



16 May 2018

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Submission for a Signalised Pedestrian Crossing on Mercari Way, Albany, Auckland

**Introduction**

Business North Harbour represents approximately 4,500 commercial property and business owners located within the business district north of Constellation Drive/Upper Harbour Highway and south of Oteha Valley Road. This business district employs over 35,000 employees.

Mercari Way is on the boundary of Business North Harbour's area. Therefore, this submission is representing the businesses on the Eastern side of the road (odd numbers) only.

*Our submission on the installation of a signalised pedestrian crossing across Mercari Way, are as follows:*

**SARAH DE ZWART**

Relationship and Transport Manager



**CONNECT. COMMUNICATE. COLLABORATE.**

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## Location

Mercari Way is a critical link for the Albany retail area. It accommodates on the Western side mega retail centres, whilst on the Eastern side smaller mixed retail, eateries, entertainment, offices and a 24-hour service station.

Mercari Way services both day time and night time economies through the predominately retail and hospitality business operations.

Mercari Way is a main feeder route from Albany Expressway, to the Westfield Mall, and the Albany Mega Centre which comprises mainly of large format retail. Traffic on Mercari Way is feed from State Highway 1 to the Northern motorway, to Rosedale Road which links the North Harbour business and commercial district.

Contributors to the Mercari Way traffic flow are Massey University (with approximately 7,000 students) Don McKinnon Drive and additional commercial business operations from Corinthian Drive.

In addition, Westfield Mall with approximately 8.5-8.8 million visitors per annum, and the adjacent Albany Mega Centre complex, would be the main contributor of retail traffic.

As a location, Albany has been identified by Auckland's Council as a strategic (nodal) area of growth for Auckland (Auckland Plan 2050).

## Our Process

Business North Harbour were advised on 4 May 2018, that Auckland Transport are in formal consultation regarding a proposed signalised pedestrian crossing across Mercari Way.

We were advised that Auckland Transport had sent out letters to the property owners and businesses along Mercari Way which guided them to the web page and give details on how to provide feedback using our online survey.

Auckland Transport also contacted the Upper Harbour Local Board and all relevant business and community organisations within the area.

As a service to our members, we personally contacted many of the residing businesses and property owners who were in the immediate vicinity of the new changes.

We needed to understand the level of support for, or opposition to, the proposed implementation of a signalised pedestrian crossing.

## Our Findings

*Please note:*

*Business North Harbour have not undertaken independent verification of Auckland Transport's plans nor designs.*

*Our positioning is based on the assumption that Auckland Transport's plans are both robust and accurate. If this proves not to be the case, our position and subsequent evidence may need to change.*

- Overall there is overwhelming support for the development. The two main factors in the positive decision were:
  - Safety from the employees who regularly cross, and their customers.
  - Maximisation of the parking facilities on both sides of Mercari Way

- Public awareness of the submission was minimal. Of the 25+ businesses which were contacted only 2 were aware of the proposal.
- Business North Harbour requests an update on Auckland Transport's proposal for the removal or alteration of the traffic island in the middle of Mercari Way to allow right turns, as proposed to our members in 2015.
- Business North Harbour requests an update on the proposed upgrading of the Mercari Way and Don McKinnon Drive intersection, from a roundabout to a signalised intersection, as stated on the Auckland Transport website: <https://at.govt.nz/projects-roadworks/mercari-waydon-mckinnon-drive-intersection/> Last update 4 July 2014.

## **Conclusion**

Business North Harbour are in support of the pedestrian crossing as it is expected to improve the volume and safety of the pedestrian flow between the western and eastern sides of Mercari Way. This as previously stated, will increase opportunities for our members.

Business North Harbour considers the proposed signalised pedestrian crossing as a positive INTERIM solution for Mercari Way.

## **Further Considerations**

However due to the volume of traffic generated through the Albany destination shopping, and the growth of the commercial, retail, proposed mixed use development directly behind Mercari Way, Business North Harbour requests a formal review of the entire Mercari Way and Don McKinnon Drive traffic behaviour to future proof safety concerns and traffic management. This is critical with expected employee numbers as outlined in the Auckland Plan 2050, with the Albany centre expected to employ over 15,000 and 6,000 residents.

Business North Harbour on behalf of our members, requests an update from Auckland Transport on previously circulated proposed Mercari Way/Don McKinnon Drive roundabout changes. Business North Harbour requests an update from Auckland Transport as to the previously circulated 'turn right' proposals.

*We will publish our submission on our website [www.businessnh.org.nz](http://www.businessnh.org.nz) so that our members know their feedback has been forwarded to Auckland Transport.*

If you have any questions, please contact the author.

Thank you.