



Chris Steel MLA

Minister for Transport and City Services

Minister for Skills

Special Minister of State

Member for Murrumbidgee

Mr Tom Duncan

Clerk

ACT Legislative Assembly

London Circuit

CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Duncan

Thank you for your letter regarding petition 40-22, lodged by Mr Michael Pettersson MLA, regarding a review and action plan for road and pedestrian safety around the Harrison education precinct.

The School Safety Program within Transport Canberra and City Services (TCCS) has been working with representatives from Harrison School and Mother Teresa Primary School over recent years to respond to traffic management and safety concerns around the schools. This support has led to several infrastructure improvements being delivered around the two schools to address safety concerns in recent years.

The infrastructure improvements have included converting non-prioritised pedestrian crossings on Mapleton Avenue and Nullarbor Avenue to raised wombat crossings, refuge island and signage improvements at a children's crossing on Mapleton Avenue, school carpark improvements at Harrison School, the removal of parking spaces on Katoomba Street to improve line of sight safety concerns at the children's crossing, new bollards to prevent illegal parking, and the relocation of a children's crossing on Wimmera Street to a safer and more accessible location.

Two of these improvements were delivered on Mapleton Avenue between Sapling Street and Flemington Road – an area highlighted in the petition – to increase safety for pedestrians. A school crossing supervisor has also been provided at the children's crossing on Mapleton Avenue to support pedestrians to cross the road during the school peak periods.

Regarding the suggestion of an independent study of the Harrison Education Precinct, I am advised TCCS already engaged a consultant in 2021 to undertake an independent study and review pedestrian and traffic safety around Harrison School and Mother Teresa Primary School. The

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Education Directorate, both schools (including a selection of parent representatives) and the Harrison Early Childhood Centre were consulted and invited to support the investigation and review the report findings.

The report highlighted some unsafe driving and parking behaviours and recommended a combination of education, enforcement and engineering treatments to address the issues identified. TCCS subsequently offered support to the schools to assist with education and enforcement. The report also highlighted some engineering treatments that the two schools may wish to consider implementing within the school carparks to assist with traffic management and safety. These recommendations were shared with the two schools for consideration.

Another recommendation in the report was to consider a new pedestrian crossing on Wimmera Street. Given this recommendation and feedback from the community, TCCS has engaged a consultant to investigate this recommendation further and develop detailed designs for the crossing, which will improve pedestrian access to the school near the roundabout at the Wimmera Street and Nullarbor Avenue intersection. Subject to consultation with key stakeholders through the detailed design process, including Harrison School, and the completion of detailed design, this project could be considered for construction in future.

TCCS has reviewed the bus stops on Nullarbor Avenue outside Harrison School. The bus stops are only scheduled to be used by Transport Canberra for a school service (SR1003) to St John Paul College in Nicholls. The bus services for Harrison School, including services run by providers other than Transport Canberra, use the bus stops on Wimmera Street to drop off and collect students.

The number of students using the bus stops on Nullarbor Avenue to catch the school service to St John Paul College are very low (approximately 1-2 students per day). Given the low usage, Transport Canberra is not currently planning to upgrade the bus stops on Nullarbor Avenue. Transport Canberra will continue to monitor the usage over time to consider whether bus stop upgrades are required in the future.

The speed limits in Harrison are consistent with the speed limits applied across the ACT. TCCS will continue to collect and monitor traffic data in the area to determine if traffic calming treatments or increased enforcement activities are required on any streets in Harrison in the future.

It is important to note that schools are busy environments each morning and afternoon with most trips being concentrated around short peak periods. This can create congestion – especially at locations with large student numbers and low participation in cycling and walking. Both schools are supported by three active travel programs – the Ride or Walk to School, Active Streets for Schools and School Crossing Supervisor programs – to encourage and support students to walk or ride to school. TCCS will continue to encourage the schools to participate in these programs to help to reduce the reliance on private vehicles.

TCCS has also encouraged the schools to promote alternative drop off and collection points to reduce the volume of vehicles in Wimmera Street during the peak periods, including parking at the sportsgrounds that are a short walk from the two schools.

TCCS has reviewed the feedback provided by the school communities through the Active Travel Plan consultation process and will continue to work with the schools to identify and respond to safety concerns in the area.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris Steel', is positioned below the text 'Yours sincerely'.

Chris Steel MLA
Minister for Transport and City Services
05 June 2023