

F22/55/05 – D24/31505

Date: Thursday 20 June 2024 at 10.30 am

Venue: Council Chambers, 63 Miranda Street, Stratford

### Present

The District Mayor N C Volzke (the Chairman), the Deputy Mayor – M McKay, Councillors: S J Beck, G W Boyde, A M C Dudley, J M S Erwood, A K Harris, E E Hall, Councillor V R Jones, and W J Sandford.

### In attendance

The Chief Executive – Mr S Hanne, the Director – Assets - Mrs V Araba, the Director – Environmental Services – Mr B Sutherland, the Acting Director – Community Services – Mrs E Bishop, the Committee Secretary – Ms E Coulton, the Communications Manager – Ms G Gibson, the Community and Economic Development Manager – Ms S Afzal, The Roading Manger – Mr S Bowden, The Communications Manager – Ms G Gibson, the Roading Engineer – Mrs D Taplin, the Communications Advisor – Mrs S Clarkson, the Projects Manager – Mr S Taylor, NZTA Representative - Mr C Lai (*via audio or visual link*) one member of the media (Stratford Press) and thirty five members of the public.

#### 1. Welcome

The Chairman welcomed the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chief Executive, Councillors, and staff.

##### 1.1 Opening Karakia D21/40748 Page 6

The opening karakia was read.

##### 1.2 Health and Safety Message D21/26210 Page 7

The Chairman reiterated the health and safety message and emergency procedures.

#### 2. Apologies

An apology was noted from Councillor M J Watt and Councillor C M Tongaawhikau.

#### Recommendation

THAT the apologies be received.

DUDLEY/HARRIS  
Carried  
CL/24/76

#### 3. Announcements

There were no announcements.

#### 4. Declarations of Members Interest

The Chairman requested Councillors to declare any real or perceived conflicts of interest relating to items on this agenda. There were no conflicts of interest declared.

#### 5. Attendance Schedule

The attendance schedule for Ordinary and Extraordinary meetings was attached.

#### 6. Deputation

##### **Deputation – Arnold Cox – Construction of Broadway Pedestrian Crossing**

Points noted in presentation:

- Mr Cox noted that he is against the proposal of the new pedestrian crossings to be undertaken on Broadway.
- He stated that he is an owner of Stratford Knit and Sew and noted that his shop will be directly affected by the addition of a northern crossing due to the loss of car parks right outside the shop, he noted that he has a lot of elderly customers and this will impact them greatly. He mentioned that the loss of carparks would have a significant negative impact on the community and the shopping experience in Stratford.
- It was noted by Mr Cox that he is concerned about the northern crossing's location in regard to trucks coming around the corner and the lack of visibility, he mentioned that it could turn hazardous quickly.
- He noted that when looking at the proposed drawings, it came to his attention that a potential drainage problem may arise with the addition of a northern crossing causing flooding issues.
- Trucks stopping on top of the proposed northern pedestrian crossing will also be a major problem and Stratford has a lot of heavy traffic that passes through daily. He also noted that the average wheelbase of a truck is 2.5 meters and the street is 3.5 meters which only gives 500 millimetres of clearance.
- Mr Cox estimated that around 10 thousand cars pass through Broadway everyday and noted that these pedestrian crossings will create more blockages and traffic back-ups.
- He noted that by removing the existing middle crossing jaywalking will be increased as it removes the central access to facilities across the road from Prospero Place – especially when activities and events are held there.
- He reiterated that the loss of 22 car parks is going to negatively impact our community and noted that we need to draw people to Stratford, not drive them away. He believes the current parking in main street is a draw to shoppers passing through Stratford as there is a lot of parking and that it is also free.

Questions/Points of clarification:

- Councillor Beck asked Mr Cox as a shop owner, if he has noticed a danger for pedestrians crossing the road, he wondered if he had witnessed any near misses. Mr Cox believes that Broadway is safe for pedestrians currently.
- Councillor Harris questioned if the Officers could clarify if drainage issues are a possibility with the addition of the crossing. The Roading Asset Manager clarified that the plans communicated to the public are only preliminary drawings and that if we were to go with that option we would make sure the curb extension is not hard against the curb line so we should not have any issues with drainage.

