



Getting Birkenhead Moving Better

Engagement summary report

Project overview

The Birkenhead Avenue and Onewa Road intersection sees around 45,000 people pass through every day. During the morning peak, almost 3,000 people are travelling per hour. Many of these people are travelling by bus, heading to work, school or wherever they need to be. Up to 52 buses travel through the intersection during morning peak hours.

Congestion is becoming more of an issue at this busy intersection as the area grows. To ease the pressure and create smoother journeys for everyone, whether they're driving, taking the bus or walking, we proposed some low-cost improvements that would give vehicles more room for turning, connect the T3 lanes on Birkenhead Avenue and Onewa Road to improve bus and high-occupancy vehicle travel, and create safer crossing points for pedestrians.

We proposed:

Extra turning lanes from both sides of Birkenhead Avenue to Onewa Road: To give turning traffic from these sides more space for queuing outside of T3 operating hours.

A new connector T3 lane linking the Onewa Road and Birkenhead Avenue T3 lanes: To give buses and high-occupancy traffic the space they need to move smoothly and seamlessly through the intersection during the morning peak.

New T3 entry lanes from the south side of Birkenhead Avenue and from Highbury Bypass: So that traffic entering Onewa Road from these sides during the morning peak is queued up in the proper lane at the start of the intersection, resulting in fewer sudden lane changing on Onewa Road that worsens congestion.

A new signalised pedestrian crossing and slip island on the northeast corner of the intersection (by Zion Hill Methodist Church): To make it safer for pedestrians to cross the new left turn lanes.

Smart technology upgrades to traffic lights and pedestrian signals: So that the lights can instantly sense long traffic queues building up and quickly cycle more green time to clear the queue. Smart technology can also sense large groups of people walking and dedicate more signal time for them to cross together.

Early engagement with elected members and key stakeholders

Before going out for public engagement, we engaged elected members as well as some businesses, schools and organisations close to the intersection to ensure their insights helped shape the direction of the project and proposals from the outset.

Organisations we actively worked with before and during the public engagement period in November 2025 included:

- Kaipātiki Local Board
- Birkenhead Primary School
- Birkenhead Kindergarten
- Next Generation Childcare centre
- Zion Hill Birkenhead Methodist Church
- Colliers (lease owners to Highbury Shopping Centre)
- Birkenhead Pool and Leisure Centre

- Birkenhead RSA

Each of these groups gave strongly positive feedback on the project. Their comments, questions and suggestions helped inform how we communicated the project and the proposed changes to the wider public.

How people heard about our proposals

To raise public awareness of the project, we:

- Mailed more than 21,000 brochures to residents and businesses in neighbourhoods surrounding the intersection
- Posted ads on Facebook and Instagram geo-targeted to users located near the intersection
- Posted push notifications on the AT mobile app for passengers on bus routes that go through the intersection
- Gave brochures to each of the groups we engaged early with, such as Birkenhead Primary School and Next Generation Childcare, for them to post in their front offices or hand out to visitors and staff

Brochures, ads and push notifications all had links to the main engagement page with information about the project and proposals. People could give feedback by completing the online survey or emailing the engagement team.

Who we heard from

More than 1,700 people visited our engagement webpage. Of these visitors, 375 interacted with the page by clicking a link to a specific section, downloading a document, and/or going to the online survey. In total, 281 people completed the online survey. Three people emailed their feedback.

The next sections discuss how people told us they currently use the intersection, what were the key feedback themes for the proposed changes, and suggested improvements. Where relevant, we have incorporated the emailed feedback into these themes and suggestions.

How people travel through the intersection

To help us better understand those who engaged with us and gain some context to their feedback, we asked about people's travel habits through the intersection. We asked how (by car, bus, etc.), when (mornings, afternoons, weekdays, etc.), and why (work, school, shopping, etc.) they are travelling through the intersection.

