

## **Queenstown Town Centre Transport Strategy**

*Beach Street Trial - Monitoring Actions Report 05 August 2016*

### **Purpose**

The trial temporary / partial closure of the upper part of Beach St is running from the start of February to September 25<sup>th</sup>. The effects of this element of the Queenstown Town Centre Strategy (Strategic / Programme Business Cases) are being monitored to inform future Council decisions on further or permanent pedestrianisation.

### **Scope**

This report will collate feedback and data in order to report on a two monthly basis to Downtown QT and to the Project Sponsor (General Manager, Property and Infrastructure).

### **Findings**

#### ***Survey results***

The website survey was opened on Council's main webpage in early March to provide an opportunity for any user to comment. A small number of structured questions were included as prompts with free text boxes available for users to address any relevant issue. The initial report to 31 March 2016 contained 14 responses, with the bulk of them positive and constructive. In the second period (April – May) only one response was received (which indicated support for the scheme). Due to this low response – further publicity has been given to the survey, through Council's website.

The attached survey results (Attachment A) combine six months of responses (February to July 2016) which gives a better overall picture. The majority of responses are positive although there are a small number of respondents who do not favour the scheme. Two key points identified are that there are minimal references to safety issues and a mixed response to other pedestrianisation opportunities.

In my opinion there are no significant negative effects identified through this survey.

The safety issue that emerges is the interface between traffic and pedestrians at the Cow Lane / Beach Street junction, and this could be improved by signage / line marking, but is in a low speed environment so is considered to be minor.

Other pedestrianisation schemes would be informed by the comments in this survey, mainly being the positive responses of users, with the need to address the practicalities of deliveries to premises in a "pedestrianised" area.

## ***Monitoring***

Tony Pickard, Principal Planner Infrastructure, has carried out site visits on several occasions to identify any apparent issues or patterns of changed behaviour and / or safety issues. These have continued at irregular intervals over the period and it was observed that the behaviour has not generally changed – noting, as in the previous reports that several issues reoccurred:

- Delivery vehicles blocking Cow Lane by parking in the main lane area.
- Loading zones being used by non-goods / service vehicles.
- Parking of trades vehicles for the development site on Beach St and also for other local addresses.
- Delivery vehicles taking 15 – 20 minutes to unload.
- Pedestrians and vehicle interaction at the Cow Lane / Beach St junction.
- Low levels of vehicle use of Beach St between 08.00 and 11.00 (deliveries and through traffic).

One additional pattern is occurring in this reporting period, in that the space between the bollards at the top of Beach Street and the edge of Camp Street has become an informal loading zone. In this latest period - this has also been continued by the Friday market stall users.

Additionally the number of development sites within the CBD has attracted a substantial number of trades vehicles parking in both parking and loading bays for considerable periods. Some are permitted through Council windscreen notices, but these seem to be in the minority.

## **Spend data**

Data has been obtained from consultants MarketView to address a general picture of non-cash transactions on Beach Street. These have excluded the casino transactions, as there may be some significant sized individual items that skew the results. As a summary, the following (in millions of dollars) are noted:

<i>February / March</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2012 – 2015 Average</i>
Beach St	2.89	2.82	2.43
Rest of Town Centre	58.04	50.75	40.40
<i>April / May</i>			
Beach St	2.18	2.19	2.00
Rest of Town Centre	46.23	41.01	33.64
<i>June / July</i>			
Beach St	2.25	2.28	2.12
Rest of Town Centre	55.68	46.91	39.77

Whilst these figures do not show a consistent path, they also do not show a significant increase or decrease. The loss of the businesses from the site currently under development, including a successful café business, is noted.

### **Traffic Data**

An initial set of data was obtained from NZTA, extracted from Tom Tom (GPS) data. This initial report set a base to start to identify, mainly, travel times between two key points around the CBD (Lake Street and Coronation Drive) or any other anomalies. Again this is a generalisation, as new traffic lights; changes in season, and construction projects (Beach St, Marine Parade), may skew the results, but will assist in an overall picture.

As a snapshot of data received, the average time taken between Coronation Drive and Lake Street (in that direction, shown in the table below), shows that there is a pattern (a slowing of speed and consequent increase in travel time) emerging. The timing of this change however can be directly related to the installation of two sets of traffic lights on the route between late May and July. This effect was anticipated and not considered to be related to the trial.

<i>Month</i>	<i>Average Time</i>	<i>Average Speed</i>
Feb	3.28	13.19
Mar	3.22	14.44
Apr	3.31	14.42
May	3.29	14.58
June	3.48	13.38
July	4.48	10.60

### **Feedback from the business community**

Between the first and second monitoring reports, a survey was undertaken by DowntownQT (Chamber of Commerce) partly to supplement this report but also to allow identification of effects on the business community in more general terms. The initial results were circulated to QLDC and a final set has now been provided as Attachment D (summary only).

The results indicate a neutral to positive result with some mixed results on key points such as further pedestrianisation of other streets and whether to prohibit delivery vehicles completely. The key questions #1 and 2, show that business has not been adversely affected and that over 80% of respondents favoured a permanent closure.

It is also noteworthy that (at Q8) the business community were split on support for further pedestrianisation in the Town Centre, with a slight majority responding as a negative.

## **Summary**

The trial continues to track on the positive side in terms of effects on users, and businesses, and has negligible effects on traffic. There are some continuing behavioural issues which may have been present before the trial started, but would only be eradicated with an almost continuous enforcement presence.

Tony Pickard  
**Principal Planner Infrastructure**  
05 August 2016

The following attachments are circulated in a separate document:

Attachment A: QLDC website survey results

Attachment B: Traffic data  
February-March  
April-May  
June-July

Attachment C: Spend data  
February-March  
April-May  
June-July

Attachment D: Business Survey Feedback