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40km/h around shopping centres a knee-jerk reaction

RACQ has questioned a planned speed limit drop to 40km/h around shopping centres and dining precincts in Brisbane, saying the proposal was a knee-jerk reaction which may not save a single life.

Brisbane City Council (BCC) announced it would commence a rolling program to install 40km/h safety zones at dozens of popular suburban areas with shops and cafes, to reduce the number of vehicle crashes with pedestrians and cyclists.

RACQ spokesperson Paul Turner said the move was concerning, as no evidence had been released to support lowering speeds on major roads around suburban shopping centres.

“This is a knee-jerk reaction by BCC because we haven’t seen any evidence on which roads have been chosen, and why,” Mr Turner said.

“It seems to be a quick and cheap solution to a complex problem, and not necessarily the right one.

“While we’ve supported the change to 40km/h on Ann Street in the CBD, we’d need to see hard evidence of the effects of speed on incidents involving pedestrians in these shopping precincts before we would endorse them.

“We have serious issues with 40km/h zones on multi lane major commuter thoroughfares like Old Cleveland Road and Gympie Road. These are already heavily congested roads with slow travel times so infrastructure separation should be considered to protect vulnerable road users and keep traffic moving.

“If BCC is serious about pedestrian and cyclist safety, they need to do more than put up a few signs, and should be prepared to stump up some cash. It’s far better to prevent the incident happening in the first place, than to have it occur at a slower speed.”

Mr Turner said BCC had not consulted with motoring groups on the proposed change.

“We’re really concerned with the lack of consultation on such a big change. BCC seems to be jumping on the bandwagon of changing a few speed signs without actually stopping to look at the cause and effect.”

Media inquiries: RACQ spokesperson Paul Turner 04408 850 270; RACQ Media Advisor Clare Hunter 0427 261 932.

RACQ is Queensland’s largest club and peak independent motoring organisation. We were formed in 1905 to represent the interests of the State’s first motorists and today campaign for safer drivers, vehicles and roads on behalf of the 1.7 million members who own the Club. We offer those members a vast range of motoring, insurance, banking, entertainment and travel services and benefits, and each year respond to more than a million calls for roadside assistance.