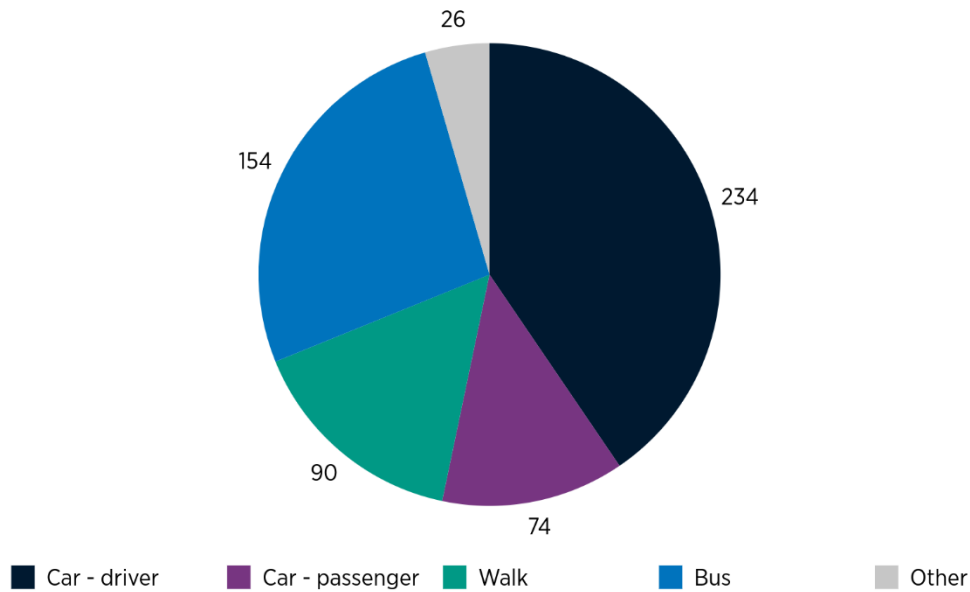
For most of these questions, people could pick more than one option. They could also pick 'Other' as an option for the questions on how they're travelling and why they're travelling.

Overall travel habits

Overall, most of the respondents said they travel through the intersection by car, as a driver (232) or as a passenger (74). Many of the respondents also clicked more than one travel mode option. This suggests that even though most people travel through the intersection by car, they do also regularly travel by other modes such as by bus and walking.

How do you usually travel through the intersection?

n=281*

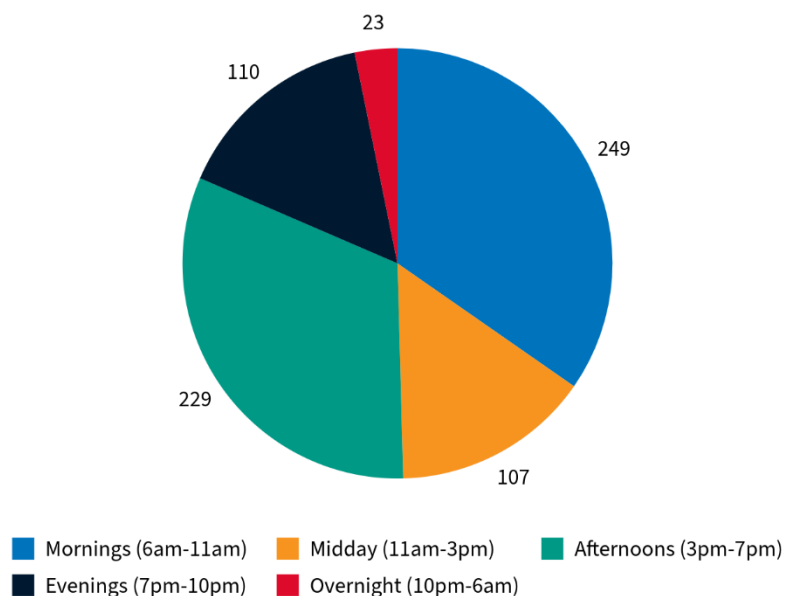


**People could select more than one option including adding detail in 'Other'*

Most respondents overall said the top times of day they're travelling is in the morning (6am-11am) and during the afternoon (3-7pm). These times of day align closely with peak traffic hours and the operating hours of the T3 lanes around the intersection. Therefore, the proposed changes would likely have some level of impact on their journey. This is especially true for bus users. Almost all of the people who said they travel by bus (140 out of 155) said they travel during morning peak hours, when the T3 lanes are operating and bus movements are prioritised.

