

ITEM 10. LAWSON STREET CYCLEWAY AND FOOTPATH IMPROVEMENTS**FILE NO: S118109****SUMMARY**

Lawson Street is a busy thoroughfare for people walking between Redfern Station and Sydney University. The southern footpath is particularly congested between Little Eveleigh Street and Ivy Lane, with up to 3,000 people using the path in the morning peak each day.

This project will provide more footpath space for people walking to and from Redfern Station, reconfiguring the location of kerbside parking and trees to release more useable area for pedestrians.

Lawson Street and Lawson Square is a busy section of road network that currently does not have any cycle facilities. This is a high priority cycle route for bike riders from Newtown to the eastern CBD. This project completes a missing link in the City's Newtown to City regional cycle network.

A separated bi-directional cycleway will run along Lawson Street and Lawson Square between Little Eveleigh Street and Wells Street to connect into existing cycle facilities. The crossing points at signalised and un-signalised intersections will provide a safe crossing environment for bike riders.

The project aims to balance the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, street tree canopy cover, screening between residential properties either side of the street, and to retain as much parking as possible.

The NSW Government is partially funding this project as it contributes to their cycling and pedestrian safety programs.

The concept design has been developed in consultation with key stakeholders and road authorities and was placed on public exhibition to seek community feedback. All community feedback has been considered and a detailed response is provided in this report. The feasibility of some suggestions from the community will be explored in design development.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) endorse the concept design and scope of works for the Lawson Street cycleway and footpath improvements project, as described in the subject report and shown in the drawings at Attachment A to the subject report, for progression to design development, construction documentation and tender; and
- (B) note the estimated project costs as detailed in confidential Attachment B to the subject report.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Exhibition Panels

Attachment B: Financial Implications (Confidential)

(As Attachment B is confidential, it will be circulated separately from the Agenda Paper and to Councillors and relevant senior staff only.)

BACKGROUND

1. The Cycling Strategy and Action Plan was adopted by Council in 2007, and subsequently incorporated in full into the City's long term strategic plan, *Sustainable Sydney 2030*. The City has since planned and largely implemented the delivery of the first suite of infrastructure projects. The Lawson Street and Lawson Square cycleway will complete a missing link for cyclists travelling from Newtown to the eastern side of the CBD.
2. Lawson Street is also a major pedestrian route between Redfern Station and Sydney University. The improvements to the Lawson Street footpath (between Ivy Lane and Redfern Station) will provide methods of improving pedestrian safety on a very narrow footpath.
3. The design has been developed in close consultation with Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) and Transport for NSW, and with input from other stakeholders in the precinct, such as cycling groups, the Local Police Command and the Aboriginal Housing Company. Through feedback and traffic modelling, the proposal has been refined and received in-principle approval from RMS.

CONCEPT DESIGN AND SCOPE OF WORKS

Cycleway Works

4. A bi-directional cycleway is proposed on the north side of Lawson Street and Lawson Square between Eveleigh Street and Regent Street.
5. The cycleway will include an intermittent median separator between the cycleway and the traffic lane to separate cyclists from vehicles, whilst still allowing stormwater to flow through.
6. A cyclist waiting area will be provided in Little Eveleigh Street at the intersection of Lawson Street to allow a space for cyclists to safely wait to cross the road, out of the way of both pedestrians and vehicles.
7. The proposal includes a short length of shared path at either end of the new bi-directional cycleway, providing a safe transition into existing cycle provisions in Little Eveleigh Street and Wells Street. Shared path pavement markings will be deployed to raise user awareness and reduce potential risks.
8. As part of a separate project, Lawson Street will soon be a 40km/hr zone, making it safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

Adjusted Traffic Signals

9. In order to allow bike riders to continue cycling through a signalised intersection without dismounting, bicycle lanterns are proposed on existing traffic signals at the Lawson and Gibbons Street intersection, to provide bike riders a safe phase within the signal sequence to cross concurrently with some pedestrian movements.
10. The Regent Street and Lawson Square intersection already has shared bicycle lanterns installed. It is proposed to relocate the stop line in Gibbons Street further north to allow cyclists direct safe access into the Wells Street Shared Zone.

Footpath Improvement Works

11. A new raised pedestrian crossing is proposed to provide priority for pedestrians crossing Lawson Street in front of Redfern Station. This will in turn assist in slowing vehicles down at this intersection.
12. A raised shared environment is proposed across Regent Place to prioritise pedestrian and cyclist movements and to slow vehicles down.
13. To improve amenity and safety, the footpath will be widened in the following locations along Lawson Street and Lawson Square:
 - (a) at the intersection of Ivy Street, Little Eveleigh Street and Eveleigh Street in the no-parking area;
 - (b) in front of Redfern Station; and
 - (c) at the intersection of Gibbons Street.
14. Works to kerbs and footpaths will be limited to those areas where the kerbs are relocated, footpaths widened or trees are removed. Affected kerb and paving will be replaced with materials consistent with existing conditions.

