
REPORT 4
(1215/48/IM)

MANNERS/DIXON/VICTORIA/WILLIS STREETS TRAFFIC AND STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS

1. Purpose of Report

To seek the Committee's approval to one of the recommended options for traffic circulation and streetscape improvements in the area of Manners/Dixon/ Victoria/Willis Streets.

2. Executive Summary

Montgomery Watson Harza (MWH) were commissioned by Council to look at a number of options for traffic circulation in the area of Manners/Dixon/Victoria/Willis Streets. This included considering the following wider city objectives:

- Minimise bus travel times
- Maintain vehicle accessibility
- Provide on street servicing
- Provide on street parking
- Improve pedestrian amenities
- Provide some useable public space (seating, gathering areas)
- Improve linkage between Manners Mall and Manners St

After detailed analysis of a wide range of options, three schemes were refined to concept level plans covering the following options:

Option A: Status Quo with bus advance signals at Dixon /Victoria and Manners/Willis Streets

Option B: Status Quo with Manners St buses only

Option C: Status Quo but buses and cars routed one-way westbound on Dixon St, to Willis St. General traffic routed eastbound on Manners St

With all options, the right turn from Victoria into Manners Street was to be closed.

Comment on these options was invited from the community, including key stakeholders and interest groups. Feed back from a majority of respondents was evenly split between options B and C. However feed back from bus and taxi operators preferred option B. This primarily reflected their desire for consistency of route and concerns over congestion at key intersections on Dixon St and Willis St.

Option C performs the best in terms of overall traffic efficiency now and in the future but when the Council's objective of enhancing public transport is factored in, then option B emerged as the preferred option.

Following a report to Committee in April where option B was recommended, Committee asked for option B to be explored in more detail to allow the continuation of the right turn from Victoria Street into Manners Street. Design work also covered the pedestrian link between Manners Street and Manners Mall, footpath widening, positioning of street trees and furniture. While investigations show that it is possible to allow the right turn from Victoria Street into Manners Street it is not the most efficient transport option. A subsequent survey of users of the area confirmed that a clear majority would accept the right turn from Victoria Street into Manners Street being closed off.

It is requested that the Committee consider the following potential options:

Option 1/ Status Quo with Victoria Street two lanes south bound past Manners Street; bus advance facilities on Dixon Street at Cuba Street and on Manners Street at Willis Street.

Option 2/ (Option B) Victoria Street two lanes south bound past Manners Street; right turn from Victoria Street into Manners Street closed; and only buses, taxis, and service vehicles carrying out business in the street being permitted to turn right from Dixon Street into Victoria Street, north bound between 6am and 6pm Monday to Saturday. General vehicles would be permitted outside these times.

Option 3/ (Modified Option B) Victoria Street two lanes south bound past Manners Street; the right turn from Victoria Street into Manners permitted; and buses only permitted to turn right from Dixon Street into Victoria Street, north bound at all times.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Note **that further** surveys were conducted of predominantly car drivers using Manners Street to add to **feedback from** previous consultation.*
3. *Approve one of the following options:*

Option 1/ Status Quo with Victoria Street two lanes south bound past Manners Street; bus advance facilities on Dixon Street at Cuba Street and on Manners Street at Willis Street

*Option 2/ (Option B) Victoria Street two lanes south bound past Manners Street, right **turn from** Victoria Street into Manners Street closed. Only buses, taxis, and service vehicles carrying out business in the street being permitted to turn right **from** Dixon Street into Victoria Street, north bound between 6am and 6pm Monday to Saturday. General vehicles would be permitted outside these times.*

Option 3/ (Modified Option B) Victoria Street two lanes south bound past Manners Street; the right **turn from** Victoria Street into Manners permitted; and buses only permitted to turn **right from** Dixon Street onto Victoria Street, north bound at all times.

4. Note that **a further** report will be brought back to the Committee for approval of detailed **traffic** and parking resolutions as required.

4. Background

4.1 Scheme Objectives

MWH (Montgomery Watson Harza) were asked to carry out a comprehensive study on the circulation options for Manners/Victoria/Dixon/Willis Streets. Increasing general traffic congestion and concerns from Stagecoach and other bus companies operating in the area have reinforced the need for this work. The study examined the most appropriate form of traffic management for the area, particularly conscious of the importance of these streets for public transport services. However, the public transport improvements have not been pursued without due consideration for the needs of other general traffic, pedestrians and requirements for general servicing, parking and public space within the area.