## **Deputation – Stratford Business Association – Construction of Broadway Pedestrian Crossing**

Points noted in presentation:

- Matt Dimock, the Chairman of the Stratford Business Association noted that it is not very often the business association share the same views on a decision being put forward by council, but they all agreed that the two options provided by council in regard to updating the pedestrian crossing were poor.
- They believe the existing crossing should be upgraded and raised with lights instead of the proposed two new crossings as having a single controlled crossing with lights will minimise the confusion caused by pedestrians watching the glockenspiel and not crossing the road that we see often.
- Mr Dimock noted that the association believes that adding in two crossings is not adding in a safety feature but rather enticing dangerous jaywalking and making traffic congestion worse.
- Connectivity between Broadway and Prospero Place will be lost as there will no longer be direct access to public facilities, eateries, and shops across the road.
- It was noted that removing 22 car parks from the main street is unacceptable. There is limited parking within the CBD as it stands currently and noted that Stratford shoppers are typically direct and will often drive from one end of town to the other to visit two different shops and park outside of the shop as opposed to walking. He noted that there is a risk of the car park loss affecting business.
- The consultation process was confusing. He noted that the public were offered two options to choose from but within the agenda for this meeting, seven were mentioned, the public has not had consultation on options three through to seven.
- The Stratford Business Association believes that racing through this process due to available funding is not a good idea and that the council needs to take their time to get it right.

Questions/Points of clarification:

- Councillor Beck asked how many out of the SBA liked the idea adding lights to the crossing? Mr Dimock noted that the committee are united on the idea of adding lights to the existing crossing but have not had time to undertake a formal consultation with the entire association. He did state that he went around and had a conversation with as many business owners as possible and gathered that the majority thought the two options were not good enough but did not get to discussing other options such as lights.
- Councillor Boyde questioned if Mr Dimock believes that the other 5 options in the agenda should be going out to the public for consultation. Mr Dimock clarified that he believes, yes they should be going out for public consultation. He also noted that the write up in the Stratford Press was one sided and made it seem as if the project was done and decided. The District Mayor clarified that the council can not and does not control what is written by the media.

### Recommendations

1. THAT the report be received.
2. THAT the Stratford District Council approves one or more options described in this report, that address largely stakeholder concerns and satisfy the NZTA funding requirements.

### Recommended Reason

Substantial progress must be made on the construction of the Broadway pedestrian crossings within this financial year to secure the allocated funding from NZTA. However, feedback from the community may necessitate a change in direction for this project, in accordance with one or more of the options preferred in this report.

ERWOOD/SANDFORD  
Carried  
CL/24/77

### The District Mayor Noted:

- It was clarified that the funding that is available to achieve this project is \$460,000 from NZTA and that the project is not rate payer funded.
- There are conditions with the funding which state to receive the full funding a contract needs to be in place by the 30<sup>th</sup> June. He noted that this is why the consultation period has been rather quick and that if we do not jump on this funding from NZTA now, it is likely we will not get the funding again.
- The crossings will not be raised, and each crossing design and option will have a pedestrian refuge in the centre to allow for better traffic flow.
- The Northern crossing contained in options 1 and 2 was considered as part of our transport choices project which was widely consulted on however this project came to a halt when funding was withdrawn. He noted this to illustrate that the decision has had significant thought before the funding from NZTA came through.
- If we are to go ahead with one of the options, the existing crossing will be removed.
- Central Taranaki Safe Trust has done a pedestrian count to give the council an idea on how many people cross the roads at specific times and what age group they belong to.

### The Roading Asset Manager noted:

- The Roading Asset Manager reiterated that the plans have been in motion for a significant period of time through the transport choices programme which was lost through the change of government. He reiterated the conditions of the funding from NZTA and why the timeline is tight.
- Out of the 62 comments we have received, 57 are against options 1 and 2. The extra options seen in the agenda have been created after reviewing the submission and seeing the feedback.
- Council is happy to discuss and go through with other options.
- If we were to hold off on utilizing the current funding available, our project would have to go into a contestable fund further down the line against other projects throughout New Zealand and the outcome will not be known until September.

