

Item 3.

Project Scope - Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road Cycleway, Erskineville and Alexandria

File No: X026143.001

Summary

This report describes the proposed bike network connections in Erskineville, Alexandria and Waterloo, along Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road which will form part of the Regional and Local Bike Network identified in the City's Cycling Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2030.

The existing pop-up cycleway provides a safe connection from Erskineville to Central Sydney and usage has steadily increased over time to an average of 2,468 trips per week in February 2021 and 2,405 trips in the first week of March 2021. However, to achieve a desirable separated cycleway width and maintain dedicated pedestrian footpaths on both side of the road at the bend in Railway Parade, vehicular traffic was restricted to one way southbound from Sydney Lane and Swanson Street. This has caused an increase in traffic using Park Street.

Following community consultation in November and December 2020, Council resolved on 29 March 2021 to defer approval of the concept design for a permanent cycleway on Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road. Council requested documentation of the options to establish a cycleway and maintain two-way motor vehicle traffic in Railway Parade north of Swanson Street. Council also asked staff to bring a report back to Council on the results of an area wide transport study for Erskineville and Alexandria.

To accommodate the bi-directional separated cycleway and provide safe connections into the wider network, the proposal includes the same functional arrangements and reallocation of road space that have been implemented for the pop-up cycleway, except on Railway Parade between Sydney Lane and Swanson Street.

Railway Parade north of Equity Lane is not wide enough to safely accommodate pedestrians, a separated bi-directional cycleway and two-way traffic. The Project Team considered four different options for retaining two-way traffic and it was decided that, given the constraints, a shared path option was safer than the other options, including an option of keeping people cycling with general road traffic (see Attachment D).

The proposed shared path option does not provide as good a solution for people walking and cycling as the original proposal but is better for people cycling than the arrangement before the pop-up cycleway. Some compromises are necessary in terms of available space. Relocation of existing poles, lights and crash barriers are required to optimise the available space on the Shared Path, and the road lane widths will need to be reduced. Additional traffic calming measures will be introduced to reduce vehicle speeds in this area given the narrow configuration. A three-tonne vehicle limit will also be desirable. These changes will need to be further refined during design development and are subject to Transport for NSW approval.

Reverting vehicular traffic in Railway Parade to two-way vehicular traffic between Sydney Lane and Swanson Street should result in a decrease in traffic using Park Street. An update on the area wide transport study for Erskineville and Alexandria is also included in this report.

This report seeks Council approval of the modified permanent cycleway proposal along Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road. The modified proposal includes two-way vehicular traffic, new separated cycleways and sections of shared paths as well as pedestrian improvements in the form of raised pedestrian crossings, footpath continuations and widening. The report also seeks Council approval to retain the pop-up cycleway for a period of up to two years until the permanent modified proposal is implemented.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) note the Review of Environmental Factors for the Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road pop-up cycleway to be retained for a period of up to two years, as shown in Attachment B to the subject report;
- (B) approve the Chief Executive Officer signing the determination associated with the exhibited Review of Environmental Factors for the Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road pop-up cycleway for the following reasons:
 - (i) the City is the self-assessment authority for the projects and holds the authority to assess and grant approval to activities under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979;
 - (ii) the proposed projects identified in the Review of Environmental Factors is an “activity” under Division 17 (Road infrastructure facilities) within State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007. The activity constitutes in part “exempt development” and in part activities that are “development that is permissible without consent” and therefore Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 applies;
 - (iii) the Review of Environmental Factors has been carried out for the projects addressing the environmental impacts of the temporary retention of the pop-up cycleway in accordance with Clause 228(2) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000; and
 - (iv) subject to compliance with the mitigation measures outlined in each Review of Environmental Factors, the proposed activity will not result in a significant impact on the environment and may be approved under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- (C) note the Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road permanent cycleway Review of Environmental Factors, as shown in Attachment C to the subject report.

- (D) approve the concept design for the Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road Cycleway as shown in Attachment D to the subject report for detailed documentation and construction tender;
- (E) note that Railway Parade will be reinstated to two-way traffic and a new shared cyclist and pedestrian path will be constructed. Given the narrow width of the road corridor at the bend, the City will look to improve this cycling connection in the future;
- (F) note that the City is currently undertaking an area-wide transport study of Erskineville and Alexandria to be reported back by way of CEO Update, and
- (G) note the estimated project costs as detailed in confidential Attachment G to the subject report.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Bike Network Connections Map
- Attachment B.** Review of Environmental Factors for the Bridge, Railway and Henderson Pop-up Cycleway
- Attachment C.** Review of Environmental Factors for the Bridge, Railway and Henderson Permanent Cycleway
- Attachment D.** Drawings - Concept Design for Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road Cycleway
- Attachment E.** Engagement Report - Combined Erskineville and Alexandria Cycleways
- Attachment F.** Erskineville and Alexandria Transport Study Map
- Attachment G.** Financial Implications (Confidential)

Background

1. In November 2018, Council endorsed the Cycling Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2030, for incorporation into the City's long-term strategic plan Sustainable Sydney 2030.
2. The Cycling Strategy and Action Plan includes an overall proposed Bike Network which is being implemented in sections over time. Concept designs for several routes in Erskineville, Alexandria and Waterloo (as shown in Attachment A to the subject report) have been developed and consultation was undertaken at the end of 2020.
3. The Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road cycleway forms part of the priority Bike Network and will service the large number of current and future residents in the Ashmore precinct to the Australian Technology Park, Redfern and on towards other existing bicycle connections to the central business district.
4. This project, in connection with the Ashmore Street and Harley Street Cycleway connects two major trip attractors; University of Sydney to the west and University of New South Wales to the east. The route serves the growing populations of Green Square and Ashmore Precinct.
5. In May 2020 Transport for NSW approached the City with the proposal to deliver pop-up cycleways in response to the pandemic, to allow people to travel more safely and maintain physical distancing. Henderson Road was identified as a suitable route for a pop-up cycleway because the City had already commenced developing a concept design for a permanent cycleway along this route. The City subsequently constructed a pop-up cycleway along Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road.
6. Bike counters are in place on Henderson Road. Since the construction of the pop-up cycleway the weekly number of bike trips has reached 2,468 trips per week in February 2021 and 2,405 trips in the first week of March 2021.
7. In March 2021 Council deferred the decision on the scope of this project, pending further investigation of options at Railway Parade (now proposed with two-way traffic reinstated) and an area-wide transport study.

Review of Environmental Factors - Pop-up Cycleway

8. The Review of Environmental Factors assesses the proposal to continue operation of the existing two-way separated cycleway along the western side of Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road in Erskineville and Alexandria for a period of up to two years.
9. The purpose of the Review of Environmental Factors is to describe the proposal, assesses the potential for the proposal to result in environmental impacts, and inform the decision to proceed with the proposal.
10. The Review of Environmental Factors was prepared by environmental planning consultants on behalf of the City of Sydney. The proposal and associated environmental impacts have been described in the context of clause 228 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000 (EP&A Regulation), fulfilling the requirements of Section 5.5 of the EP&A Act.

11. The pop-up cycleway provides a safe connection from Erskineville to Central Sydney and usage has steadily increased over time to an average of 2,468 trips per week in February 2021 and 2,405 trips in the first week of March 2021.
12. To continue the operation of the pop-up cycleway, no new construction works are required.
13. Maintenance works may involve replacement of the safety barriers with other materials that may be more suitable for ongoing operation.
14. The full Review of Environmental Factors is provided as Attachment B of this report.

Revised concept design and scope of works

15. The proposal for the permanent cycleway is shown in Attachment D to the subject report. It provides a bi-directional separated cycleway along the western side of Bridge Street north of Ashmore Street, part of the western side of Railway Parade and the northern side of Henderson Road from Railway Parade to Davy Street. Revisions to the concept design on Railway Parade between Sydney Lane and Swanson Street are described below.
16. To accommodate the bi-directional separated cycleway and provide safe connections into the wider network, the proposal includes the same functional arrangements and reallocation of road space that have been implemented for the pop-up cycleway, except on Railway Parade between Sydney Lane and Swanson Street.
17. Railway Parade north of Equity Lane is not wide enough to safely accommodate pedestrians, a separated bi-directional cycleway and two-way traffic. The Project Team considered four different options for retaining two-way traffic and it was decided that given the constraints a shared path option was safer than keeping people cycling with general road traffic. The proposed shared path option does not provide as good a solution for people walking and cycling as the original proposal but is better for people cycling than the arrangement before the pop-up cycleway. Some compromises are necessary in terms of available space. Relocation of existing poles, lights and crash barriers are required to optimise the available space on the Shared Path, and the road lane widths will need to be reduced. Additional traffic calming measures will be introduced to reduce vehicle speeds in this area given the narrow configuration. These changes will need to be further refined during design development and are subject to Transport for NSW approval.
18. The revised proposal includes the following:
 - (a) The cycleway replaces 32 parking spaces on the western side of Bridge Street;
 - (b) Two-way travel for vehicles is retained on Railway Parade between Sydney Lane and Swanson Street. The existing western footpath along this section of Railway Parade will be widened to provide a Shared Path for pedestrians and cyclists. This Shared Path will connect to the separated cycleway on Bridge Street via the signalised crossing at Swanson Street and a via connection to the bi-directional cycleway that continues along Railway Parade north of Sydney Lane. Additional traffic calming measures will be introduced to reduce vehicle speed on Railway Parade.

- (c) Reintroducing the left turn from Swanson Street into Railway Parade reduces the safety and level of service for people walking due to additional traffic movement and signal phase at this important pedestrian connection serving Erskineville Station, Public School and retail precinct.
 - (d) Narrower general traffic lanes on Henderson Road in conjunction with speed humps are providing effective traffic calming as has been previously requested by Henderson Road residents;
 - (e) Restricting through traffic along Alexander Street at Henderson Road, making Alexander Street left-in and left-out only (previously approved by Council on 29 March 2021);
 - (f) An overall reduction of on-street parking in Henderson Road of one space as a result of the new road geometry.
19. The previous proposal was endorsed by the Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee on 18 February 2021.

Erskineville and Alexandria Transport Study

20. In accordance with the Council resolution, the City has commenced the area-wide “Erskineville and Alexandria Transport Study” which will assess the impacts of requested traffic measures for Park Street and Mitchell Road and the Transport Study is being delivered in stages, as follows:
21. Stage 1: Existing Situation Data gathering (April 2021 to May 2021)
- (a) Data Collection (traffic surveys)
 - (b) Transport Data Analysis
 - (c) Mitchell Road and Maddox Street Safety Review
 - (d) Development of the Base Traffic Model and its validation as being “fit for purpose” for options testing
22. Stage 2: Options Testing and Development (May 2021 to June 2021)
- (a) Model return of two-way traffic in Railway Parade
 - (b) Model No Right Turn from Park Street to Henderson Road closure in Park Street at Henderson Road, Traffic Signals in Mitchell Road
 - (c) Identify list of other possible traffic and transport management treatments and model
 - (d) Consolidate treatment options into network scenarios (map of treatments to be modelled together to understand their impacts/benefits)
23. Stage 3: Reporting (July 2021)
- (a) Final Draft Report

24. A map of the study area is included in Attachment F.
25. Following completion of the “Erskineville and Alexandria Transport Study”, Transport for NSW will formally review and community consultation can be undertaken.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

26. 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 report is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
 - (a) Direction 3 - Integrated Transport for a Connected City - The projects include traffic calming initiatives that support behaviour change in the city and its villages and encourage a shift to sustainable travel modes.
 - (b) Direction 4 - A City for Walking and Cycling - The proposals will meet the objective of implementing priority projects to improve safety, accessibility, connectivity and amenity across the local government area for people cycling.

Organisational Impact

27. The projects will create additional assets, such as new civil infrastructure and pavement markings, which will require ongoing maintenance.

Risks

28. Road Safety Audits have been carried out on the pop-up cycleways.
29. Road Safety Audits will be carried out on the developed designs to further identify any risks associated with the proposals and develop mitigation measures.

Social / Cultural / Community

30. People will have improved access to safe cycling infrastructure. The proposed bike network connections will contribute to better connected neighbourhoods, increased transport choice and a more active and healthier community.
31. These cycleways can supplement public transport in key corridors. They create a safe option for travelling between workplaces, schools, health care and the city centre. The cycleways will free up space on public transport, roads and parking and allow people to travel while maintaining physical distance. They will play an important role in allowing people to safely return to work and local businesses, helping support economic recovery.
32. The City is committed to making bicycle transport easier and safer, so it is an attractive and feasible option for more people.

Environmental

33. The projects align with the City's Sustainable Sydney 2030 goals which aim to provide a better environment for people walking and riding bikes, resulting in lower emissions.
34. Cycling and walking are integral to our transport future because they are the most accessible, equitable, sustainable and reliable forms of transport.

Financial Implications

35. The total forecast project construction costs are based on the concept plans and have been verified by independent quantity surveyors. A summary of the financial implications is included in confidential Attachment G.
36. The projects include the upgrade of assets owned by third parties; such traffic signals owned by Transport for NSW and the demolition of existing assets. Sufficient funds have been included in the draft 2021/22 Operating Budget to deliver these project related works.
37. There are sufficient funds in the draft 2020/21 Capital Works budget and future year forward estimates to deliver these capital projects.

