

Traffic Treatment - Alexandria Local Area Traffic Management - Proposed Permanent Road Closures

File No: X010878

Summary

This report recommends that Council approve two permanent road closures to vehicular traffic in Alexandria to mitigate traffic congestion, improve pedestrian access, safety and increase open space in Alexandria.

At its meeting on 24 August 2020 - Item 8.2 (refer to Attachment A), Council resolved that:

Council approve road closures for a one-year trial at the following locations:

- (i) Loveridge Street closure at McEvoy Street; and*
- (ii) Brennan Street closure at McEvoy Street.*

The trial closures were implemented in December 2020.

Loveridge Street

In respect of the trial closure of Loveridge Street at McEvoy Street, the City received the following submissions from the local community:

- The Loveridge Street closure at McEvoy Street has increased traffic on Power Avenue next to the School and Park especially during school days.
- The access to Power Avenue (including for school buses) is difficult with high traffic volumes around Wyndham Street.
- Industrial sites in Loveridge Street have difficulties with deliveries by large trucks.

City staff reviewed the feedback from the local community and in late February 2022 the City consulted the local residents and businesses in Loveridge and Brennan Streets and Power Avenue, on three options.

An alternative proposal was to shift the closure of Loveridge Street from the intersection of McEvoy Street to the intersection of Power Avenue (refer Attachment D). Direct access for industrial sites in Loveridge Street would be returned to using McEvoy Street. This would reduce the traffic volumes on Power Avenue (especially industrial traffic), reduce conflict between school traffic and commercial traffic and improve accessibility and safety in the local area. Closing the street at Power Avenue will continue to mitigate the impacts of WestConnex on local roads.

In response to this proposal, 500 letters were distributed and a total of 21 submissions were received concerning Loveridge Street.

The proposal was referred to the Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee on 17 March 2022 where the change to the closure location in Loveridge Street was endorsed (refer to Attachment E).

Brennan Street

The trial closure of Brennan Street at its intersection with McEvoy Street has resulted in calming and reducing the traffic in the street and improved safety. No concerns were raised by the community during the trial. Following the trial, the City notified the community that the trial closure at McEvoy Street will be made permanent. No additional concerns were raised by the residents and businesses in Brennan Street. Referral back to the Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee for this item was not necessary as the Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee had previously endorsed the permanent closure of this street at this location.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council approve the regulation of traffic to effect permanent road closures at the following locations:

- (A) Loveridge Street closure at Power Avenue, noting that it will be open at McEvoy Street; and
- (B) Brennan Street closure at McEvoy Street.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Resolution of Council - 24 August 2020 - Traffic Treatment - Alexandria Local Area Traffic Management - Proposed Permanent Road Closures
- Attachment B.** Alexandria Local Area Traffic Management Plan
- Attachment C.** Map of Original Permanent Closures – Loveridge and Brennan Streets, Alexandria
- Attachment D.** Map of Final Permanent Closures – Loveridge and Brennan Streets, Alexandria
- Attachment E.** Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee (LPCTCC) Agenda and Minutes of 17 March 2022 – Item 20

Background

1. At its meeting on 24 August 2020 (refer Attachment A), Council resolved that:
Council approve road closures for a one-year trial at the following locations:
 - (i) *Loveridge Street closure at McEvoy Street; and*
 - (ii) *Brennan Street closure at McEvoy Street.*
2. The trial closures were implemented in December 2020. A review of the trial closures and further public consultation in Loveridge, Brennan Streets and Power Avenue has occurred following the trial.
3. In April 2018, the City developed a Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) plan for Alexandria, which included proposed road closures to mitigate increased traffic flow from the WestConnex St Peters interchange. The Local Area Traffic Management Plan was developed to protect local amenity, maintain property access, apply a precinct-wide approach to ensure the problem is managed collectively rather than street by street and consider the impact on pedestrians and cyclists as well as vehicles (refer to Attachment B).
4. The City originally consulted with the local community to gather their feedback on the proposed suite of treatments in the Local Area Traffic Management plan from April 2018 to June 2018. At the end of the consultation period the City received 731 submissions, with 75 per cent of the submissions supporting the City's Local Area Traffic Management plan.
5. The City has progressed the implementation of the Alexandria Local Area Traffic Management plan which included a number of permanent local road closures. The closure of the roads to vehicular traffic, created pedestrian only spaces that activate the street and provide safe pedestrian links through the precinct making it safer for people to walking, while reducing short-cut traffic movements and increase open space in Alexandria.
6. In August 2020, four permanent road closures were recommended to Council for approval with two being approved to proceed, while the closures of Loveridge Street at McEvoy Street, and Brennan Street at McEvoy Street were only approved for a one-year trial (refer Attachment C).
7. Loveridge and Brennan Streets are local residential streets which link McEvoy Street to Power Avenue.
8. The trial closures were implemented in December 2020. The trial closure of Loveridge Street at McEvoy Street did achieve its goal of preventing short-cut traffic bypassing the signals on McEvoy Street at Wyndham Street. During the trial, the City received the following submissions from the local community:
 - The Loveridge Street closure at McEvoy Street has increased traffic on Power Avenue next to School and the Park especially during school days.
 - The access to Power Avenue (including for school buses) is difficult with high traffic volumes around Wyndham Street.

- The Industrial sites in Loveridge Street have difficulties with deliveries by large trucks.

