

2 October 2024

Isaac Morrison
fyi-request-28288-568ca954@requests.fyi.org.nz

Hi Isaac

The information you requested - CAS-971358-L2T3F4

I refer to your request for information dated 3 September 2024 relating to AT's decision not to fully pedestrianize Mercury Lane around the new Karangahape City Rail Link station entrance when it opens in 2026.

Please find attached the following documents and records:

- Minutes from Auckland Transport's meetings with representatives of the George Court apartment building.
- An email outlining AT's decision-making.
- An email to the Mayor's office in response to a complaint from a member of the public.
- An email sent at the request of one of the George Court representatives about how the pedestrian mall might operate, particularly with respect to access and the operation of the bollards, as she had been receiving queries from concerned residents within the building.
- Karanga-a-Hape Neighbourhood Network Improvements Single Stage Business Case.

The 2023 feedback summary report and the design workshop summary document can be found here: [Karanga-a-Hape Station precinct integration project](#).

In terms of costs to implement a pedestrian mall [in response to point 2], if that is seen to be necessary at a later date, this would be restricted to the cost of the reengagement/consultation/ people's time to arrange that and any costs associated with the Traffic Control Committee (TCC) as all the infrastructure, i.e., bollards, is being put in place during the upgrade work that is currently underway. We cannot predict what those costs may be at this time as this type of cost fluctuates based on a number of measures, i.e. people's time, printing costs, etc.

The decision to change the proposal from pedestrian mall to shared space [in response to point 4] has been made because it is deemed better to defer the Pedestrian Mall change until it is proven that it is needed in this location once new traffic behaviour settles and there is clear evidence that the number of people using the Mercury Lane station entrance warrants a change to a Pedestrian Mall.

AT follows the IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum, the appropriate level of public engagement and its influence on a project differs for every project. When making decisions and finalising project designs, AT endeavours to seek public feedback to inform decisions wherever possible. Public participation is not the sole factor in decision making, but one input of many. Other factors and inputs including safety, access needs, costs, funding, legislation, international best practice, subject matter expertise of our planners and engineers, AT plans and policies and more.



There is also continued objection from a few stakeholders. One stakeholder has stated several times, including to the Mayor [see *RE: Project K - CRM:022580000556; CAS-938560-Z5V0K5 email*], that they will object to the Environment Court if a Pedestrian Mall is approved. An appeal to the Environment Court can delay a project by many months, which would result in prolonged disruption to the community and additional cost for potential rework afterwards.

The decision-making discussion also noted that AT may receive objections / complaints because we are not progressing with the proposed Pedestrian Mall as this was well supported considering feedback received both during the 2023 consultation period and, following that, during discussions with residents, property owners and businesses owners in the area. [See *Mercury Lane Shared Zone decision email*.]

Throughout, concern has continued to be expressed about how access for those stakeholders would work for non-residents / business owners, such as service and delivery vehicles, employees, and people moving in/out, etc.

As a result, it was decided that a Shared Space would be the best option in the first instance. In the meantime, upon the re-opening of Mercury Lane, monitoring of the space will be undertaken. So, reviewing access through Mercury Lane continue to occur. If the space is not being used as expected, i.e., high traffic volumes, illegal parking, etc., we will reconsider the resolution for a Shared Space and undertake a new round of consultation to restart the Pedestrian Mall process. Retractable bollard infrastructure is being installed during the current upgrade work to provide barriers to the station for emergencies. These can also be used if access through the road changes in future.

It is expected [in response to point 5] that by reversing the flow of traffic from north of the George Court apartment building car park entrance to Karangahape Road that traffic will reduce significantly. Also, it has been demonstrated that removing the delineation between pedestrian zones and vehicle zones encourages vehicles to slow down. The traffic signals at the top of Mercury Lane will control traffic exiting onto Karangahape Rd (left turn only). The signal phase will have a short 'green time' to discourage drivers using this route as a shortcut and will further encourage traffic to slow.

A copy of the Safe System Audit on the proposed designs has been provided. It includes evaluation of the level of safety provided by a Pedestrian Mall in comparison to other options including a Shared Zone.

As part of the Karanga-a-Hape Station precinct Integration project (a.k.a. Project K), we are increasing the number of CCTV cameras operating in the area. These will be used both to monitor use of the space to establish if a future change to its use is required, as well as to enforce the shared space rules.

In terms of providing input into the TCC decision-making process, they will be considering both the 2023 consultation, which, as you note, reflected both support and opposition to the pedestrian mall proposal, as well as our on-going discussions with the directly impacted groups.

Also, the feedback we have received since last week when we informed the community (as per our email last week) that the latest thinking was to recommend a Shared Space to the TCC rather than a Pedestrian Mall, will also be considered in that decision-making process. You are not the only person to respond to our email – some have been supportive of the shared space proposal and some, like you, are opposed to it, preferring a Pedestrian Mall. However, there is no opportunity to speak to this before the TCC.

In the future, should AT determine that a change of designation from the planned Shared Zone is warranted, you will be able to provide your input into that process.

Some information such as names and contact details has been withheld under section 7(2)(a) of the LGOIMA, to protect the privacy of natural persons, including that of deceased natural persons.



With respect to the information that has been withheld in these attachments, I do not consider there are any other factors which would render it desirable, in the public interest, to make the information available.

Should you believe that we have not responded appropriately to your request, you are able to make a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman in accordance with section 27(3) of the LGOIMA and seek an investigation and review in regard to this matter.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Patel', written in a cursive style.

Suresh Patel

**Bus, Ferry and Network Integration Manager
Infrastructure & Place**