

Streetscape Improvements - Saunders and Miller Streets, Pyrmont

File No: X021137

Summary

This report outlines proposed changes to a small part of the Council-approved scope for walking and cycling improvements in Saunders and Miller Streets, Pyrmont. Two-way separated cycleways will be delivered in Saunders and Miller Streets to provide a safe connection for people riding between the shared pedestrian and cycle path on Anzac Bridge and the shared zone and existing separated cycleway in Union Street, Pyrmont.

The cycleways will provide a key missing link along a NSW Government strategic bicycle corridor that will enable people to ride between Anzac Bridge and the city centre separated from vehicular traffic.

The project will deliver safety and amenity improvements for people walking, including a new marked pedestrian crossing on Miller Street and three raised shared environment intersections. No trees will be removed and additional greening will be provided.

The project originally proposed Saunders Street become a one-way street, which also enabled seven additional parking spaces.

Community consultation was undertaken between 29 August and 9 October 2019 and included a letter mail-out to over 1,200 local residents and businesses, an online Sydney Your Say survey, promotion on social media and face-to-face engagement.

Council approved the project scope in-principle in December 2019, but also made a resolution for further community consultation on a revised two-way Saunders Street design (Option 2).

Consultation on the proposed two-way Saunders Street design was undertaken between 28 January and 11 February 2020. The proposed Option 2 design would see Saunders Street remain a two-way street and lose four parking spaces (total net loss of 15 spaces for the whole project).

The City has accepted a funding offer from the NSW Government as part of the Transport for NSW Active Transport Program for construction of the project. The general conditions of this funding is for construction to be completed in the 2020/21 financial year.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) approve the concept design and scope of works for streetscape improvements in Saunders and Miller Streets, Pyrmont, for Option 2 as described in the subject report and shown in the consultation panels in Attachment A and drawings in Attachment B to the subject report for progression to design development, documentation and construction;
- (B) note the estimated project costs as detailed in Confidential Attachment C to the subject report; and
- (C) note that the City has accepted a funding offer from the NSW Government as part of the Transport for NSW Active Transport Program for construction of the project conditional on the works being completed in the 2020/21 financial year.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Consultation 2 Panels
- Attachment B.** Concept Design - Revised (Option 2)
- Attachment C.** Financial Implications (Confidential)

Background

1. Sydney's Cycling Future was published by Transport for NSW in December 2013 and identified Saunders and Miller Streets, Pyrmont, as NSW Government strategic bicycle corridors.
2. The City's Cycle Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2030 was adopted by Council in November 2018 and included Saunders and Miller Streets as planned regional cycle routes.
3. Saunders and Miller Streets are well-used cycle routes that provide a connection between the shared pedestrian and bicycle path on Anzac Bridge and the shared zone and separated cycleway in Union Street, Pyrmont. It is a key cycle route between the Inner West and Sydney CBD. Counts carried out on Tuesday 26 March 2019 recorded a total of 1,496 cyclists at the intersection of Miller and Harris Streets between 6am and 9am, and 4pm and 7pm.
4. There are currently no dedicated cycling facilities along Saunders or Miller Streets which forces people riding to share the road with motor vehicles.
5. There are more than three times as many people riding bicycles than in cars using Saunders Street in the morning peak, and on Miller Street also, there are more people riding than driving in the morning peak. In locations where the City has built separated cycleways the number of bike trips has generally doubled within one or two years and then doubled again in a couple more years. This shows the strong demand for safe cycling facilities and the value in providing space for residents, workers and visitors to ride.
6. The design for streetscape improvements has been developed in consultation with Transport for NSW, Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) and the State Transit Authority.
7. In December 2019, Council gave in-principle endorsement to the construction of separated cycleways on Saunders and Miller Streets. Council requested the Chief Executive Officer prepare a detailed concept for a two-way traffic configuration on Saunders Street requiring vehicles to 'yield' in a narrow traffic lane in order to retain as much parking as possible. The Chief Executive Officer was also requested to write to the community about the resolutions and undertake further consultation for a minimum of two weeks from 27 January 2020.
8. In response to the December 2019 Council resolution, a two-way design option was devised that provides for a separated cycleway and retains two-way vehicle access, but results in four fewer parking spaces in Saunders Street. The revised design retains all other aspects of the previous design including the proposed change to traffic signals, shared environments, marked pedestrian crossings, and bus stops. The revised design for Miller Street retains all aspects of the original design.
9. Public exhibition of the revised design was undertaken between 28 January 2020 and 11 February 2020.

Concept Design and Scope of Works

Separated Cycleway

10. In December 2019, Council approved two-way separated cycleways on the northern side of Saunders and Miller Streets to provide a connection between the ramp to the Anzac Bridge shared path and the shared zone and existing separated cycleway in Union Street, Pyrmont.
11. The revised design proposes a two-way yield street traffic design along Saunders Street in order to accommodate the separated cycleway and retain parking on both sides of the street. Vehicles would be required to 'yield' in a narrow traffic lane.

Shared Environments

12. In December 2019, Council approved shared environment treatments where the separated cycleway on Saunders Street intersects with Quarry Master Drive (east) and where the separated cycleway on Miller Street intersects with Jones and Mount Streets. These shared environment treatments will calm traffic and give priority to people walking at these intersections.
13. Traffic volumes at the intersections of Quarry Master Drive (east) and Jones and Mount Streets are low as these streets are used for local access only. As such, shared environment treatments are considered appropriate at these intersections. The shared environments will be raised to the footpath level, which will improve access and safety for pedestrians.
14. The shared environment treatments will be similar to those provided as part of the Bourke Street separated cycleway (Woolloomooloo to Waterloo) and George Street separated cycleway (Redfern to Waterloo).
15. The design of the shared environment treatment has been developed by the City in close consultation with RMS and Transport for NSW. The proposed treatment has received in-principle approval from RMS.

Marked Pedestrian Crossing

16. There is currently no pedestrian crossing facility on Miller Street between Harris and Bank Streets, a distance of 250 metres.
17. In December 2019, Council approved a marked pedestrian crossing in Miller Street near Miller Lane to provide a safe facility for people to cross the cycleway and road. The pedestrian crossing will improve access to the supermarket at the corner of Miller Street and Bulwara Road. Footpath widening will be provided on the southern side of Miller Street in conjunction with the pedestrian crossing to increase safety by improving sight lines and reducing the crossing distance.

Bus Stops

18. The revised design does not propose any bus stop changes to the original design.
19. There are two bus stops on the northern side of Miller Street which are located 150 metres apart:
 - Bus Stop 200915, located west of Jones Street; and
 - Bus Stop 200932, located east of Mount Street.

20. In December 2019, Council approved an in-lane Bus Stop island between the separated cycleway and traffic lane for Bus Stop 200932. The island will include a bus shelter and will be 16 metres long to accommodate articulated buses. A raised marked pedestrian crossing in the separated cycleway will provide pedestrian access between the footpath and Bus Stop island. Similar to the Bus Stop islands in Campbell Street, Surry Hills and Bourke Street, Woolloomooloo, cyclists must give way to pedestrians at the marked pedestrian crossing.
21. In December 2019, Council approved the closure of Bus Stop 200915 as this section of Miller Street is not suitable for an in-lane Bus Stop island. Due to the proximity of the signalised intersection of Bank and Miller Streets, drivers would block the intersection if buses continued to stop at this location.
22. State Transit Authority has provided in principle support for the proposed Bus Stop changes.

Parking and Loading Zones

23. To facilitate two-way traffic and a separated cycleway, the proposed revised design would result in four fewer parking spaces on Saunders Street. This would be in addition to 11 fewer parking spaces on Miller Street required for the separated cycleway. The total net loss of parking would be 15 spaces.
24. The original one-way proposal would have created seven new parking spaces in Saunders Street.
25. In Miller Street, it is proposed to remove eight 2P ticket permit parking spaces, three Loading Zone / 2P ticket spaces and three car share spaces to accommodate the separated cycleway and marked pedestrian crossing.
26. To offset the loss of the part-time Loading Zone spaces in Miller Street, three part-time Loading Zone spaces will be provided nearby in Harris Street. The changes will provide part-time Loading Zone spaces within 75 metres of the existing Loading Zone in Miller Street. Timed parking will be provided outside Loading Zone times.

Traffic Signals

27. The revised design does not propose changes to the scope approved by Council in December 2019.
28. Bicycle traffic signal detectors will be provided in the cycleway at Miller Street on approach to Harris Street. These detectors will replace the existing cyclist push button at this location. The existing bicycle lanterns installed at the intersection of Miller and Harris Streets will provide access for cyclists between the separated cycleway and the shared zone and separated cycleway in Union Street.
29. The project does not require changes to the traffic signals at the intersection of Miller and Bank Streets. However, the changes in Saunders and Miller Streets are within the extents of the Traffic Control Signal (TCS) plan for the intersection. Updated Traffic Control Signal plans for the two signalised intersections were approved by RMS on 22 August 2019.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

30. 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 3 - Integrated Transport for a Connected City:
 - (i) The project will improve safety and amenity for people walking and riding along Saunders and Miller Streets.
 - (ii) The separated cycleways will provide a key missing link in the City's regional bike network.
 - (b) Direction 4 - A City for Walking and Cycling:
 - (i) The pedestrian crossing in Miller Street will provide a significant safety improvement for people walking by providing a safe crossing in Miller Street.
 - (ii) The three shared environment treatments will calm traffic and give priority to people walking at these intersections.
 - (iii) The separated cycleways will improve rider safety on Saunders and Miller Streets by providing facilities that are physically separated from vehicles, encouraging more people to ride.

Organisational Impact

31. The project will create new civil infrastructure assets which will require ongoing maintenance.

Risks

32. Risks associated with the design have been considered through the concept design and consultation phase. These include road safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, as well as environmental impacts and community concerns.
33. An independent Road Safety Audit has been undertaken during the development of the design to identify, assess and address risks associated with the proposal.
34. On 22 January 2020, the NSW Government approved a funding variation for construction completion by 30 June 2021.
35. If the works are not completed by then, further negotiations will need to be held with the NSW Government in respect of the continued availability of funding.

Social / Cultural / Community

36. The streetscape improvements will improve pedestrian amenity for people of all abilities.

37. People will have improved access to safe cycling infrastructure to 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, increased transport choice and a more active and healthy community.

Environmental

38. As part of the cycle network, the cycleway will provide a viable transport alternative which will contribute to lower carbon emissions and reduced pollution.
39. The 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 to ensure all environmental impacts have been identified and assessed and, where required, action is identified to manage impacts

Budget Implications

40. The City has accepted a funding offer from the NSW Government as part of the Transport for NSW Active Transport Program for construction of the project.
41. The total forecast project construction cost, based on concept plans, has been assessed by an independent quantity surveyor. There are sufficient funds allocated for this project within the current year's capital works budget and future year's forward estimates. A summary of the financial implications is included in Confidential Attachment C.
42. As part of this project, upgrades to non-Council owned assets, including Ausgrid street lighting, are required. This will be recognised as expenditure within the operating budget.

Relevant Legislation

43. Roads Act 1993 for road related approvals.
44. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 for project assessment and approval.
45. Attachment C contains confidential commercial information which, if disclosed, would confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
46. 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 outcomes for its ratepayers.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

47. Key dates are as follows:

Community Consultation 1	August - October 2019
Community Consultation 2	January - February 2020
Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee	November 2019 and March 2020
Construction Period	April 2020 - late 2020

48. On 24 July 2019, the City received a formal funding offer from the NSW Government for construction of the project as part of the 2019/20 Active Transport Program. The general conditions of funding under this program is for construction to be completed by 30 June 2020.
49. On 8 August 2019, the City sent formal correspondence to the NSW Government accepting the funding offer.
50. On 22 January 2020, the NSW Government approved a funding variation for construction completion by 30 June 2021.

Options

51. Saunders Street is not wide enough to accommodate the two-way separated cycleway, two traffic lanes and parking on both sides of the street. The original design proposed restricting Saunders Street to one-way westbound, reducing it to one traffic lane in order to accommodate the separated cycleway and retain parking on both sides of the street. This would have created seven new parking spaces in the street. The revised design requested by Council retains two-way traffic in Saunders Street resulting in four fewer parking spaces.

Public Consultation 1 - Original Design

52. The design has been developed in consultation with Transport for NSW, RMS and the State Transit Authority.
53. Public exhibition of the original design plans (one-way Saunders Street) was undertaken between 29 August and 9 October 2019 and included the following activities:
- mailing consultation letters and design plans to 1,252 local residents and businesses in the area requesting feedback on the proposal;
 - a page on the Sydney Your Say website where the design plans could be viewed and feedback provided via an online form and survey;
 - advertising the one-way proposal in Saunders Street in The Sydney Morning Herald in accordance with Section 116 of the Roads Act 1993;

- (d) promotion on the SydneyCycleways and City of Sydney social media channels including two Facebook posts and two tweets; and
 - (e) community engagement sessions on 3 September and 12 September 2019 in Union Square.
54. A total of 134 formal submissions were received during the consultation period with 94 responses supporting the proposal, 36 opposing and four neutral.
55. Key points raised during community consultation include:
- (a) safety improvements due to the cycleway providing dedicated space for people riding that is physically separated from vehicles;
 - (b) benefits for providing a key missing link in the cycle network; and
 - (c) the desire for a cycle connection to Sydney Fish Market.
56. Of the 36 opposing submissions received:
- (a) 15 raised concerns about the loss of parking on Miller Street;
 - (b) eight raised concerns about the proposal to convert Saunders Street to be one-way; and
 - (c) five raised concerns about the closure of Bus Stop 200915 near Jones Street.
57. The online survey on the Sydney Your Say website included a specific question about the proposal for Saunders Street to be one-way. Of the 134 submissions received 71 supported the proposal for Saunders Street to be one-way, 38 opposed; and 25 were neutral or did not comment.
58. Of the 38 submissions opposing the proposal for Saunders Street to be one-way, 26 raised concerns about additional journey time for people driving out of the area by having to travel via Bank Street to access Miller Street.

Public Consultation 2 - Revised Design

59. Public exhibition of the revised design (two-way Saunders Street) was undertaken between 28 January and 11 February 2020, and included the following activities:
- (a) a page online at the Sydney Your Say website from 28 January to 11 February 2020;
 - (b) 1,991 letters to local residents and businesses in the area; and
 - (c) recontacting all 135 people who made submissions during the original consultation.
60. A total of 28 formal submissions were received during the consultation period, 26 through the Sydney Your Say website and two via email.
61. A number of residents requested additional time to make submissions, however, no additional responses were received prior to Friday 14 February 2020.

62. Of the 28 submissions received, seven favoured the original one-way design, 15 favoured the new two-way design, two supported either design and four did not support the cycleway generally.
63. The number of submissions received were significantly lower than consultation on the original proposal, which included
 - (a) 135 submissions; and
 - (b) eight objections to Saunders Street becoming one-way.

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