

# Local traffic update

by Robert Newman

## Elizabeth Street at Wilkes Ave

Since the temporary closure of Cameron Ave West in June 2007, there have been a number of proposals for traffic and pedestrian improvements at this location ranging from road closures to fences on the east side of Elizabeth St to two pedestrian crossings with a 30 metre island in the middle of the road.

Council received funding from the RTA to upgrade the pedestrian refuge at this location to bring it in line with current standards. This funding was \$17,000 with matching funding from Council but the work needed to be completed by the end of June.

The completed works provide a two metre wide refuge in the centre of the crossing. The trade-off for the wider refuge is traffic now passing much closer to parked vehicles on Elizabeth St than previously.

*Why is there a pedestrian refuge and not a pedestrian crossing?*

Traffic levels for cars are not high enough, in peak hour there are around 150 traffic movements.

*Why didn't council discuss this?*

They did. In fact after a lot of discussion and plans over the last year a meeting was held in May on site with all 3 local Councillors, 4 members of the APA, representatives of local business and Willoughby Council's Traffic & Transport staff. At this meeting it was decided that we didn't need two crossings 16 metres apart on a 30 metre island. Also it was felt that the surplus funds could be better used addressing the issues of pedestrian safety at the new library location which was purchased after the original proposal for funding was applied for from the RTA.

*Why is the road so narrow now?*

The lanes are 3.0 metres wide to ensure that

speeds were reduced more effectively and also to minimise loss of parking as 3.0m lane widths allows larger kerb blisters, improving visibility to pedestrians and hence reducing the amount of No Stopping required on approach and departure from the refuge.

## I am NOT a pedestrian crossing

Pedestrians do NOT have right of way over cars if crossing the road at a pedestrian refuge. A refuge is used where the traffic levels of both cars and pedestrians are not high enough for RTA to allow a pedestrian crossing to be installed. The refuge is to allow pedestrians to cross the road in two sections by giving them a safer area in which to stand rather than the exposed middle of the road while cars drive on either side.

One thing is for sure - pedestrians will come off the worse in any encounter so be sure to use the utmost care whenever crossing the road.

## Pedestrians can be fined by the police

On-the-spot fines apply to pedestrians who commit the following offences:

- cross against an amber or red traffic light
- cross against a 'don't walk' sign
- cross the road within 20 metres of a pedestrian crossing
- fail to use the shortest or most direct route across a road
- walk along or fail to give way when crossing a bicycle path
- walk improperly on a road.



*The new pedestrian refuge at Wilkes Ave*

So all the pedestrian traffic crossing Hampden Rd rushing to catch a train or get home - don't say you haven't been warned!

## Cameron Ave carpark

New signs have been erected to clearly delineate the 3 hour and all day parking zones.

## Ella St bridge (Dalleys Rd)

The rail bridge at Ella St / Dalleys Rd will be closed from 21 September 2009 to 21 April 2010 on last Council advice. This is likely to affect residents and workers who use this route, from Herbert St, to access Naremburn and Willoughby.

## Pedestrian refuge near Channel 9

A new pedestrian refuge will be installed on Artarmon Rd, just east of Richmond St, just over the Channel 9 hill. It was originally requested to be closer to Edward St but this location was too close to the crest of the hill for traffic coming from Willoughby Rd. ■