

From: official information
Sent: Thursday, 3 February 2022 6:09 pm
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: official information
Subject: Final Response: LGOIMA 21409 - [REDACTED] - Traffic flows on Cambridge Road, Hamilton

Kia Ora,

I refer to your **information request below**, Hamilton City Council is able to provide the following response.

1. Do you think that this 7-year disruption to the Hillcrest neighbourhood is acceptable?

One of the purposes of the Wairere Drive extension project has been to introduce an arterial road into the city network to encourage traffic off other roads such as Cambridge Road, Galloway Street and Knighton Road. Without the Wairere Drive extension project increased traffic effects on these roads over time were inevitable.

In a similar manner the Waka Kotahi Waikato Expressway plays an important role to attract the right traffic on the right roads. It is preferable to have all through trips, particularly heavy vehicles, using the Expressway rather than loading up Wairere Drive and Cambridge/Galloway/Knighton roads.

Delivery of a road network has to be sequenced and invariably there are various impacts while the planned network is being delivered. Through a series of Council meetings and decision making over time it was decided to stage the Wairere Drive extension project to Cambridge Road and to treat the last section from Cambridge Road to Cobham Drive as a separate project. The original intent was to have a simple roundabout connection at Cobham Drive but the growth planning for Peacockes was advanced and the roundabout connection was abandoned in favour of a full interchange which has taken more time to implement. This change in scope has meant that Cambridge road has been carrying more traffic for a longer period than originally envisioned.

Aligning funding from various partners and procuring design and construction is a complex issue and both Waka Kotahi and Hamilton City Council have been progressing their projects as best as they have been able to do, particularly with the recent COVID and supply chain related challenges. Councils current projected completion date for the Cobham/Wairere Drive intersection is May this year and Waka Kotahi have advised June this year for the Waikato Expressway. At this point in time we would expect to see reduced traffic impacts on Cambridge Road.

2. Have you undertaken any impact assessments in terms of noise, air pollution or building damage recently and if not why not?

Council has not, to my knowledge, undertaken any impact assessments in terms of noise, air pollution or building damage related to volumes of traffic on Cambridge Road. Council would typically respond to complaints or claims of damage and once again, to my knowledge, we have not received any.

Cambridge Road is an existing road with effectively existing use rights and there are no district plan requirements in relation to noise etc. The projects are subject to consent conditions including conditions to manage effects such as noise but these conditions don't extend to being applicable to Cambridge Road.

3. What positive steps are you planning to take (and by when) to ensure this 7-year long increase in traffic doesn't become the new normal? After all, extending Wairere Drive will only shift the pinch point to Cobham Drive.

Council expects that traffic will develop different patterns once the 2 strategic projects open later this year aligned with right traffic on right roads, but acknowledges that there are no guarantees that this will occur.

In summary, as shown in the graphs in this email:

- An increase in vehicles per day of around 6000 (from 12000 to 18000) after Wairere was opened, i.e., an increase of 50% in traffic volume.
- And even more critically, a 300% increase to 1400 per day in "All Goods Vehicles" (everything apart from cars). And a 10-fold increase during the week in the largest trucks ("Truck and Trailers") travelling up and down the hill (from 30 to 300 day and night!). Incidentally, there is also over 100 per day of this latter category at the weekend

So, inadequate planning of traffic systems has funnelled a massive increase in large trucks moving up and down one of the steepest hills in Hamilton on roads clearly not built to deal with these tonnages.

It is this massive increase in the larger trucks that has had the most impact on the neighbourhood over the last 6-7 years, in terms of noise (laboured engines crawling up the hill, engine breaking down the hill), shaking houses and, I assume, air quality. Unfortunately, I have been unable to source data on air quality but with the number of trucks crawling up the hill, there must be an adverse effect on particulates emitted to the air too.

I shared my findings with the Hillcrest Community on Facebook and received reactions of shock and disappointment, with comments that really did show the effect your "planning" has had on the community.

I'm sure your response will be that things will change after the final section of Wairere drive and the Tamahere bypass have been completed. However, that doesn't make up for the nuisance that we residents have had to tolerate for 7 years (assuming they are completed in 2022: I'm not holding my breath). So, can you answer three specific questions please:

1. Do you think that this 7-year disruption to the Hillcrest neighbourhood is acceptable?
2. Have you undertaken any impact assessments in terms of noise, air pollution or building damage recently: and if not, why not?
3. What positive steps are you planning to take (and by when) to ensure this 7-year long increase in traffic doesn't become the new normal? After all, extending Wairere drive will only shift the pinch point to Cobham drive.

I look forward to your response.