What times of day do you typically travel through the intersection?

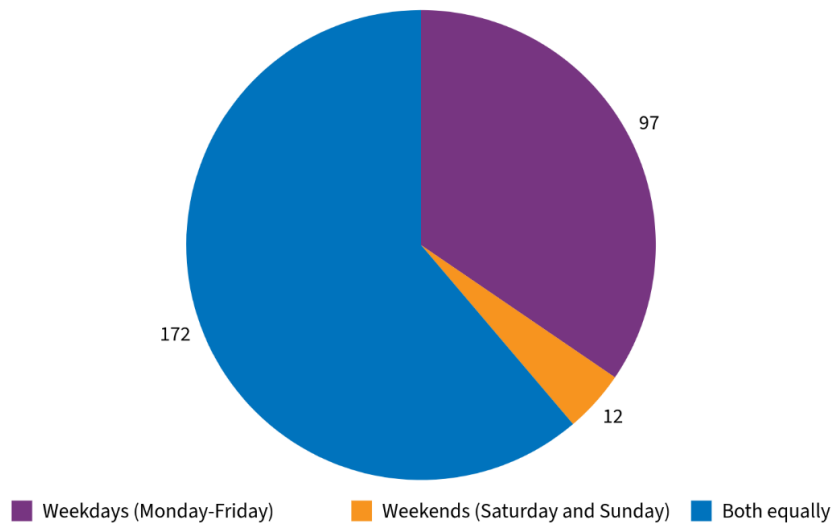
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**People could select more than one option*

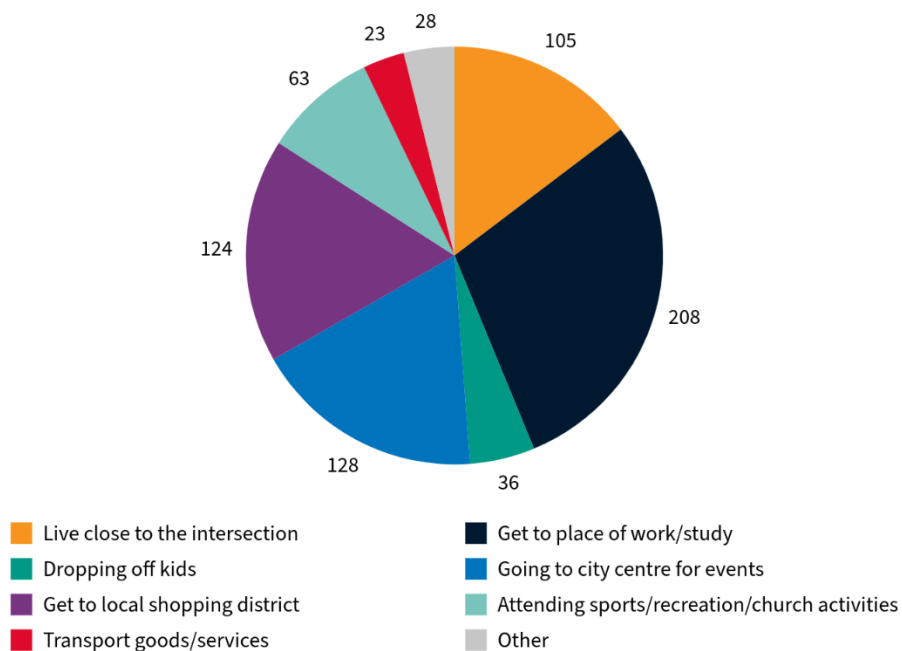
Most people also said they travel through the intersection equally on weekdays and weekends (172), which shows they travel regularly through the intersection on many different trips throughout the week.