To this end the following wider Council objectives were identified for the area.

- Minimise bus travel times
- Maintain vehicle accessibility
- Provide on street servicing
- Provide on street parking
- Improve pedestrian amenities
- Provide some useable public space (seating, gathering areas)
- Improve linkage between Manners Mall and Manners St

4.2 Options

A wide range of options for improving traffic management were identified and tested. All options were within the existing road reserve and there is no consideration of property acquisition.

The first stage analysis was designed to assist the Council in narrowing its selection of options to three. The second stage was to develop these options to concept level suitable for consultation with the community. The Committee approved the following three options for this work in September 2002.

These were:

Option A: Status Quo with bus advance signals at Dixon /Victoria and Manners/Willis

Option B: Status Quo with Manners St buses only

Option C: Status Quo but buses and cars routed one-way westbound on Dixon St, Victoria to Willis St. General traffic routed eastbound on Manners St.

In each of these options the right turn from Victoria St into Manners Street was closed off. A “do minimum” option would introduce bus advance signals at Dixon /Victoria and Manners/Willis Streets within the existing street circulation pattern.

Option B was recommended to Committee in March as it best fitted the objectives and was supported by the bus companies and Taxi operators. Committee however recommended to the Council that the status quo remain but with bus advance signals at Dixon /Victoria and Manners/Willis. This decision was referred to the Council for ratification. However they referred it back to City Infrastructure Committee to revisit the options and consider keeping the right turn from Victoria Street into Manners Street.

4.3 Consultation

Detailed concept plans were developed for each option to show the traffic circulation patterns and to draw out the key urban design possibilities within each option. A consultation pack was produced and distributed to local businesses, stakeholders such as the bus and taxi companies, Retailers Association, Chamber of Commerce and AA, to solicit feed back on these schemes. Advertising in the region-wide Contact newspaper invited the wider community to comment. Information could be obtained directly from the Council’s web site with its online facility for comment or by requesting an information pack that included a freepost submission form.

4.4 Results from Consultation

57 submissions were received. Of these support for each option was as follows:

Option A: 7
Option B: 24
Option C: 20
Existing: 6

For those that supported option B there was generally no desire to change Willis St to one-way. However those supporting option C almost unanimously supported making Willis St one-way.

Both bus and taxi companies, who together move the most people through this area support option B. Principally bus operators saw two problems with option C. They consider there will be congestion at the intersections of Dixon/Willis Streets and Willis/Manners/Boulcott Streets if general traffic is still to use these areas and believe there would be a psychological barrier to passengers in moving from the bus stop outside the Mid City to Willis St. Bus operators see the potential for quick improvements by Council implementing option A but are keen to see option B implemented as soon as possible. They would like to see option C re-evaluated when the inner city bypass is complete. Taxi operators support option B only if they are permitted to use Victoria and Manners Streets and street widths are maintained, otherwise they believe the present street arrangement should be kept.

Submissions from the general public generally favoured either option B (11 respondents) or C (8 respondents). The main comment coming through being either a desire to improve public transport reliability or reduce general traffic congestion in this area of the city.

Submissions from businesses and residents working and living in the area generally supported option C (9 respondents) with B (6 respondents) a close second. The main comment coming through being a desire to see more traffic in the street to improve the exposure of their business and to maintain existing parking and servicing provisions.

A submission from Cycle Aware criticised Council's lack of consideration for cyclists in any scheme. Forced to choose an option, they prefer option B on the proviso that cyclists share the bus only lane in Manners Street as well as there being a contra flow cycle lane. They also want to reduce Victoria Street past the end of Manners Street to one traffic lane plus a dedicated cycle lane.

The Retailers Association considered that their members were best served by option A if there has to be change. They are concerned that traffic will be further congested at the intersections of Victoria/Dixon and Dixon/ Willis Streets and don't want to promote any scheme that will do this.

The AA preferred option C as the best solution to improve this area of the City's roading network for general traffic now and in the future.

