

Item 7.

Project Scope - Phillip Street to College Street Cycleway

File No:

Summary

In November 2018, Council endorsed the Cycling Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2030. The Strategy includes an overall proposed bike network (see Attachment A - Sydney Bike Network map).

This report describes the proposed new permanent connection for bike riders between existing cycleways along College Street and King Street in the City Centre. The 310 metre long bike route is proposed along sections of Macquarie Street at the eastern end of Queens Square, Prince Albert Road and College Street.

The Phillip Street to College Street Cycleway is part of the City's broader Cycling Strategy and Action Plan, the NSW Government's Principal Bicycle Network and a strategic cycleway network route in the NSW Government's Sydney City Centre Access Strategy. The proposal aligns with a well-used route for bike riders between the city centre and the eastern suburbs.

The majority of the proposed cycleway will be a separated cycleway, with the existing Shared Path at Queens Square remaining to provide the connection through the square. The project will not remove any trees or parking spaces and all existing vehicle traffic movements and property accesses will be retained. The City undertook community consultation between 20 February 2023 and 21 March 2023. 118 submissions were received. The majority were supportive of the cycleway works, with several suggestions made to improve the design.

This report seeks Council approval of the concept design for the Phillip Street to College Street Cycleway.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) approve the concept design for the Phillip Street to College Street Cycleway as shown in Attachment B to the subject report for detailed documentation and construction tender; and
- (B) note the estimated project costs as detailed in Confidential Attachment D to the subject report.

Attachments

- Attachment A.** Sydney Bike Network Map
- Attachment B.** Community Consultation Drawings
- Attachment C.** Engagement Report
- Attachment D.** Financial Implications (Confidential)

Background

1. In November 2018, Council endorsed the Cycling Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2030, for incorporation into the City's Community Strategic Plan Sustainable Sydney 2030. The Strategy includes an overall proposed bike network.
2. Priority 1 of the Strategy and Action Plan is to connect the bike network, as there is strong evidence that safe and connected cycling infrastructure is essential to making bike riding a viable transport option for the majority of the population.
3. The Strategy and Action Plan target is to complete 80 per cent of the regional route network by 2024 and 100 per cent by 2030.
4. Direction 4 in the City's Community Strategic Plan is to make Sydney a city for walking and cycling. Its targets include that a minimum of 10 per cent of City trips will be made by bicycle and 50 per cent as pedestrian movements by 2030.
5. Transport for NSW research has found that 70 per cent of Greater Sydney residents would ride, or ride more, if there were safe cycleways, separated from traffic. Recent surveys of residents in the City of Sydney and neighbouring council areas have consistently found over 70 per cent support for building a bike network and separated cycleways.
6. The City, with funding from Transport for NSW, has recently built cycleways on Pitt, King and College Streets. Construction will soon start on the Oxford and Liverpool Street cycleway, and later this year Transport for NSW will build a cycleway on the remaining blocks of King Street. This proposal will improve the connection between those cycleways, improving safety for people riding and for people walking.
7. This project will be part of a continuous and safe connection from Bondi Junction to Circular Quay or the Sydney Harbour Bridge. It is part of the NSW Government's Principal Bicycle Network and a strategic cycleway network route in the NSW Government's Sydney City Centre Access Strategy.
8. Transport for NSW is fully funding the design of the project and the City will apply for construction funding in a future round.
9. Initial usage is expected to be at least 2,000 bike trips per day on weekdays. When the City builds new separated cycleways, it is common for the number of bike trips to double within one or two years. This growth is higher in the city centre or where the cycleway is well connected into the network.
10. The design approach is consistent with the NSW Government's Road User Space Allocation Policy and its hierarchy of road users, which prioritises people walking. It is also consistent with our commitment to build the network faster and with less construction disruption by minimising kerb adjustments.

Concept Design and Scope of Works

11. The proposal will deliver a safe connection for bike riders between the existing cycleways on College Street and King Street as described below.

College Street

12. On College Street, the proposal comprises a separated bi-directional cycleway connecting into the existing cycleway on College Street.

Prince Albert Road

13. On Prince Albert Road, between College Street and Macquarie Street, the proposal comprises a separated bi-directional cycleway along the south and west kerb.

Macquarie Street

14. On Macquarie Street, alongside the Queens Square Precinct, the proposal comprises a separated bi-directional cycleway on the western side.
15. A newly constructed access ramp for cyclist will be provided at the eastern end of Queens Square giving access to the cycleway at Macquarie Street.

