

SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

20 FEBRUARY 2013

AGENDA ITEM C12

COTTER STREET, GREYTOWN – INVESTIGATION OF PROPOSAL TO MAKE ONE WAY

Purpose of Report

To consider the proposal to make Cotter Street, Greytown one-way to improve safety.

Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Cotter Street not be made a one-way and that access to the recycling depot be via West Street.*

1. Executive Summary

Cotter Street is a narrow road with a road reserve of only 10m compared to the normal 15 or 20m. It has residential properties on both sides and a sealed carriageway of approximately 5m compared to the more usual 11m. There are no kerbs, channel or footpaths.



Until recently this road was no exit with historical traffic volumes of fewer than 100 vehicles per day which would be commensurate with the number of dwellings.

Traffic volumes have increased significantly on this road with the opening of the Woodside Trail adjacent to the recycling centre.

The recycling centre is only open Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday for 2 to 3 hours depending on the day. This has the effect of concentrating the increased number of vehicles into a short time frame with up to approximately 50 more vehicles over the 2-3 hour period. The recycling centre has also attracts heavy trucks to the street travelling the full length to the recycling centre.

There are a number of safety issues relevant to this road arising from the increased use. As a no exit residential street local traffic would generally be self regulating with the narrow carriageway and proximity of boundaries, poles etc slowing traffic particularly as opposing vehicles need to go very close to or onto the berm to pass. There is no footpath so pedestrians walking on the berm or the carriageway when the ground is wet would also have the effect of slowing vehicles down while being in close proximity to moving vehicles.

It is presumed that there has been an issue with vehicles travelling 'fast' on this road as it has a 50kph speed limit sign which is usual on a residential street. The limited width of the road and close proximity of boundary fences etc would make even 50 kph appear very fast.

A particular hazard of the narrow road reserve is that there is very limited space between a vehicle exiting a property and moving vehicles which can be dangerous if sight distances are compromised for example with garden vegetation. With a normal width road reserve there is adequate width for a vehicle exiting a driveway to be seen and to see approaching traffic. The narrow road reserve also has the effect of putting non frangible hazards eg substantial trees and power poles close to the vehicle path.

The increase of non local traffic and cyclists onto this road will result in increased risks through their lack of appreciation of the constraints and safety issues compared to any other residential street nearby. These include increased speed unsuitable for the conditions, higher risk to pedestrians, and increase in passing movements both approaching and following in the case of cyclists.

Residents may also feel threatened by the increased risk when exiting their property.

2. Background

With the construction of the Governors Green Subdivision and Pierce Road connecting with both Cotter and West Streets there is now an opportunity to make Cotter Street one-way to eliminate some of the conflicts.

One-way streets may introduce their own problems and a decision has to be made as to the best direction for it to be one way. Generally one way streets will result in increased speeds because there is no opposing traffic. This will eliminate one risk but substantially increase the risk to exiting vehicles from residential properties and to pedestrians and cyclists using the berm or carriageway pavement.

The second issue is one of compliance particularly on a generally little trafficked residential street. Property owners particularly near Humphries Street forced to travel the extra 0.8 kilometres may drive travel the wrong. The additional distance reduces the further south the property is. Compliance by cyclist is probably a more significant problem with a number of councils looking at ways of allowing cyclists to travel both directions on one-way roads, for example using shared footpaths as cyclists will not ride the extra distance unless forced to.

One-way streets require signage and road markings at frequent intervals on residential roads where it is not obvious that it is one-way for example by the direction of oncoming or parked cars.

There are other options to improve the safety of the road such as reducing the speed limit to something more appropriate to the conditions, construction of a footpath, encouraging property owners to improve the visibility of their driveway so they can be seen and they can see approaching vehicles.

Compliance with speed limits less than 50 kph in residential areas is difficult resulting in a greater diversity of speeds. Construction of a footpath is likely to force traffic to favour the other side of the road though would improve conditions for pedestrians. There is also very limited space for a footpath given the trees and poles along the roadside.

Another option would be to signpost the access to the cycle trail and recycling depot to be via West Street. This would result in an increase in traffic in West Street which is much better equipped to handle the traffic. West Street already accommodates heavy vehicles and has a much wider carriageway complete with a footpath. This would then enable Cotter Street to return largely to the status quo. This would require improving road markings and signs at the Cotter Street Pierce Street intersection which needs to happen anyway and improving the width of the carriageway from Pierce Street to the recycling depot.

3. Discussion

3.1 Legal

The council is required to create a one-way road by a bylaw under section 22AB Land Transport Act 1998. Section 22AD requires that the bylaw is made using the special consultative procedures set out in section 83 of the Local Government Act 2002.

Many councils have Traffic and Parking Bylaws in place under which they can legalise the control, use of and parking on roads by passing a resolution

generally after advertising the proposed resolution before the meeting. This is a very much simpler process than the special consultative procedure and allows for changes particularly in parking control to be made quickly in response to changing road use or safety issues. South Wairarapa District Council does not have such a bylaw.

The special consultative procedure set out in Section 83 requires the council to prepare a statement of proposal, notifying and advertising the proposal inviting submissions, hearing those submissions and making a decision on the proposed bylaw. Note that section 155 of the Local Government Act 1974 requiring consideration of whether a bylaw is appropriate and its implications for the New Zealand Bill of Rights do not apply to a bylaw made under the Land Transport Act 1998.

3.2 Financial Considerations

The costs of making Cotter Street one-way include preparation of a proposal, advertising, consultation, considering submissions and notifying the outcome. Physical works would be limited to marking the road with lane arrows along the length of the road and at any entrance to the road with high traffic volumes. Signage (4 signs) would be required at the ends indicating one-way and no entry. Additional signs eg chevron board and markings would be required at the intersection with Pierce Road to highlight the T junction.

The costs of directing traffic via West Street would be shifting signs and additional signs eg chevron board and markings would be required at the intersection with Pierce Road to highlight the T junction.

4. Supporting Information

4.1 Decision Making

Changing Cotter Street to one-way is unlikely to improve the safety of this road and in fact may make it worse because of the constrained road reserve. A preferred option would be to direct traffic to the recycle depot via West Street which has a wider carriageway and probably better pavement as it is already used extensively by heavy vehicles.

Contact Officer: Ian Richards, Roading and Reserves Manager

Reviewed by: Mark Allingham, Group Manager Infrastructure Service