Do you usually travel through the intersection on weekdays or weekends?
n=281



When asked why they're travelling through the intersection, the top response overall was to get to work or school (208). The next two highest responses were to go into the city centre for events (128) and to reach local shops (124). This also makes sense given that the intersection is a key connection point for people heading to the SH1 motorway and its close proximity to Highbury Shopping Centre.

What's your purpose for travelling through the intersection?
n=281*



**People could select more than one option including adding detail in 'Other'*

A small number of people (28) answered 'Other' as a reason for travelling through the intersection, usually in addition to one or more of the other available options. When prompted to elaborate, most of them wrote in that they were travelling to visit family and friends, they were going to medical appointments, they were walking, running or cycling for fitness, or they were travelling to other parts of Auckland like Takapuna and Mangere.

People travelling by car

Nearly all of the people who said they travel by car to get through the intersection said they travel in the morning (207 as drivers, 68 as passengers). This was followed closely by afternoons (191 as drivers, 68 as passengers). Therefore, most people travelling by car are doing so when the T3 lanes around the intersection would be operating. Most travellers by car also said they travel on weekdays and weekends equally (153 as drivers, 47 as passengers).

When asked why they're travelling, the top answer by people travelling by car was that they are going to work or school (171 as drivers, 68 as passengers). Other top answers were to get to the city centre for events (118 drivers, 47 passengers), and to reach their local shopping district (113 drivers, 41 passengers).

People travelling by bus

Bus users were the next highest number of respondents (154). Nearly all of them said the times of day they were travelling through the intersection were the mornings (140) and the afternoons (135). Similarly to people travelling by car, most of them also said they travelled equally on weekdays and weekends (91).

Also similarly to people travelling by car, the top three reasons bus users gave for travelling were because they were commuting to work or school (125), they were going to the city centre for events (76), and they were going to shops (75). Proportionally, however, more bus users said they were travelling for work or school than for events in the city centre or to shop compared to those travelling by car.

Top reasons for travel percentage comparisons		
Bus users vs car users		
	Bus users	Car users (drivers + passengers)
Work or study	81%	75%
Going to city centre for events	49%	54%
Visiting local shops	49%	50%

People walking

Highbury Shopping Centre appears to be a big motivator of people walking through the intersection. Of the people who said they walk through the intersection, the top reason they gave was they were visiting local shops (64). Most people walking also said they typically travel in the afternoon (80) - which is when most of the shops at Highbury are open - equally on weekdays and weekends (63).

The second highest reason people walking gave for travelling through the intersection was to get to work or school (59), which may reflect those going to nearby schools such as Birkenhead Primary. The third highest response was to visit the city centre for events (53).

Many of the walking respondents also selected multiple answers for how they're travelling through the intersection. This suggests that many people in the area combine walking with other travel modes for their journey, such as walking and then taking the bus.

Respondents who picked 'Other'

A handful of respondents (24 total) selected 'Other' in response to the question of how they're travelling through the intersection. Most of these people wrote in that they travel by bike and scooter (17) or that they travel by motorcycle (7).

Among these groups, most of them said the times of day they typically travel were afternoons (21 total) and mornings (20 total). However, a good number of them also said they travel midday, between 11am and 3pm (17 total). Like most of the respondents, the top reason people cycling or motorbiking gave for travelling through the intersection was to get to work or school (20 total).

People who live near the intersection

In the survey question about why people were travelling through the intersection, 105 people said they live close to the intersection. Among these respondents, most of them said they travel by car as a driver (98). A little more than half (54%, n=57) said they travel by bus or they walk (53%, n=56). Only 18 of these people wrote in that they ride a bike, scooter or motorcycle through the intersection.

