

Remuera/St Johns Rd – Double Decker Works

Ōrākei Local Board Feedback – August 2018

1. The Board acknowledges that necessary works along this arterial road must be carried out to facilitate the roll out of double decker buses.
2. Since the roll out of the New Central Bus Network in July the Board has received a number of complaints about the 75 bus route along this stretch of road. At peak hour travel times (7.00am – 8.30am) buses are well over capacity. Commuters are facing wait times of 20 minutes plus on a route that is supposed to deliver a service every 15 minutes. There is also a significant problem with ‘staggering’ - with 2 or 3 buses arriving at a stop simultaneously with then an acceptably long wait until the next arrival. The Board has received advice that the activation of double decker buses will help ameliorate these problems on this route.
3. The Board has been made aware of the adverse effect these works will have on a number of small businesses in the Remuera township through the Remuera Business Association. It requests that Auckland Transport work closely with those affected businesses and the Remuera Business Association to mitigate those effects where possible. It is important that Auckland Transport provides a clear channel of communication between those businesses and affected residents with project management. In particular, rationale should be provided for any perceived ‘down time’ on site where works are temporarily halted. Auckland Transport should work with businesses to ascertain least disruptive work hours and dates and ensure all reasonable steps are taken to maintain safe pedestrian / customer access to those affected businesses.
4. The Board requests a reconsideration of the location of the proposed new bus stop directly opposite the Meadowbank Shopping Centre. The position of the new stop is extremely close to the signalized intersection at St Johns Rd/Grand Drive, and sited on a bend in the road. There is also reasonably dense roadside vegetation. Whilst the current proposed location is ideal for visitors to the Shopping Centre, it has the potential to create a significant traffic bottle-neck at that nearby intersection, particularly during peak hour travel times when there are already significant queues to get through this set of lights. The right hand lane is currently marked for turning vehicles only, limiting the straight through traffic along St Johns Rd to the same lane used by the bus. The Board requests that Auckland Transport look at alternative options for siting. This may involve reconfiguration of existing stops east & west of the proposed new stop to ensure equidistance.
5. The Board notes that the works will require the removal of existing street trees and that there will be mitigating replanting. Its asks that the current aesthetics of the treescape along Remuera Rd be taken into consideration and suitable species adding to visual amenity be chosen.

6. The Board has received feedback from the Remuera Residents' Association (copy attached) and acknowledges its concern around parking removal. The Board seeks assurance that Auckland Transport will only be removing existing parking where absolutely necessary in order to accommodate the new double decker buses.

SUMMARY: The Board support these works but requests Auckland Transport work closely with affected residents and businesses to mitigate adverse effects.