turn won't give the traffic exiting the Mall enough time to clear a backlog. Or could the exit from the Mall be at least two, ideally three, lanes wide from the Mall roundabout to the traffic lights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional lanes would require land acquisition at considerable expense and traffic modelling shows they are not required. • The lanes exiting the mall are appropriate to allow right turns at the same time as the right turns from Mercury Way south (northeast bound traffic). Adding a straight through movement on the right turn lane for vehicles coming from the mall would prevent the opposing right turns from operating.
10	Albany Mall & Pak n Save - Congestion	<p>There is currently a congestion problem created by merging and high traffic volumes running through the intersection and then navigating the second roundabout type intersection to Pak n Save & Westfield. The proposed plan does not address this.</p> <p>Have 2 lanes for Pak n Save and Westfield car parks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic modelling indicates that two straight through lanes into the Westfield car park are unnecessary. • The single straight through lane on Mercari Way on the southern approach to the intersection is all that can be accommodated as traffic modelling shows the need to provide dedicated left and right turn lanes. There is not enough road corridor width available for an additional lane without land acquisition, which would add considerable cost to the project. • However, if in the future the intersection capacity/congestion becomes an issue, the pavement width on the northern side of the intersection has been future proofed to accommodate alterations to the intersection layout. So land acquisition would only be required to accommodate an additional lane (to create two straight through lanes) on the southern approach to the intersection. • The traffic lights should not worsen the current situation.
11	Albany Mall & Pak n Save - Parking	More parking at the Mall would be appreciated.	Parking at the mall is provided privately and is not managed by Auckland Transport.

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12	Access - Mercari Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When exiting Mercari Way Business Centre, the proposal creates the need for large detours to head towards McClymonts Road. Suggest another set of lights, and a gap for right turning traffic in the raised island to be installed at the north exit from the Mercari Centre to Don McKinnon Dr. 	<p>Another set of lights at the location suggested is not appropriate as it would be too close to the signalised intersection at Mercari Way/Don McKinnon Drive, which would block east-bound vehicles on Don McKinnon Drive and cause vehicle tailbacks into the Mercari Way/Don McKinnon Drive intersection and create congestion.</p> <p>Traffic counts show that during weekday and weekend peak traffic times between 0.07% and 0.38% of vehicles using the intersection would have previously completed a U-turn to head east along Don McKinnon Drive. The intersection upgrades benefit a large number of vehicles while only a very small percentage of vehicles will be adversely affected by the changes. For those vehicles that are adversely affected, there are other routes they could take which are outlined below.</p> <p>Vehicles that wish to access roads north and east of Mercari Business Centre have the following options once the proposal is implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles could turn right at the traffic lights into Mercari Way (north) and perform a U-turn at the roundabout. This will require an extra distance of 230m to be travelled compared with the current option of doing a U-turn at the roundabout. Exit via Corinthian Drive, and then turn right onto Don McKinnon Drive at its intersection with Corinthian Drive. Vehicles can head west around the ring road. For vehicles accessing McClymonts Road this will require an extra distance of 500m to be travelled compared with the current option of doing a U-Turn at the roundabout.
13	Access - Mercari Centre	To get into the business centre on Mercari Way, you need to travel a long distance out of the way. Instead of the raised medians, there needs to be a right hand turn.	This is not an issue as the project includes a right turn bay on Mercari Way for vehicles heading in the northbound direction to access the business centre.
14	Access - Mercari Centre	The proposal provides easy access to Mercari Way	Thanks for your comments in support of the project. Yes this project includes a right turn bay on Mercari Way for vehicles heading in the northbound direction to access the business centre.
15	Access - Mercari Centre	The right turning bays in Mercari Way need to be lengthened to allow more cars to wait in order to turn right without impeding through traffic.	The length of the right turn bay is restricted by the petrol station access. Traffic modelling shows that there will nearly always be suitable gaps in the Mercari Way traffic flow between signal phases for vehicles to make the right turn before the right turn bay fills up.