Relevant Legislation

38. Local Government Act 1993 - Section 10A provides that a council may close to the public so much of its meeting as comprises the discussion of information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
39. Attachment G contains confidential information which, if disclosed, would confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
40. 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.
41. Roads Act 1993.
42. Local Government Act 1993.
43. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
44. Environmental Planning and Assessment (General) Regulation 2000
45. State Environmental Planning Policy (Infrastructure) 2007

Critical Dates / Time Frames

46. Key dates for Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road are as follows:

Milestone	Target Dates
Temporary traffic calming works in Park Street	April 2021
Permanent traffic calming works in Park Street	Commencing May 2021
Permanent Cycleway Design Development	April - July 2021
Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee Approval for revised plans	July 2021
RMS Traffic Signal Plan Approval	July 2021
Tender Period and Approval to appoint contractor	August - October 2021
Construction	October 2021 - December 2022
Reopening Railway Parade to two-way traffic	Early 2022

Options

47. Not building the cycleways would not achieve the City of Sydney's strategic objectives and its positive impacts and outcomes. This option is therefore not recommended.

Public Consultation - concept design

48. Public exhibition of the concept designs for Mitchell Road and Huntley Street, Alexandria Shared Path Connections, Ashmore and Harley Streets and Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road was undertaken between 20 November 2020 and 18 December 2020, and included the following activities:

- (a) mailing consultation letters to 9,750 local residents and businesses in the area requesting feedback on the proposal;
- (b) a page on the Sydney Your Say website was viewed 2394 times where the design plans could be viewed, and feedback provided via a survey; promotion on the Sydney Cycleways and City of Sydney social media channels including two Facebook posts and two tweets; and
- (c) community information session on 9 December 2020 on Zoom.

49. Notification, as required under Section 116 of the Roads Act, was also carried out from 20 November 2020 to 18 December 2020 for the proposed turn bans at Swanson Street and Railway Parade as well as Alexander Street and Henderson Road.
50. Overall 599 submissions were received. Details of these can be found in the Engagement Report at Attachment E.
51. There were 453 submissions specifically in response to the Henderson Road, Railway Parade and Bridge Street proposal with 347 objecting to the proposal, 65 comments with mixed support and design suggestions, and 41 supporting the proposal.
52. Submissions supporting the proposal believed that the changes would improve safety and cycle access through the area and reduce vehicle speeds. Some of the concerns raised related to the narrowing of the adjacent traffic lanes and loss of parking.
53. A large number of submissions opposed the Railway Parade one-way closure as it has resulted in increased traffic in Park Street. In response the City has developed a proposal for traffic calming measures in Park Street, with input from Park Street residents, and has sought community feedback on this proposal from 24 February 2021 to 3 March 2021. Engagement activities have included letterbox drops, drop-in sessions at Solander Park and email correspondence. Residents supported the changes and temporary work is now complete. Permanent work will commence in May 2021.
54. In response to concerns about increased traffic on Park Street, the project for the permanent cycleway will also redesign Railway Parade back to two-way traffic but with additional traffic calming measures.

Public Consultation - Review of Environmental Factors

55. Public exhibition of the Review of Environmental Factors documents for Bridge Street, Railway Parade and Henderson Road was undertaken between 12 March 2021 and 9 April 2021, and included the following activities:
 - (a) mailing consultation letters to 9,800 local residents and businesses in the area requesting feedback on the proposal;
 - (b) a page on the Sydney Your Say website was viewed 572 times where the design plans could be viewed, and feedback provided via a survey;
56. Overall 153 submissions were received including 103 survey responses and 50 email submissions comprising
 - (a) 37 responses in support of the proposal;
 - (b) 16 did not support the proposal; and
 - (c) 100 were qualified responses with suggestions.

57. Details of these can also be found in the Engagement Report at Attachment E. Key points raised were the same as when the concept design was exhibited in 2020 and include:
- (a) general support for more safe riding and the connection this project will provide;
 - (b) support for allocation of space for riding in place of parking spaces is supported by some respondents; and
 - (c) more people will ride knowing that these connections are there.
58. Concerns people raised include:
- (a) Closure of Railway Parade;
 - (b) Increase in traffic on Park Street; and
 - (c) Narrowing of Henderson Road causing vehicles to slow down in order to pass.
59. Details of these concerns can be found in the Engagement Report at Attachment E.

Future Consultation

60. Community members and organisations that have made submissions were notified when the projects were reported to the Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee.
61. The City of Sydney is undertaking coordination with Transport for NSW regarding the Erskineville Station upgrade to ensure the City's cycleway remains in service and is a key element in cycle access to the station.
62. Notification letters will be sent to property owners and businesses prior to construction.
63. 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

Director City Projects and Planning

Sam Wheatley, Delivery Manager

Sebastian Smyth, Executive Manager, City Access and Transport