



Minister for Transport; Housing

Our ref: 30-21798

RECEIVED
- 7 OCT 2011
BY: _____

Ms Adele Carles MLA
Member for Fremantle
Shop 1, Queensgate Centre
William Street
FREMANTLE WA 6160

Dear Ms Carles

Safety Information for High Street, Option 4 and 4a

Thank you for your letter dated 15 September 2011 to the Hon Troy Buswell MLA, Minister for Transport, regarding your request for documentary evidence to support upgrading High Street with Option 4. The Minister has asked me to respond on his behalf.

The Department of Transport (DoT) engaged several independent consultants before making its decision/recommendation. Attached is a copy of the safety auditor's assessment of the relative safety risks associated with Options 4 and 4a. Also attached is an excerpt from Worley Parsons Limited's report on the safety issue.

Throughout the study DoT has been seeking to achieve a balance between local community needs and the requirement for High Street to be upgraded to national freight network standards. Unfortunately, Option 4a does not provide that standard and presents a medium to high level of road safety risk.

The engineering consultant engaged jointly by DoT and the City of Fremantle highlighted these risks and they were pointed out in both DoT's and the City of Fremantle Council officer's reports to the Council meeting on 22 August 2011.

The assessments by DoT and the consultants both show that Option 4 has the best outcomes for freight efficiency, road safety and community amenity and does not impact upon any more privately owned homes than Option 4a. Impact on the public golf course is only marginally greater for Option 4.

Option 4a may be similar to Option 4 in many respects including the multi criteria assessment; however, there are fundamental safety concerns with Option 4a which the State Government cannot ignore. Furthermore, it is not simply a question of reducing the speed limit for the project. The study's terms of reference were clear. These included agreed speed values and road geometry in keeping with a major freight route.

The Option 4 curve has an operational speed of 70 kph with a posted speed of 60 kph. This provides a safety margin for some vehicles exceeding the speed limit, which in reality does occur. The curve radius of 270 m is the absolute minimum radius required for that speed where an intersection also exists. Travelling westbound on High Street from Carrington Street at the posted speed of 70 kph and being required to slow to 60 kph is deemed to be a consistent speed regime. This situation is not unusual on major routes and is not unexpected for drivers. There is also good visibility to the traffic lights in the middle of the curve to allow the driver to slow down and stop if required.


Option 4a on the other hand has an operational speed of 55 kph and posted speed of 50 kph and a much tighter curve radius of 150 m. This presents a significant safety issue for drivers, particularly for heavy freight vehicles. The speed regime is inconsistent and unexpected in a major freight route environment. This gives rise to much greater risk of incident and potential injury. There is poor visibility to the traffic signals as they are significantly out of the driver's line of sight. This type of road geometry is not appropriate for a major freight route.

The slower speed would require constant enforcement. If the 50 km/h limit is not enforced, vehicles (particularly trucks) travelling in excess of the safe (designed) speed limit are far more likely to stray from the lane in which they are travelling. This could have serious adverse safety consequences. A speed limit which is inconsistent and unexpected is extremely difficult to enforce and would require continued enforcement, which is not realistic or achievable.

The additional impacts on the public golf course from Option 4 are relatively minor and can be addressed through redesign of the golf course, for which the road construction authority will be responsible.

Thank you for your correspondence.

Yours sincerely



RACHAEL TURNSECK
CHIEF OF STAFF

- 6 OCT 2011