Although mornings (95) and afternoons (90) were the top times of day people who live near the intersection said they were travelling through it, a significant number also said they travelled at midday (53) and in the evening time (55), between 7pm and 10pm. Most of them also said they travel equally on weekdays and weekends (75).

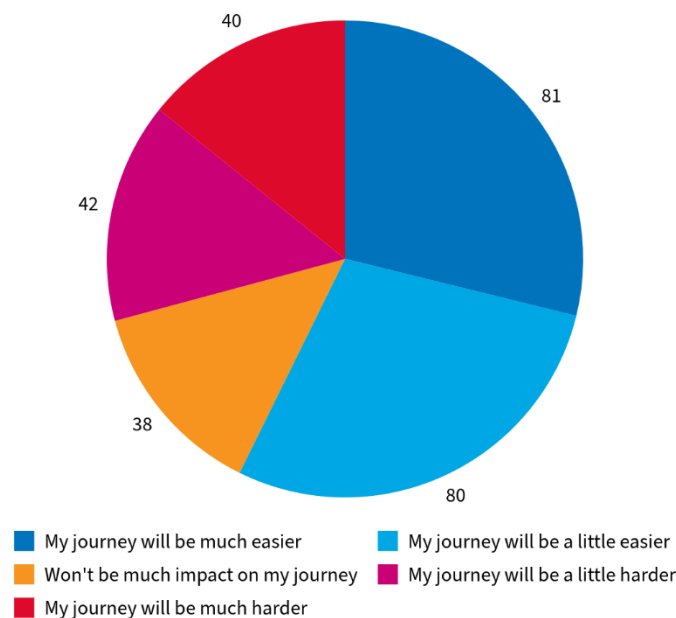
When asked why they were travelling, most said they were going to work or school (73), but many also said they were travelling to reach local shops (64). Altogether, this shows the intersection is heavily used by nearby residents for a wide range of reasons at multiple times of day, making it a crucial part of most of their journeys.

Key feedback themes

The community's response to the proposed plan to optimise travel through the Birkenhead Avenue and Onewa Road intersection was overall positive.

We asked people how they believed the proposed changes would impact their journey - whether it would make it easier, much easier, harder, much harder, or there would not be much impact. Most respondents (57%, 161 total) said they believed the changes would make their journey easier or much easier. About 14% (n=38) didn't feel the changes would impact their journey much. About 29% (82 total) felt the changes would make their journey a little or much harder.

Seeing the proposed plan, how do you feel the intersection changes might impact your journey?
n=281



Positives

The new T3 connector lanes will improve the T3 operations: People felt the T3 lane changes around the intersection would greatly improve bus/high-occupancy vehicle movements during the busy morning peak (105). The turn from Birkenhead Avenue onto Onewa Road was highlighted as a main cause of delays, with merging cars frequently blocking entry into the T3 lane. Respondents



believed connecting the Birkenhead Avenue and Onewa Road T3 lanes at the intersection would help address these issues, resulting in improved travel times and smoother traffic flow overall.

“Great idea, let’s make it happen”: 27 people expressed strong support for the proposal, with positive comments such as, “Looks good to me,” “Great idea, let’s make it happen,” and “Thank you for coming up with this well-thought-out plan.” Many of these commenters wanted us to implement the project as soon as possible. Two mentioned leaving plenty of notice for residents ahead of construction.

The signalised crossing will make it safer for pedestrians: 15 people commented how they believed the new signalised pedestrian crossing over the left turn lanes on the Zion Hill Methodist Church corner of the intersection would make it safer for pedestrians.

Concerns

Congestion will get worse: Of the people who believed the proposed changes would make their journey harder or much harder, their top concern (shared by 52 people) was how the changes would affect travel for regular vehicles going through the intersection. They were concerned the changes prioritise bus movement over regular vehicles and would therefore make congestion worse for drivers.

Changes prioritise Onewa Road through movement: 34 people said the changes do not consider vehicle through movement to Highbury Bypass, Hinemoa Street and Birkenhead Avenue.