Public Consultation

9. The trial closures and submissions from the community were reviewed and in late February 2022, the City consulted the local residents and businesses in Loveridge and Brennan Streets and Power Avenue to gather local community feedback on the three options:
 - (a) Option 1: Retain current engagement - Closure of Loveridge Street at its intersection with McEvoy Street.
 - (b) Option 2: Alternative arrangement - Closure of Loveridge Street at its intersection with Power Avenue instead of at McEvoy Street.
 - (c) Option 3: Alternative arrangement 2 - Partial closure of access to Loveridge Street from McEvoy Street, and a left turn only access from Loveridge Street to McEvoy Street.
10. Five hundred letters were distributed and a total of 21 submissions were received. Ten submissions were supportive of Option 2 while seven submissions supported Option 3. Two submissions wanted to retain the temporary closure at McEvoy Street and two submissions didn't want any option.
11. Shifting the closure of Loveridge Street from the intersection of McEvoy Street to the intersection of Power Avenue, Option 2, (refer to Attachment D), would reduce traffic volumes on Power Avenue (especially industrial traffic), reduce conflict between school traffic and commercial traffic, and improve accessibility and safety in the local area.
12. Direct access for industrial sites in Loveridge Street via McEvoy Street would be returned and closing the street at Power Avenue instead would continue to mitigate the impacts of WestConnex on local roads.
13. On 17 March 2022, Option 2 was referred to the Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee (LPCTCC) for their consideration. The Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee endorsed the proposed closure in Loveridge Street at its intersection with Power Avenue (refer Attachment E).
14. The trial closure of Brennan Street at its intersection with McEvoy Street has resulted in calming and reducing the traffic in the street and improved safety. No concerns were raised by the community during the trial. Following the trial, the City notified the community that the trial closure at McEvoy Street will be made permanent. No additional concerns were raised by the residents and businesses in Brennan Street. Referral back to the Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee for this item was not necessary as the Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee had previously endorsed the closure of this street at this location.

15. On 26 February 2020, Transport for New South Wales (TfNSW) approved a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) to permanently close Loveridge and Brennan Streets at McEvoy Street to vehicular traffic. Transport for New South Wales have advised City staff that moving the closure in Loveridge Street from McEvoy Street to Power Avenue was still compliant with the original Traffic Management Plan and Section 116 process as it maintained the same impacts on traffic.

Section 116 Roads Act 1993

16. In accordance with Section 116 of the Roads Act 1993, a public notice for the permanent road closures of Loveridge and Brennan Streets were originally published in the Sydney Morning Herald on 11 March 2020.
17. A Section 116 (S116) is a statutory requirement to publish a public notice in a local newspaper which informs and allows the community to make submissions on a proposed road closure prior to a decision being made. The Section 116 notice must allow at least 28 days for the community to provide written submissions on the proposal to either the City or Transport for New South Wales.
18. The original public notices of 11 March 2020 stated the proposals were to permanently close Loveridge and Brennan Streets at McEvoy Street with access available from Power Avenue.
19. Further, a letter was delivered on 11 March 2020 to every occupant along Loveridge Street, Brennan Street and Power Avenue asking for comments.
20. Following the Council decision in August 2020, the trial closures were implemented in December 2020 and a sign was installed in Loveridge and Brennan Streets to inform the community about the trial.
21. General feedback from the local community during the trial concerned an increase in traffic on Power Avenue next to the school and Alexandra Park, especially on school days; and access difficulties on local roads for school buses and large trucks for industrial sites in Loveridge Street.
22. On 11 February 2022 the City sent a notification letter to 500 residents and businesses surrounding Loveridge Street to consult about the three revised options to address the feedback received during the trial.
23. While the initial Section 116 public notice in March 2020, specifically referred to a permanent closure of Loveridge Street at McEvoy Street, through the above process for the trial closure, the City has actively sought and considered feedback from the affected community, and the proposal to close Loveridge Street at Power Avenue instead of McEvoy Street is what the community ultimately preferred.
24. Transport for New South Wales was informed that the revised proposal, after considering submissions and feedback during the trial and subsequent consultation, was to move the closure in Loveridge Street from McEvoy Street to Power Avenue. Transport for New South Wales confirmed this was still acceptable and endorsed the changed proposal at the Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee meeting in March 2022.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

25. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This plan is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 2 - A leading environmental performer - the proposals provide the City with more landscaping and open space.
 - (b) Direction 5 - A city for walking, cycling and public transport - the proposals help develop a network of safe, linked pedestrian paths, and traffic calming which gives greater priority to pedestrians.

Financial Implications

26. There are sufficient funds available in the 2022/23 Capital Works budget and future year forward estimates to proceed with permanent construction.
27. Ongoing maintenance costs for the permanent road closure are not expected to exceed existing costs to maintain the current trafficable road.

Relevant Legislation

28. Transport for NSW is responsible for the control of traffic on all NSW roads and has delegated to Council certain functions to regulate traffic on local roads.
29. The Transport for NSW delegation gives Council authority to approve the regulation of traffic under Part 8, Division 2 of the Roads Act 1993.
30. Section 116 (Part 8, Division 2 of the Roads Act 1993) requires a public notice for the permanent road closures to be published in a local newspaper and 28 days be provided for feedback.
31. This delegation can only be exercised by the elected Council and is subject to a number of conditions and limitations, including the advice of Council's Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

32. Construction works are expected to commence in the 2022/23 financial year to coordinate with other treatments recommended in the Alexandria Local Area Traffic Management Plan.

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