4.5 Traffic Modelling

This area of the city's roading network carries approximately 19,000 people a day by bus and 23,000 people by car of which taxis carry approximately 5,000 based on information provided by the Bus and Coach Association and the Wellington Regional Branch of the NZ Taxi Federation. Traffic modelling results show that all options improve bus travel time through the area with option C giving the greatest improvement. This comes at the expense of longer travel time for cars except for option C which shows an overall improvement for all traffic. Adoption of either option A or B will best work if Dixon Street is made one-way west between Victoria Street and Willis Street. Unless Dixon Street is made one-way, queuing problems will be experienced. Option C already assumed Dixon Street would be one way. Even better performance of the network can be achieved in option C if Dixon Street is made bus only westbound, the Inner City Bypass is in place and Ghuznee Street is turned back to a two way city street.

Looking at a wider range of transport performance indicators resulting from the modelling we can see that these options except A, produce more CO emissions and all options use more fuel than the existing circulation pattern.

5. Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The City Infrastructure Committee last considered this proposal in April. It has been referred back to this Committee to further consider the options and explore the feasibility of allowing the right turn from Victoria Street into Manners Street. Although there was acceptance that business and stakeholder groups had been well canvassed by consultation there was some concern at the lack of survey information from people who drive through this area. The Committee felt that this group was not well reached in previous consultation. Further analysis of allowing the right turn has been carried out

and a design for this is shown in the appendix. A further survey has also been carried out to target drivers who use this area on a regular basis.

5.2 Results from Survey

A survey was conducted specifically targeting people in the vicinity of Manners Street/Manners Mall, Manners/Willis Street intersection and outside Boulcott Street, Willis Street and Lombard, car parking buildings. Of the 200 respondents surveyed 83% drive vehicles in the inner city and 71% use Manners Street at some time, 61% once or more a week. Of those using Manners Street 84% use the right turn into Manners Street at some time. The majority of drivers were unconcerned at the prospect of using an alternative route to Manners Street and most thought that an alternative route would not affect their usual travel time. A clear majority of respondents, including both drivers and non drivers, were in favour of the right turn from Victoria Street onto Manners Street being abolished. Some 60% of drivers who use Manners Street are in favour of the right turn being abolished, with just over 50% of the drivers who use the turn on a regular basis in favour of it being abolished to allow for improvements to the pedestrian crossing and Manners Street in general.

5.3 Traffic Modelling

Traffic modelling of a variation to Option B where the right turn from Victoria Street into Manners Street is allowed, showed that overall travel time for all vehicles is similar, but the travel time savings for buses is reduced on that achieved under option B. The overall network efficiency of this option is similar to the other three options but again if maximum efficiency is to be maintained, then Dixon Street needs to be made one-way.

5.4 Amenity Considerations

Apart from the odd comment questioning the need for any work in the area, there was a general desire to see more trees in the streetscape and for footpaths to be upgraded and widened. However there was a caution from the Retailers Association and some businesses, to ensure trees do not obscure the ability of retailers to be seen. A general call was also made for more seating, rubbish bins and from Cycle Aware for more cycle stands.

The greatest pedestrian improvement in the area can be made by banning the right turn from Victoria Street into Manners Street. This allows the Manners Street footpath to be extended out into the intersection to enable a more direct crossing between Manners St and Manners Mall. The pedestrian cross walks can be simplified and the intersection phasing improved for a better level of service for the pedestrians.

5.5 Overall assessment of Options

It is considered important that whichever option is chosen it should meet the objectives set at the outset to maintain the qualities of a liveable street. The options now being considered all have the potential to meet the objectives to varying degrees.

Option 1/ Status Quo with Victoria Street two lanes south bound past Manners Street; bus advance facilities on Dixon Street at Cuba Street and on Manners Street at Willis Street will improve bus times considerably while maintaining the existing street network. Plans for bus laning and bus advance signals are shown in the appendix.

Option 2/ (Option B) Victoria Street two lanes south bound past Manners Street; right turn from Victoria Street into Manners Street closed; and only buses, taxis, and service vehicles carrying out business permitted to turn right from Dixon Street onto Victoria Street, north bound between 6am and 6pm Monday to Saturday. Dixon Street one-way westward. General vehicles would be allowed outside these times. This option will significantly change traffic flow patterns but offers the best overall travel savings particularly for buses.

Option 3/ (Modified Option B) Victoria Street two lanes south bound past Manners Street; the right turn from Victoria Street into Manners permitted; and buses only permitted to turn right from Dixon Street onto Victoria Street north bound between 6am and 6pm Monday to Saturday. Dixon Street one-way westward. This option maintains more flexible route choice for cars but loses some of the advantages that could be gained under option 2 for buses. It however could be seen as an incremental step towards a bus only route through Manners Street in the future.

Plans showing the intersection of Manners Street and Victoria Street with and without the right turn are included in the appendix.

Any of the above options could fulfil the project's objectives, and deliver on the Council's broader transport objective of enhancing public transport on the golden mile and to improve the reliability of public transport in the CBD. With the new information available, the Committee is asked to determine a preferred option for implementation.

5.6 Further Work

Detailed design of the preferred option will follow. Completed plans will be circulated to business owners and residents in the area prior to construction for any feedback on street improvements and the siting of trees to ensure there are no conflicts with business activities. Costs will be kept within those budgeted in the annual plan. Traffic resolutions for any traffic and parking changes will be referred to the Committee for approval through the normal traffic resolutions process.

6. Conclusion

Analysis of the three options for improving the circulation of traffic in the block bounded by Dixon/Victoria/Manners/Willis Street has shown that any of these schemes will achieve the outcomes set by the Committee. The major transport operators have supported option 2 in the past and would equally support option 3 as a variation. Bus operators would also support option 1 but prefer option 2 as it potentially provides the greatest travel time savings through the area. Option 2 would gain the support of a majority of drivers who use the area and who stand to lose the most by this option in terms of flexibility of route choice. Option 2 also provides the best opportunity to

improve the pedestrian link between Manners Street and Manners Mall. However Option 3 maintains the flexibility of route choice for car drivers. As all options meet the Council's broader transport objective of enhancing public transport on the golden mile and to improve the reliability of public transport in the CBD the Committee is asked to determine its preferred option for implementation.

Contact Officer: Stephen Harte, Manager, Asset Development, Roading, Traffic and Transportation

Supporting information

a) Strategic fit

This project supports the following outcomes in the Strategic Plan:

Outcome 8.1 – Transport Effectiveness

A well planned/comprehensive transport network supports a compact and highly liveable city where people move about easily and safely.

Outcome 8.2 – Transport Accessibility

Transport options enable people to easily fulfil their work and lifestyle requirements.

Outcome 8.3 – Transport Efficiency

Efficient transport contributes to the economic viability and growth of the city.

Outcome 8.4 – Transport Sustainability

Transport solutions ensure wise use of resources and cater for the long-term needs of the community.

b) Annual Plan reference

Relates to CX3 77 Roading Capacity Improvements -Vehicle Network

c) Annual Plan and Long Term Financial Strategy implications

The cost of design will be met from existing budgets. The implementation of the project will be met by project CX377

d) Treaty of Waitangi implications

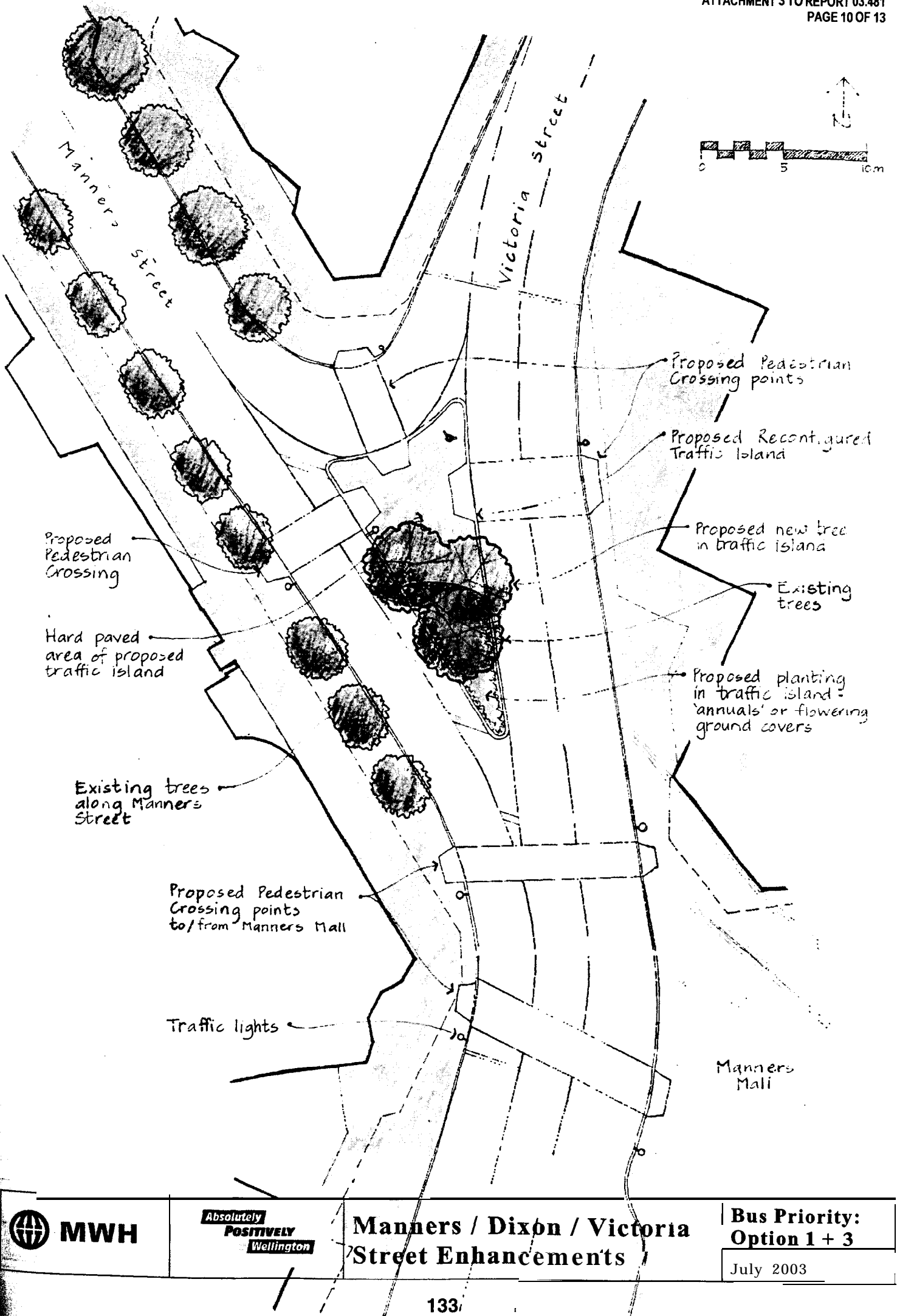
None identified.

e) Consultation

Consultation with the Community, affected residents, businesses and stakeholder has been carried out and the results reported above. Further feedback will be sought on the final design from directly affected businesses and residents in the area.

f) Legal implications

The are no legal implications

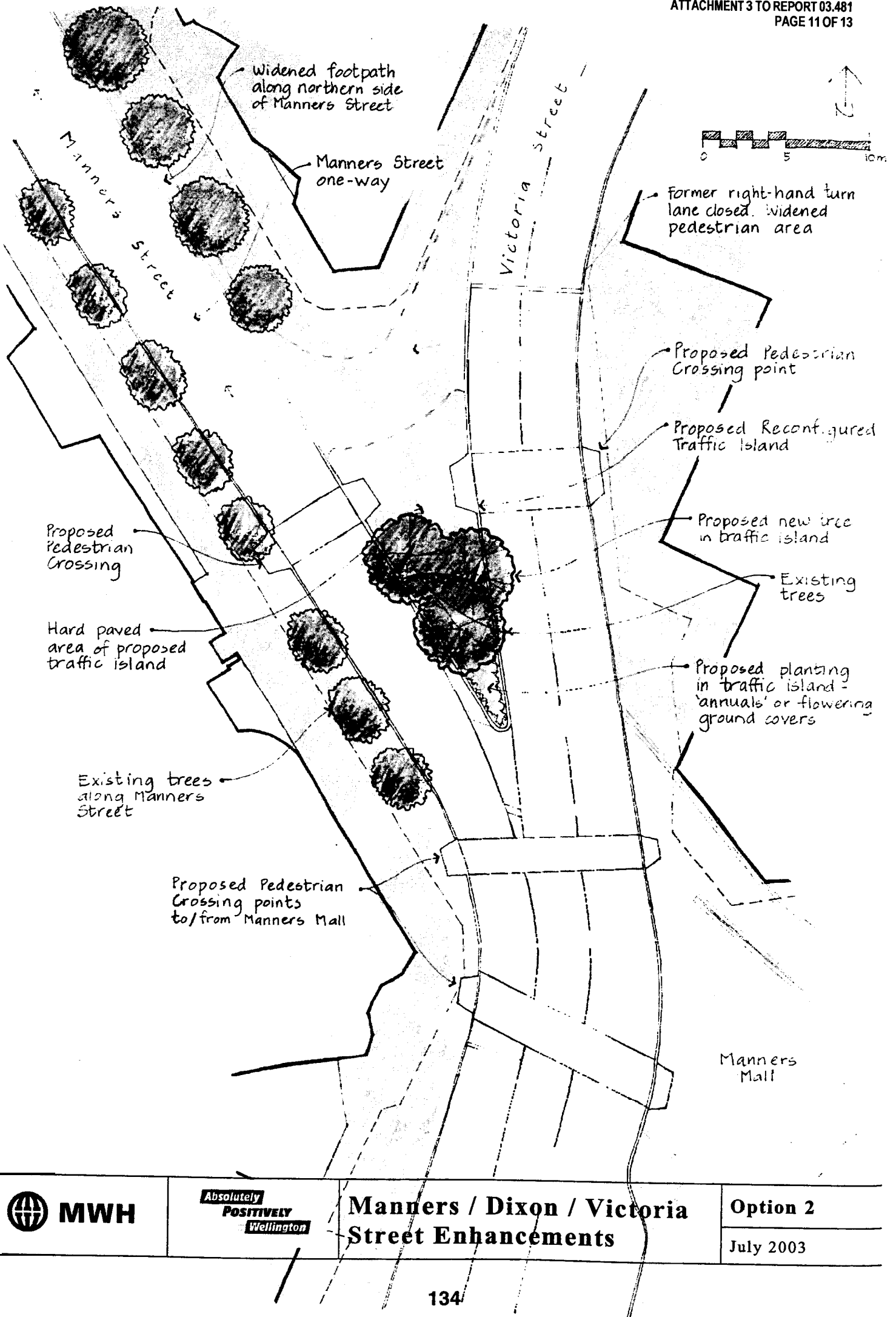



**Absolutely
POSITIVELY
Wellington**

Manners / Dixon / Victoria Street Enhancements

**Bus Priority:
Option 1 + 3**

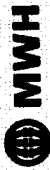
July 2003



 MWH	Absolutely POSITIVELY Wellington	Manners / Dixon / Victoria Street Enhancements	Option 2
			July 2003

