

1 August 2013

Hello

As a local resident/business owner, you may recall that in August 2012, the NZ Transport Agency and Hutt City Council tried out some changes to the traffic light cycles and lane markings at the Melling intersection. Our goal was to improve traffic flows around this busy, complicated intersection, where local roads join State Highway 2 (SH2) and the majority of motorists using the intersection are travelling along the state highway. The challenge at Melling is to keep traffic moving on SH2 in peak times and reduce travel times for commuters and freight, without significantly disadvantaging people using local roads.

While the changes we made in August 2012 did improve journey times for commuters on SH2, motorists using the Harbour View lights saw their waiting times go up a bit. Because it's important to balance the needs of both state highway users and people on the local roads, we are now looking at new ways to improve the layout for the whole of the Melling and Block intersections.

But these two intersections are also part of a wider transport network. NZTA is looking at traffic and safety issues across the whole of the state highway corridor from Petone to the Rimutakas, as well as working with Hutt City Council to make the local network work better. We want to find the right solution that will give motorists across the entire network a better journey, and we want to do this as soon as possible.

The idea of building a grade-separated interchange at Melling (where we physically separate the levels at which the lanes cross) has been raised. Grade separation would reduce risks to motorists and improve the traffic flow at Melling, but a project of this scale would be a very long, expensive and difficult exercise. The area's geography—steep hills and the river—also makes grade separation in this area challenging.

It's important to look at what we can do to make improvements to the Melling and Block intersections sooner rather than later, and we expect to receive a report back on options by December this year. But it's also important that any improvements at the Melling and Block intersections work in with improvements across the wider network, so the the Transport Agency will need to look carefully at the best solutions overall. We will be in touch as soon as we have come up with options—probably early next year.

If there are any developments in the meantime, we'll let you know.

You can also visit the Melling website

(<http://www.nzta.govt.nz/network/projects/project.html?ID=141>) if you'd like to keep an eye on this project.

And if you have any questions or would like more information on this project, please contact me on michael.siazon@nzta.govt.nz

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. We want to make your local road network work as well as possible for everyone.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Siazon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael Siazon
Project Manager
SH2 Melling Intersection Improvements