Questions/Points of discussion:

- Councillor Sandford asked the Roding Asset Manager that if council were to decide on another option that is not option 1 or 2, will there be adequate time for him to put together a proposal to give to NZTA before the 30<sup>th</sup> of June. The Roding Manager clarified that in anticipation for this decision there is a draft contract and rough quote in place that we will be able to go with if it is decided to proceed.
- Councillor Jones noted that an option mentions traffic lights, he was under the impression that for this funding NZTA ruled out traffic lights. He asked if this is still the case and if it is why? As it is a good safety option. NZTA representative Chris Lai noted that Stratford does meet the requirements for pedestrian signals based on traffic volume and activity. He noted that if we were to change the project to include traffic signals we would need to change the scope of the project with NZTA but clarified that he is not the right person to ask. The District Mayor clarified that upgrading the existing crossing with traffic signals would meet the guidelines from a safety perspective. Mr Lai confirmed this.
- Councillor Erwood noted that if we defer the current funding, we run the risk of losing it. He then stated that if we re-apply through the contestable fund later down the line and NZTA does not accept it, then our issues may not be a risk in their eyes. The Roding Asset manager noted that may not be the case as other projects within the contestable fund may be of higher priority. He also remarked that whilst signalising the crossing may be good for pedestrian safety, it is not the best for congestion. He noted that if 383 people are crossing the road in an hour and a half and the signals operated 100 times in that allocated time frame, it would cause a total of around 50 minutes of delay. Councillor Beck noted that if they are crossing the road regardless of the signal, wouldn't there be a delay anyway? The Roding Asset Manager clarified how the signals work and the inbuilt delay they have, he noted that the traffic light cycle is often longer than someone freely crossing the road. He also noted that we currently do not have the time to implement them and start construction before the 30<sup>th</sup> of June.
- Councillor Jones asked the Roding Asset Manager what traffic modelling has been done? The Roding Asset Manager clarified that we are not required to do any traffic modelling for pedestrian crossings, only if we were to involve traffic signals.
- Councillor Hall asked NZTA representative Mr Lai if he could weigh in on the pros and cons for options 1 and 2. Mr Lai noted that the option with the further north crossing is highly beneficial for members of the public walking up Regan Street but there would be traffic congestion.
- Councillor Beck noted that the lanes are only 3.5 meters wide for both cars and heavy transport, he asked if the lanes are too narrow as Stratford has frequent heavy vehicles with large wheel bases. The Roding Asset Manager that we would more than likely extend the lanes to 4 meters wide. Mr Lai noted that 3.5 meter lanes are standard for the State Highway and reducing the width of the lane in turn reduces speed.
- The Deputy Mayor questioned if option 4, moving the crossing to the Prospero Place green space, will be approved by NZTA. The Roding Asset Manager confirmed that the funding will be available.
- Councillor Boyde noted that when we first discussed the proposed project placing a crossing further north of the roundabout was not feasible but now it seems as if it is, he sought clarification on this. The Roding Asset Manager noted that originally it was not an option within the brief but after seeing the submissions and contacting NZTA, it is now available as an option.
- The District Mayor noted that in the submission process, the council received four submissions from different trucking companies from throughout the district. He noted that all made a similar point with their concern of trucks and trailers going through the roundabout and stopping on the crossing or holding up traffic. He asked Mr Lai what his view on this was. Mr Lai noted that it comes down to the frequency of heavy vehicles that are traversing through the main street. He remarked that ideally we would want to keep the roundabouts clear, but it is at a slow speed so there is a lower safety risk.
- The District Mayor noted that there were many different thoughts shared in the submissions and everyone's reasoning and logic was well done. He noted that we need to consider the positives and negatives of each option and that the main issues raised within submissions were lights, roundabout plantings, loss of parking, congestion, stacking of traffic and a bypass. He noted that not all issues are relevant to this conversation currently. The District Mayor invited councillors to express their thoughts on the options and state their preferred one.
- Councillor Hall noted changing the pedestrian crossing has been mentioned a number of times in her term at council and that the opportunity for this funding is great but can appreciate the

frustration of the timeline. She noted that she drives Broadway a number of times a day and agrees as a driver and a pedestrian, things need to change. Councillor Hall expressed that she leans towards evidence based decisions and the numbers from the Taranaki Safe Trust did just that for her. She appreciates that the loss of parking is frustrating but is in favour of option 1.