16	Access - Mercari Centre	Provide a painted no stopping area to provide for safer access to Mercari Business Centre for right turning vehicles from Mercari way.	<p>Investigations show that regular queuing will not be experienced from the lights on the Albany Expressway/Mercari Way intersection to the extent that it blocks the entry to no.15 Mercari Way. On the odd occasion where significant queuing occurs, driver courtesy usually prevails.</p> <p>However, if queuing does become an issue a no-stopping area could be implemented in future. The situation will be monitored post-construction to determine if there is a need to implement a no-stopping area.</p>

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17	Access - Albany Mega Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposal restricts access to Albany Mega Centre. Install a right turn bay in the Centre median 	<p>Another set of lights at the location suggested is not appropriate as it would be too close to the signalised intersection at Mercari Way/Don McKinnon Drive, which would block west-bound vehicles on Don McKinnon Drive and cause vehicle tailbacks into the Mercari Way/Don McKinnon Drive intersection and create congestion.</p> <p>Vehicles heading east along Don McKinnon Drive have the following options to enter the Albany Mega centre once the proposal is implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enter the Mega Centre via Coliseum Drive. Go via Coliseum Drive/Mercari Way and complete a right turn at the intersection of Mercari Way/Don McKinnon Drive. This would only add 20m extra distance to the current option of doing a U-Turn at the Mercari Way/Don McKinnon drive intersection.
18	Dual Right Turn Lanes	Like the dual right turn lanes from Don McKinnon heading to the Albany Expressway.	Thanks for your comments in support of the project.
19	U-Turns	Please provide "No U-Turn" signs at the end of the raised islands at the intersection itself.	The intersection design will include 'No U-turn' signs.
20	Remove Medians	Remove the medians.	Medians serve a number of functions and are preferred in an environment such as Albany Centre. They improve safety by eliminating right turns across multiple lanes of traffic when exiting properties. They provide informal pedestrian refuges for those crossing away from formal pedestrian facilities, and also provide an visually pleasing environment, as opposed to a large paved area full of traffic.
21	Cycling	Cycle lane between the left turning traffic and straight through traffic is dangerous.	<p>This cycle lane layout is a commonly used layout. The cycle lane is in the best location to provide for all turning movements that cyclists may wish to do at the intersection (e.g. right, straight and left).</p> <p>Auckland Transport acknowledge that some people may not be confident to use the on-road cycle lane, as such an off-road shared walking and cycling path has been provided for less confident cyclists.</p>
22	Cycling	Allow cyclists to use footpath	The design includes shared off-road walking and cycling paths.
23	Cycling	On road cycle lanes will reduce the vehicle capacity. Move them off road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cycle lanes should not have a significant effect on the capacity of the intersection. Shared off-road walking and cycling paths have been provided. On-road cycle lanes have also been provided to accommodate more competent cyclists who are unlikely to use the shared path. The shared path is more suitable for less competent and recreational cyclists.

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24	Cycling	Cycle lanes in Don McKinnon Drive and Mercari Way present a hazard in that drivers entering carparks or turning from one throughfare into the other must pass through cycle lanes on each approach to the intersection. I fail to see why intersections which already have shared paths and wide public spaces beside the intersection cannot have single dedicated off-road cycle lane, the on-road cycle lanes are unnecessary and a public hazard. The provision of cycle "boxes" at the intersection are a barrier to heavy traffic and will be a frustration to traffic entering and leaving the intersection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An off-road cycle path would need to be brought back into the general traffic to go through the intersection, or given its own green phase at the lights which would increase congestion at the intersection. Also the off-road cycle path would be an isolated facility; by the time the cyclists were taken off the road and then put back on again it would be a very short isolated section of off-road cycle path. Cycle lanes and 'advance cycle boxes' are required in this location and various locations throughout Auckland to improve the safety and appeal of cycling. Cycle lanes are a commonly accepted practice throughout New Zealand and many places throughout the world. The cycle lanes should not have a significant effect on the capacity of the intersection. Shared off-road walking and cycling paths have been provided. On-road cycle lanes have also been provided to accommodate more competent cyclists who are unlikely to use the shared path. The shared path is more suitable for less competent and recreational cyclists.