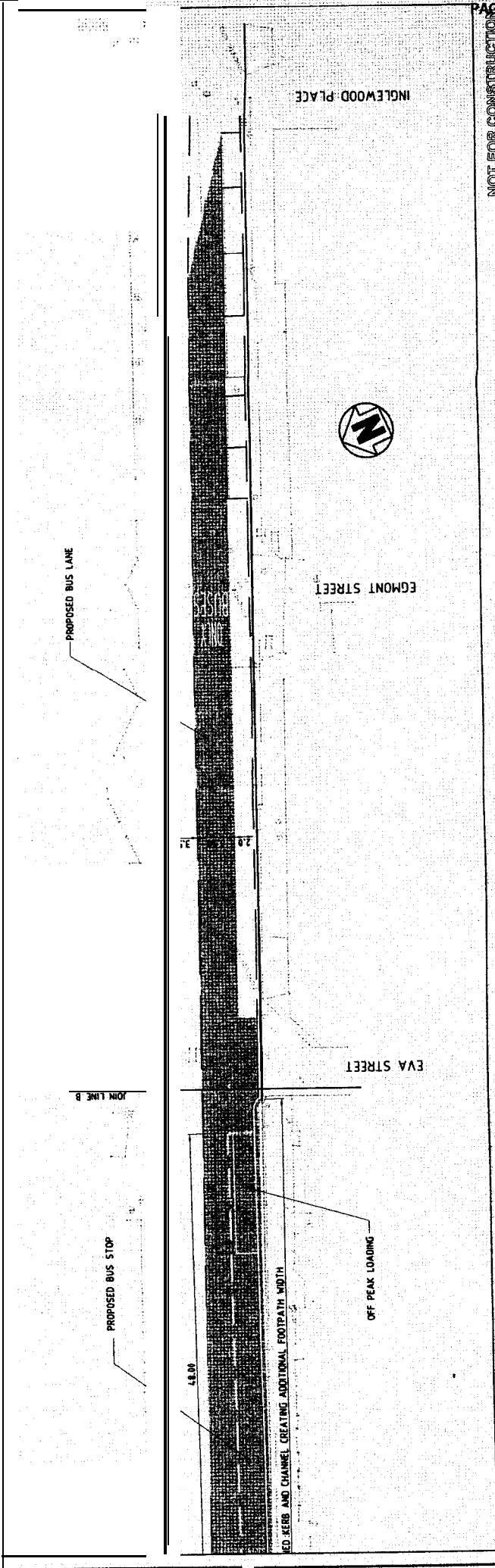
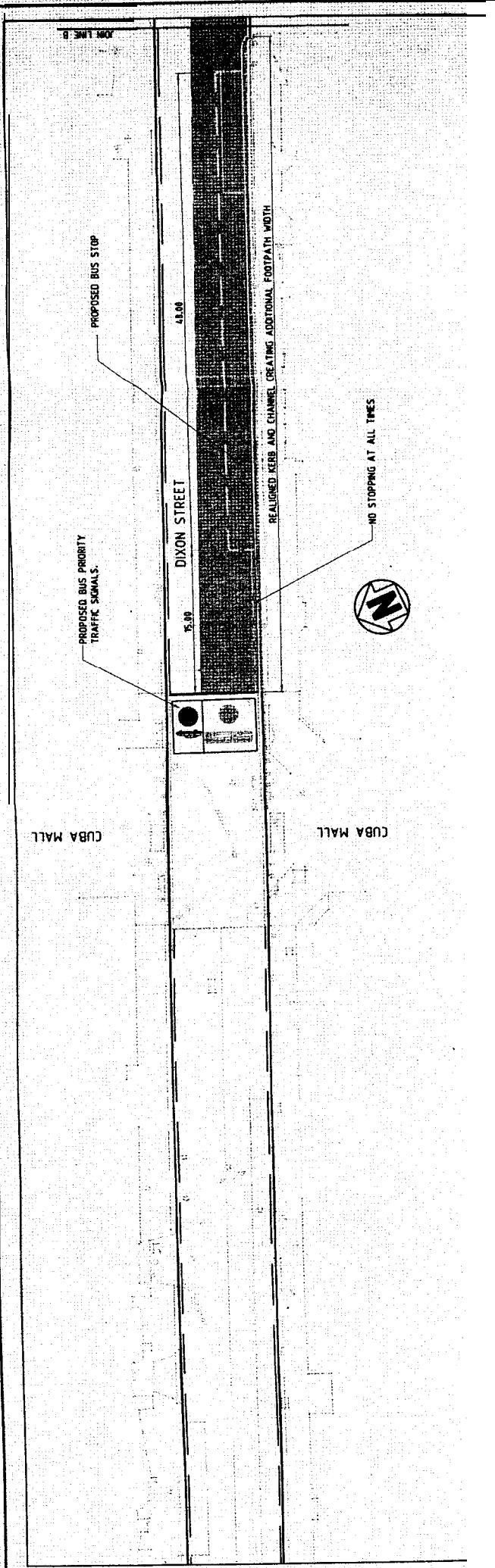
MANNERS/DIXON/VICTORIA STREET ENHANCEMENTS

BUS PRIORITY OPTION 1 + 2 + 3
 SHEET 2 OF 2



FIELDBOOK	DATE
SURVEYED	05/03
DESIGNED	07/03
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APPROVED	

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