Bus Stop

15. The design scheme reflects the approved relocation of an existing bus stop at Lawson Square to be relocated to Redfern Street as part of Transport for NSW's bus stop consolidation. The approval for the relocation of the bus stop was approved at the 21 October 2015 Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee meeting, and will be relocated in early December 2015.

Parking

16. Three car parking spaces will be removed from the parking lane in Lawson Street to provide room for the new street trees. The existing community bus stop on Lawson Street will be relocated to Little Eveleigh Street to reduce parking loss, and the kerbside space on Lawson Street re-allocated for residential parking and a loading zone.
17. The existing Australia Post parking space will be relocated from the north side of Lawson Square to the south side. The footpaths will be adjusted to provide an additional parking space so that no Police or visitor parking spaces are lost.

Lighting Improvement Works

18. Existing lighting will be retained and upgraded to ensure a consistent level of lighting and comply with regulatory standards for lighting levels.

Tree Management Works

19. The following Tree Management Plan is proposed to be implemented as part of the works:
 - (a) seven new native street trees will be planted in the southern parking lane along Lawson Street between Ivy Lane and Little Eveleigh Street. The species will be Spotted Gums (*Corymbia maculata*) in accordance with the City's Street Tree Masterplan;
 - (b) tree pits and wheel stops will be installed for the new trees in the parking lanes to protect the street trees;
 - (c) two street trees will be removed in Lawson Square to provide more space for the cycleway;
 - (d) all the trees along the southern footpath of Lawson Street between Ivy Lane and Little Eveleigh Street are proposed to be gradually removed over time. Trees of lesser value will be removed in the first year. Five trees of higher value will be retained in the footpath in the first year to maintain some street tree canopy cover and screening between residential properties either side of the road whilst the new street trees mature. Eventually, all street trees will be removed from the southern footpath over a ten year period; and
 - (e) more opportunities for new tree planting will be explored in Lawson Square in the detailed planning phase.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

20. Consultation was undertaken with the Aboriginal Housing Commission, Redfern Police, Transport for NSW, State Transit Authority, RMS and bicycle groups during the development of the concept design.
21. Public exhibition of the design plans for the Lawson Street improvements was conducted over two weeks between 26 October and 11 November 2015.
22. The project had two distinct parts – footpath improvement works and a separated cycleway. Overall, 69 submissions were received.
23. A large number of submissions were generally supportive of both the footpath and cycleway works, with several suggestions being made to improve the designs.
24. A petition was also received, signed by 70 residents from surrounding streets, opposing the Lawson Street footpath works. The primary objection is the impact it has on street parking.
25. Consultation activities included:
 - (a) a letter sent to 580 local residents and businesses informing them of the project and submission details;
 - (b) a webpage on sydneyyoursay.com.au where submissions could be made; and
 - (c) the concept design was displayed at the One Stop Shop in Town Hall House and Redfern Neighbourhood Service Centre.

26. On Sydneyyoursay.com.au, the project was viewed by 545 individual users and the plans were downloaded 399 times.

Lawson Street Footpath Works Community Feedback

27. Comments received from the community regarding the Lawson Street footpath works and the City's response to the issues raised is provided below:

Comment from the community	Response from the City
Thirty one submissions support the Lawson Street footpath works as currently proposed.	Noted.
Loss of car parking was raised in seven submissions. Previous projects resulted in parking losses and residents do not wish to lose any extra spaces.	Whilst there is a loss of three residential parking spaces on the southern side of the street (23 retained), on balance, the proposal for Lawson Street caters for the huge amount of pedestrians on this narrow footpath, whilst also maintaining a good tree canopy cover and the majority of parking
Four residents suggested dedicated spots belonging to the NSW Police and Tribal Warriors be returned to resident parking.	The suggestion for the relocation of the NSW Police and Tribal Warriors parking spaces will be reviewed with relevant stakeholders to determine if some parking spaces can be signposted for general use.
<p>Three residents did not want so many trees being removed.</p> <p>One resident suggested smaller planting be done in the footpath so no parking needs to be removed.</p> <p>There was also a request to keep the tree outside 161 Lawson Street, and one resident suggested more trees should be planted.</p>	The City has selected the number of trees to be re-planted in the street so as not to remove more parking spaces than necessary, whilst providing a clear footpath width. The new tree placement has sought to maintain screening between residential properties on either side of the street. Whilst ideally all trees removed would be replaced, the number of street trees to be replanted in the parking lane needs to be balanced against parking loss. A new tree is proposed outside 161 Lawson Street.
Six residents asked the City lobby the State Government to reopen the Wilson Street exit to Redfern Station for students.	The City will continue to advocate to the State Government for greater pedestrian connectivity with the redevelopment of the precinct. Opening alternative exits to Redfern Station may be realised as part of UrbanGrowth's Central to Eveleigh long term redevelopment plans. In the short to medium term, however, the Lawson Street footpath improvements proposed in this report will serve to improve pedestrian amenity along this key pedestrian route on a narrow footpath, and Lawson Street is likely to remain a key pedestrian route in the long term.

Comment from the community	Response from the City
A further four residents requested the City look into using a better quality finish for the footpath, similar to the brick paving finish on Abercrombie Street.	A pavement upgrade to brick paving could be provided to the Lawson Street footpath, similar to that of Abercrombie Street. This would be consistent with the City's Sydney Streets Design Code. However, this is beyond the current project scope and budget. The core objectives of this project are to improve safety and ease congestion.
Three residents want the City to encourage students to walk on both sides of Lawson Street, not just the southern side. One resident suggested employing traffic controllers	The scheme proposed will encourage more pedestrians to use the northern footpath. The new raised pedestrian crossing in front of Redfern Station proposed in the project will make it easier and safer for people to cross the road to the northern footpath, but will not eliminate the need to address congestion on the southern footpath.

Lawson Street Cycleway Community Feedback

28. Comments received from the community regarding the Lawson Street cycleway works and the City's response to the issues raised is provided below:

Comment from the community	Response from the City
<p>Thirty three submissions support the Lawson Street cycleway as currently proposed.</p> <p>Four submissions do not want the cycleway to be built.</p>	Noted.
There was concern in eight submissions about the intersection of Lawson and Little Eveleigh Street. A high number of pedestrians cross without giving way, making it hard for riders to cross. This is made harder as vehicles on Lawson Street will not have to give way for riders.	The proposal provides a new space at the entry to Little Eveleigh Street for cyclists to wait before or after crossing Lawson Street. This space is separated from cars and pedestrians by a separator kerb and wider footpaths, and will provide a safe space for cyclists to wait whilst vehicles and the high number of pedestrians pass by.
Five submissions say the Wells and Regent Street intersection is a blind corner and difficult to negotiate. They want the current design to address this.	At the intersection of Wells and Regent Street, the proposal adjusts the stop line at Regent Street, moving it further north so that bike riders can safely and directly access into and out of Wells Street, out of conflict with cars and avoiding the current blind corner.

Comment from the community	Response from the City
<p>Four submissions want the cycleway to have a better connection to Redfern Street, a popular cycling route.</p> <p>There was one request for the cycleway to be extended to Regent, Turner and Redfern Streets. It was also suggested the cycleway extend the length of Lawson Street to Abercrombie Street.</p>	<p>With regards to the request for direct connections to Redfern and Turner Streets via Regent Street, this project focuses on the connection from Little Eveleigh Street to Wells Street as this provides a more consistent level of safety and amenity. The proposal allows cyclists direct access from Lawson Square into the Wells Street 10km/hr shared zone, which is parallel to and only a short block north of Redfern Street. It also connects to the George Street separated cycleway, providing good bike access to the east, north and south.</p> <p>With regards to the suggestion to extend the cycleway further along Lawson Street to Abercrombie Street, this would potentially involve a significant loss in parking. The cycleway currently proposed connects to Little Eveleigh Street, which already provides good bike access to and from the west.</p>
<p>Two residents asked for more trees in Lawson Square.</p>	<p>More tree planting in Lawson Square will be included in the detailed design.</p>
<p>The Waterloo Peoples Precinct was concerned that the relocated bus stop made it difficult for elderly residents to access the train station due to the additional distance.</p>	<p>The bus stop relocation from Lawson Square to Redfern Street reflected on the plans will be completed by early December 2015, after being approved by the Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee on the 21 October 2015. The implementation of this component of the project facilitated a temporary construction work zone that was required for a private development and coincided with Transport for NSW's permanent bus stop consolidation project.</p>
<p>One submission was concerned the new raised pedestrian crossing made it difficult for cyclists turning onto Lawson Street from Little Eveleigh Street. Another submission was concerned the new crossing would lead to longer vehicle delays on Lawson Street.</p>	<p>It is important to provide a safe and accessible crossing for the high number of pedestrians in front of Redfern Station. Some congestion is expected, however this will make it much safer for pedestrians and will, in turn, slow cars down making it safer for bike riders. A shared path is proposed on the north side of Lawson Street before the separated cycleway so cyclists can cross Lawson Street safely from Little Eveleigh Street before joining the separated cycleway.</p>

Comment from the community	Response from the City
One submission asked that the shared paths be replaced by separated cycleway due to the high pedestrian numbers in the area.	The proposal includes a short length of shared path at either end of the new bi-directional cycleway, providing a safe transition into existing cycle provisions in Little Eveleigh Street and Wells Street. Shared path pavement markings will be deployed to raise user awareness and reduce potential risks.
One submission asked for bike light phasing to be increased at Regent Street, and the green time for vehicles turning left from Lawson to Gibbons Street.	Increasing the bike phasing at Regent Street and vehicle left turn phasing at the Lawson and Gibbons Street intersection as suggested, can be explored in the detailed design and will be subject to RMS approval.
One person asked that the cycleway continue across Regent Place, rather than as a shared zone.	The request for the cycleway continuing across Regent Place in lieu of a shared environment can be explored further with RMS in the detailed design and will be subject to their approval.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

29. *Sustainable Sydney 2030* is a vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the city, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This project is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 4 - A City for Walking and Cycling – outlines actions that will make walking and cycling an easy option for residents and visitors in our City. It recognises the importance of these transport modes to improve the health and environmental sustainability of our city.
 - (b) Objectives under this Direction include developing a network of safe, linked pedestrian and cycle paths integrated with green spaces throughout both the city and inner Sydney; giving greater priority to cycle and pedestrian movements and amenity in the City Centre; promoting green travel for major workplaces and venues in the city.
 - (c) As a key part of the cycle network, the cycleway proposed in this project will complete the missing link in an existing regional cycle route, which will provide a viable sustainable transport alternative that will contribute to lower carbon emissions and reduced pollution.

Organisational Impact

30. The project will create additional assets, such as new civil infrastructure, trees and pavement markings, which will require ongoing maintenance.

Social / Cultural / Community

31. Bike riders enjoy a healthy lifestyle with an increased level of physical activity. As part of the City's cycle network, this project will contribute to better connected neighbourhoods, and a more active and healthier community.
32. The proposal will provide streetscape improvements addressing pedestrian amenity and priority for people of all abilities.
33. As part of the cycle network, this cycleway will contribute to reduced travel times, less on-road congestion and more seats being available on public transport.

Environmental

34. As part of the cycle network, the Lawson Street cycleway will provide a viable transport alternative, which will contribute to lower carbon emissions and reduced pollution.
35. Once Council resolves to approve the design, City staff will engage an external planner to consider whether the proposed works require assessment and approval under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. A Review of Environmental Factors will be carried out for the approved proposal to ensure that all environmental impacts have been identified, assessed and, where required, action is identified to manage impacts. The review will identify the likely impacts, note steps to be taken to manage them and assess whether residual impacts of the work are likely to be significant.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

36. The total forecast project construction cost based on the concept plans has been verified by an independent quantity surveyor. A summary of the financial implications is included in confidential Attachment B.
37. As part of this project, the upgrade of non-Council owned assets, including RMS signal infrastructure and Ausgrid street lighting, is proposed to be carried out. This will need to be recognised as expenditure within the operating budget for the relevant financial year in which it occurs.
38. A budget shortfall is currently anticipated. This is based on a concept design budget estimate and includes contingencies for construction, design and escalation. Additional funding will be requested in the 2016/17 capital and operational budgets and future year forward estimates, and transferred from project savings identified in the Bicycle Related works program (as outlined in confidential Attachment B).

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

39. Attachment B contains confidential information which, if disclosed, would confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business. Discussion of the matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest because it would compromise Council's ability to negotiate fairly and commercially to achieve the best outcome for its ratepayers.
40. NSW Roads Act 1993 for road related approvals.
41. Local Government Act 1993 for construction procurement.

42. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A) (Part 4 and 5). After design development is completed, the scope of works will be reviewed by a planner to assess consent requirements for the project under the EP&A Act. Some of the proposed works may not require planning approval and may be exempt development.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

43. Key dates are as follows:

Milestone	Target Dates
Community Consultation	October – November 2015
Council Project Scope Endorsement	December 2015
Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee Approval	March 2016
Roads and Maritime Services Traffic Signal Plan Approval	April 2016
Tender Period and Council Approval to appoint contractor	May – Aug 2016
Construction period (including early footpath works)	June 2016 – April 2017

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

44. Community members and organisations that have made submissions will be notified when the report goes to Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee.
45. Notification letters will be sent to property owners and businesses prior to construction.
46. During construction, there will be close liaison between property owners, businesses, City staff and the contractors to minimise disruption to residences and trade in the area.

AMIT CHANAN

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