Cyclists have been overlooked: 16 people felt there should be more provisions for cyclists in the proposed plan.

Feedback from those who engaged with us during Onewa Road corridor project

When we engaged the community on the Onewa Road corridor optimisation project early in 2025, we also shared some of the design ideas we were considering for this project to gauge the community’s early thoughts. The early feedback we received helped to inform the proposed design we ultimately brought out for public engagement.

In the survey for this engagement period, we included a question to follow up with those who gave feedback during the Onewa Road corridor consultation and see if they felt their questions or concerns had been addressed in our current plan.

72 people indicated they had given feedback in early 2025 on what we were considering for this project. Of those respondents, 45 (about 63%) answered ‘yes,’ they felt we had addressed their feedback in our current plan.

27 people (about 38%) felt their questions or concerns hadn’t been addressed. When asked to elaborate, the most common concerns raised by these respondents were similar to the key concerns brought up in the overall feedback. They were concerned that T3 lane changes would create more congestion, not less. Some felt the plan needed more considerations for cyclist safety. There were also concerns by some that the smaller slip island on the intersection corner in front of Zion Hill Methodist Church would make it less safe for pedestrians.

Additional suggestions

In the last two questions of the survey, we asked if there was anything else we could do to help people navigate the new road layout, and we asked if there was anything else we might have missed. 122 people left comments to the first question, and 178 people left comments to the second question. Since feedback in both sections was very similar, we have combined all the comments for our analysis.

Below are the most common themes and suggestions we received:

Additional design improvements for us to consider

Improvements for pedestrians: 27 people suggested additional improvements to help make the intersection safer for pedestrians, including:

- Increase the size of one or all of the pedestrian islands.
- More physical safety features like bollards and barriers to protect people walking and to keep cars from jumping the kerb; speed calming features (i.e., raised tables, high-friction surfacing) on slip lanes; or better road markings.
- Add road signage indicating children cross through the intersection.
- Implement a four-way, Barnes Dance crossing.
- Add countdown timers so that pedestrians know how much time they have to cross.
- Fix water drainage by the pedestrian island next to Zion Hill Reserve.
- Fix up more of the footpaths around the intersection, especially the broken pavers on the footpath outside of KFC.
- Signalise the pedestrian crossing to the Zion Hill Reserve-corner slip island as well.
- Protect the mural in front of Zion Hill Methodist Church.
- Take measures to ensure no trees around Zion Hill Reserve are harmed during construction.

More or longer lanes: 17 of the comments were suggestions for longer or more turning lanes for people heading in other directions besides from Birkenhead Avenue to Onewa Road. Their suggestions included:

- A longer right turn lane from Birkenhead Avenue north to Highbury Bypass. They said cars turning right from this direction often form long queues that block the middle through lane and cause delays for people trying to go straight. One person mentioned that in the late afternoon, more than 65% of cars turn right into the bypass.
- More left turn lanes from Birkenhead Avenue south (from the shops) to Highbury Bypass.
- More through lanes on either side of Birkenhead Avenue.
- A longer T3 lane on Highbury Bypass and schedule more 97 route buses to go through it.
- Buying land off the church or the reserve and rebuild the intersection so that more lanes can be added.

More enforcement is needed: 16 comments suggested more enforcement was needed to ensure appropriate driver behaviour through the intersection. Specifically, they suggested we add more cameras to catch red light running, incorrect T3 lane usage, and drivers blocking lanes. A couple of people suggested we have officers out the first few days after finishing the project to help enforce the new rules.

More infrastructure for cyclists: 15 comments were left by people suggesting some added features for cyclists we should consider for the intersection. These suggestions included advanced stop boxes, cyclist-pedestrian shared paths, and separated crossings for cyclists and pedestrians. One commenter also encouraged us to make sure the smart traffic light technology would pick up cyclists travelling through the intersection.