25	Cycling	Hardly anyone goes there by bike.	There might not be many cyclists currently, but this may be due to the road environment being unattractive to cyclists. This work will hopefully go some way to remedying that, and encourage people out of cars and onto bikes, providing benefits for all.
26	Pedestrians	The proposal will improve pedestrian access and make it safer for pedestrians.	Yes that is correct, thanks for your comments in support of the project.
27	Pedestrians	Currently getting from the Marcari shops over to Pak n Save or towards the Mega Centre involves crossing at least four lanes of traffic. It's seriously dangerous.	Thanks for your comments. The project will improve pedestrian crossing facilities and should make the journey from Marcari Shops to Pak n Save and the Mega Centre safer and more appealing for pedestrians.
28	Pedestrians	Keep the roundabout and install a traffic light signal east and west on Don Mckinnon Drive for pedestrians and bikes to safely cross.	If pedestrian crossing facilities were provided east and west of the roundabout, that would not accommodate pedestrian demand at the intersection. Requiring pedestrians to divert to those intersections does not accommodate the path most pedestrians would prefer to take and as such it is likely that many would try and cross at the current intersection.
29	Buses	Provide bus advance lanes	Options for providing bus advance lanes had been investigated. Unfortunately, the provision of these would restrict other vehicle access, to the point that the queuing from these vehicles would impede the buses from accessing the bus advance lanes, making them redundant. Nevertheless, signals will be timed to minimise congestion/maximise traffic flow. Once operating the lights will also be monitored and tweaks to the signal phasing (e.g. green time allocations) can be made if necessary.
30	Buses	Relocate the bus stop space opposite Pak n Save out of the carriage way	This proposal is outside the scope of the project. This bus stop may be looked at in future when proposed changes to bus services on the North Shore have been through a public feedback period and the new bus network is finalised (feedback period to commence mid-late 2015 - www.AT.govt.nz/newnetwork). However, it is often preferred to keep bus stops in the traffic lane to ensure buses are not held up when re-entering the traffic lane (encourages public transport usage).

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31	Consultation	Not enough consultation	The level of consultation carried out was considered adequate for the scale of the improvements. Public consultation costs money (public funds), takes resources and time - as such the scope of the consultation needs to be related to the scale of the changes. All directly affected property owners and occupiers in the immediate area were notified, an advertisement was placed in the Northshore Times, and other interest groups were given the opportunity to submit on the proposal. There is also a project webpage www.at.govt.nz/mercariway .
32	Construction	Traffic volumes in this area are extremely high from November to January. The proposed dates for the construction works in late 2015 need to take this into account as not to affect businesses along Mercari Way.	Due to funding uncertainty the project start date is currently unknown. But Auckland Transport can confirm that in future when works do go ahead they will be timed to ensure they do not create any substantial traffic congestion during Christmas peak shopping periods.
33	Parking / Pedestrians	The shopping centre often doesn't have enough parking. The pedestrian crossing will encourage people to park illegally at 15 Mercari Way and Pak n Save. Pedestrians should not be allowed to cross. Any person crossing the road around the mall area will be parked illegally unless the person arrived by bus, and there are already crossings at the bus stops.	Parking issues should be privately managed. We are promoting pedestrian circulation within the Albany centre and all environments, as it is a more sustainable form of transport than the private motor vehicle.
34	Corinthian Drive access to motorway	Recommend an entrance to Corinthian Drive from the Motorway, currently need to come off at Highway, into Mercari, into Don McKinnon and then down to the end of the road by the Courthouse and then back again. It's a long way out of the way and a real pain! Or otherwise you come off at Otetha Valley offramp and almost do as long as a drive.	Thanks for your comments; however this is outside the scope of this project. Such a proposal would need to be delivered by the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA).