

Submission

No 14

INQUIRY INTO SCHOOL ZONE SAFETY

Name: Mr Chris Wong

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Given that the purpose of 'school zone' is to protect students crossing a road next to the school, imposing a school zone on a road with hardly any students crossing it, result in motorist suffering costly delay without meaningful benefits.

Narellan Rd near Mt Annan is a good example. A school zone was installed in Narellan Rd just because it is 'next to a school', even though the school is far from the road, and few students would want to walk 1000 m+ to cross Narellan Rd.

The other 'justification' for the Narellan Rd school zone is to protect students waiting at the bus stop. First, how many students are waiting at this bus stop? To save students a long walk, the school bus would pick up and drop off students at the school building. So hardly any students would wait at Narellan Rd bus stop.

For those that said 'we must protect every single student', there are 2 things to look into.

First, let's consider separating Narellan Rd from the school. Build a slip lane from Narellan Rd into the school access road, and relocate the bus stop to this access road. This will allow buses to drive into this access, with the bus stop separated from Narellan Rd traffic. For good measure, the school boundary can be moved away from Narellan Rd as shown, so only the access road is 'next to' Mt Annan College. With Narellan Rd separated from the school, there is no need for school zone any more. Too unusual? This is not that different from Magdalene Catholic High School further west along Narellan Rd. Physical separation from motor traffic is better than traffic speed reduction.

Second, is it fair to make (a big proportion of) ~60 000 cars and trucks to give way to a handful of students for 180 minutes everyday? The amount of people and goods forced to pay a price are disproportional to the students safety benefit. For maximum benefit to society it would be better to remove the Narellan Rd school zone. Alternatively, the school zone hours can be narrowed down to the school's actual start and end time. With the flashing light technology, there is no need for uniform NSW school zone hours anymore.

In summary, the Narellan Rd school zone can be removed or reducing impact by:

Separating the school from Narellan Rd, or

Reducing school zone time using flashing light to indicate school zone hours, or

Remove school zone due to low volume of student crossing Narellan Rd

The above methods can be used at many other school zones through out NSW. Many schools have benefited from pedestrian bridges and fences, separating the school and its students from motor traffic. In these locations, why should motorist continue to suffer from a school zone that no longer protect students (on foot)? With pedestrian fences lining Carlingford Rd and a pedestrian bridge over the road, the Epping West Public School's school zone over Carlingford Rd should follow the nearby speed camera and go away.



New boundary

Slip lane