More or clearer road markings: People made 11 comments suggesting that longer or clearer road markings would help ensure people queue in the correct lanes when travelling through the intersection. Specifically, they suggested:

- Painting directional arrows on all the road lanes at the intersection, so that it's clear which lanes are for which directions.
- Adding green paint to clearly indicate the new T3 lanes.
- Adding more yellow hatch markings than shown in the plan to ensure people avoid queuing in places where they could potentially block traffic. One person said the hatch markings should be painted in the entire middle of the intersection (inside the slip islands).
- Taking measures to ensure new road markings don't fade quickly and old road markings don't reappear.

Add more or better road signage: We received 10 comments from people suggesting we add more road signs to help with navigating the new intersection layout. Most commenters said overhead road signage would help. One commenter mentioned having issues with the corner road signage on Highbury Bypass. They said in the daytime, the sun creates a glare off the signage that was very distracting to motorists.

Change the T3 lane operating hours: We received four comments from people who believed the T3 lanes going through the intersection should have shorter operating hours. Most of the comments said the hours should end at 9am instead of 10am.

Other suggestions to improve travel in the area

T3 lanes should be T2 lanes, or put in dynamic lanes: 20 comments suggested that all the T3 lanes in the area should be converted into T2 lanes. Those who elaborated on their comments said it was because they believed the T3 lanes were underutilised and T2 lanes were more practical. Seven comments also suggested we should add in dynamic lanes, either through the intersection or on Onewa Road.

Birkenhead Avenue should be a permanent clearway: We received 10 comments from people suggesting all or part of Birkenhead Avenue on the north side should have broken yellow lines to stop parked cars from blocking traffic flow. Most of these comments suggested we add the broken yellow lines in the T3 lane space between Pupuke Road and Zion Road.

Additional improvements to Glenfield Road/Birkenhead Avenue: We received seven comments from people suggesting additional improvements on different parts of Glenfield Road/Birkenhead Avenue. Specifically, they suggested:

- Better connected footpaths and more cycling infrastructure
- More dedicated crossings for pedestrians
- Improvements to the traffic light phasing at the Birkenhead Avenue and Pupuke Road intersection
- Remove the loading zone on Birkenhead Avenue south in front of the shops, as it blocks car and bus movements
- Ban large trucks from entering Glenfield Road

Other streets in need of improvements: We received seven comments from people suggesting some other streets in the area we should investigate for future improvements. They were:

- Zion Road: Three commenters said street parking overflow made turning and travelling on this street very difficult. They suggested we investigate parking changes to address these issues.
- Onewa Road around Park Avenue: Two comments suggested we look into adding another pedestrian crossing on Onewa Road, specifically somewhere near Park Avenue. They said the road space between the Birkenhead Avenue intersection and Park Avenue was in desperate need of a safe crossing point for pedestrians.
- Mokoia Road: One person suggested Mokoia Road become a permanent clearway to address access issues and bottlenecking traffic caused by parked cars.
- Queen Street and Onewa Road intersection: One person left a comment suggesting that we change the road layout on Queen Street turning into Onewa Road to make room for two dedicated left turn lanes: one for traffic continuing west on Onewa Road past Lake Road and one for traffic turning left to Onewa Road to enter the right-turn lane onto Lake Road. They believed this might result in fewer cars getting blocked by traffic trying to turn onto Lake Road.



General public transport improvements: Three people left comments requesting we improve public transport services in the North Shore. One of these commenters suggested we put more double decker buses on the Glenfield Road bus routes while the others just wanted to see more options for North Shore residents overall.

Next steps

The project team will meet with Kaipātiki Local Board in May to discuss the public feedback. Afterwards, we will make the final decisions on our design plans, considering the local board's recommendations and the community's feedback. Once we have made our final decisions around the design, we'll share the finalised plan with the community, responses to key concerns and suggestions, and when we hope to deliver the project. We are currently on track to implement around late 2026 and early 2027.