- Councillor Boyde stated that he has to disagree with Councillor Hall. He stated that he had done his own investigation on the community's feel of the proposed crossings and noted that he is suggesting a hybrid mix of option 4 and 5 as he believes it fits in with the majority of submissions.
- Councillor Beck noted that he has a similar opinion to Councillor Boyde. He noted that the overwhelming majority of submitters want to keep a central crossing point and believes that we can upgrade the existing crossing to be fit for purpose. Councillor Beck votes for option 4 and 5, a crossing by the green space in Prospero Place and one by the Northern Dairy and Field Torque.
- Councillor Jones noted that he can not support any options. He believes it is a rushed decision and although the funding is nice, rushing it is not the right decision. It was noted the he is prepared to wait and that if the decision was right, NZTA should accept the project for funding, regardless of the timeline. Councillor Jones is in support for option 6.
- Councillor Sandford noted that the community has had issues with the crossing for a while and the council currently have the opportunity to fix it without the rate payer having to fund it. He is in support for option 4 and 5.
- Councillor Erwood is in favour for options 4, 5 and 6. He noted that we should take our time and do it properly. Councillor Erwood stated that he will not support options 1,2 and 3 and that the updating of the crossings is about safety for everyone. It was noted that Councillor Erwood is in favour of lowering the vegetation on the roundabouts as some submissions mentioned.
- The District Mayor remarked that the height of the vegetation on the roundabout is a separate matter and we will note that opinion and come back to that at a later date.
- The Deputy Mayor noted that the key issue raised by the community is traffic congestion and acknowledges that everyone within the community has different experiences traversing on Broadway. She noted that Stratford has major issues with congestion and acknowledged that this is due to multiple reasons such as jaywalking, reversing out of car parks, roundabout back ups and the crossings. She noted that she is unsure that the addition of an extra crossing will create a significant impact on the congestion, and that the pedestrian refuge will allow for traffic to move more freely, only stopping one lane at a time. She noted that Stratford is lucky to have good parking and acknowledges that the reason as to why so many parks are planned to be removed is due to safety concerns. The Deputy Mayor noted there are two options she would give her support to, option 4 and 5 and option 1.
- Councillor Dudley noted that she has been on the fence and acknowledge that it is a big decision. She noted that option 4 looks as if we would gain an extra disability carpark, The Roding Asset Manager confirmed that we would gain a disability park. She expressed that she supports option 4 and 5.
- Councillor Harris noted that there is a lot of conversation about the consequences of parking loss and that the submitter on page 55 explained it best, congestion is a poor excuse for safety. She noted that as a member of council she is here to decide what will work best for the community, not just herself, she mentioned that the council does read every submission and we do take them into account. Councillor Harris expressed that we need to ensure that Stratford has safe access from the West to the East and will be in support of option 4 and 5.
- Councillor Erwood asked the Roding Asset Manager to clarify that if the existing crossing is to be shifted to be option 4, how many car parks would be lost? The Roding Asset Manager clarified that 10 parks would be lost, it is the option with the least amount of parks lost.
- The District mayor noted that the existing crossing in Broadway has been an issue for many years. He believes that moving the crossing north to be by the Prospero Place green space will resolve the issue the town has faced with viewers of the clock confusing drivers whilst still keeping a central crossing point. It was noted that having a crossing by the roundabout may cause a new issue and that a southern crossing may not be useful after seeing the numbers from Taranaki Safe Trust. He noted that after looking at the submissions from trucking companies he believes there is a high likelihood that issues will arise with trucks accidentally stopping on the crossing and such other scenarios. The District Mayor believes that the submissions are suggesting we only require one crossing in between the two roundabouts that is close to Prospero Place and notes that he believes the crossing by Field Torque Taranaki is a good idea. The District mayor is in support of option 4 and 5.

A division was called:

Those voting for the motion: Councillors: Beck, Boyde, Dudley, Erwood, Hall, Harris, Sandford, the Deputy Mayor and the District Mayor.

Those voting against the motion: Councillor Jones.

### Recommendation

1. THAT the Stratford District Council approves a combination of options 4 and 5 that includes:
  1. The construction of a pedestrian crossing approximately 40 meters north of the current crossing and in the vicinity of the Prospero Place grassed area and removal of the existing crossing.
  2. The construction of a pedestrian courtesy crossing north of the northern roundabout in the Field Torque Taranaki/Northern Dairy Area.

### Recommended Reason

Substantial progress must be made on the construction of the Broadway pedestrian crossings within this financial year to secure the allocated funding from NZTA. After discussion and the consideration of public submissions, it was decided that the option that is best suited to the community is a combination of option 4 and 5.

BOYDE/DUDLEY  
Division  
9 for  
1 against  
Carried  
CL/24/78

### 8. Questions

There were no questions.

### 9. Closing Karakia

D21/40748 Page 140

The closing karakia was read.

*The meeting closed at 12.23pm*

N C Volzke

**Chairman**

Confirmed this 9<sup>th</sup> day of July 2024.

N C Volzke  
**District Mayor**