Queens Square

16. The bike connection through Queens Square will remain a Shared Path area, with pedestrian priority continuing within the square. Changes will likely be limited to a review of signage and line-marking as a broader public domain upgrade is planned for Queens Square in future.
17. This project will add behavioural pavement markings to make clear that pedestrians have priority. The project proposes to remove the conflict point near the Queen Victoria statue by moving people riding onto the separated cycleway at the intersection with Macquarie Street alongside Queens Square.
18. A Heritage Impact Statement (HIS) would be required for any works proposed for Queens Square due to the precinct's listed national heritage significance.
19. The project will not remove any trees or parking spaces and all existing vehicle traffic movements and property access will be retained.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

20. 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 -
 - (i) The cycleway will provide a key missing link in the City's bike network
 - (ii) The project supports 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 -
 - (i) 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; and promoting green travel for major workplaces and venues in the city.
 - (ii) As a key part of the cycle network, the cycleway proposed in this project will complete missing links in the bike network, which will provide a viable sustainable transport alternative that will contribute to lower carbon emissions and reduced pollution.

Organisational Impact

21. The project will create additional assets, such as new civil infrastructure and pavement markings, which will require ongoing maintenance and funding in the Long Term Financial Plan.

Risks

22. Risks associated with the proposal have been considered through the concept design and consultation phases. These include safety for people walking, riding and driving, environmental and economic impacts, and community concerns. The risks will be further addressed in the forthcoming design development and documentation phases.
23. A Road Safety Audit has been carried out on the concept design to identify any risks associated with the proposal, and the design amended to improve on road safety aspects. Further Road Safety Audits will be carried out at the completion of the design and at the completion of construction to further identify any risks associated with the proposals and develop mitigation measures.
24. Transport for NSW has provided Approval in Principle for the concept design of the two intersections. However, typical of cycleway projects, construction approval of the detailed Traffic Control Signal (TCS) plans are a time risk.

Cost estimates have been made against the current concept level design only and may change as the design documentation is developed. Costs will be monitored in consultation with an independent quantity surveyor.

Social / Cultural / Community

25. People will have improved access to safe and connected cycling infrastructure to enjoy a healthy lifestyle with an increased level of physical activity. As part of the City's bike network, this project will contribute to better connected neighbourhoods, increased transport choice and a more socially connected, active and healthier community. Cycling provides a sustainable, low cost private transport option for people.
26. This cycleway is part of a soon-to-be continuous route that will supplement public transport and provide an alternative (more sustainable) mode of private transport. This will reduce demand for driving and reduce pressure on parking. It will create a safe option for travelling between destinations in and near the city centre. It will play an important role in allowing people to safely get to work and local businesses, helping support economic recovery.
27. The City is committed to making bicycle transport easier and safer, so it is an attractive and feasible option for more people.

Environmental

28. This project aligns with the City of Sydney's environment performance objectives and targets. Key initiatives include:
 - (a) Transport – Street parking has been de-prioritised in favour of active transport modes. As part of the bike network, the cycleways will provide a viable transport alternative, which will contribute to lower carbon emissions and reduced pollution.
 - (b) Construction Waste - most construction waste will be diverted from landfill.
 - (c) Materials - materials adopted for this project are in line with standard City of Sydney approved products, which are selected from responsible manufacturers and sourced within Australia.

Economic

29. Building cycleways has a significantly positive benefit to cost ratio as outlined in the Cycling Strategy and Action plan (2018 to 2030).

Financial Implications

30. The NSW Government is fully funding the design phase of the project. The City will apply for NSW Government funding for construction. .
31. The total forecast project construction cost is based on the concept plans. A summary of the financial implications is included in confidential Attachment D.
32. The project includes the upgrade of assets owned by third parties, such as traffic signals owned by Transport for NSW. These works will need to be recognised as expenditure within the City's operating budget for the relevant financial year in which they occur.

- 33. There are currently sufficient funds allocated for the project delivery in the 2023/24 draft Capital Works budget and future year forward estimates. The project team will continue to review the costs of the project in consultation with an independent Quantity Surveyor and track against current market rates response.

Relevant Legislation

- 34. 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.
- 35. Attachment D contains confidential information which, if disclosed, would confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
- 36. 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.
- 37. Roads Act 1993 for road related approvals.
- 38. Local Government Act 1993 for construction procurement.
- 39. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A) (Part 5) - The scope of works will be reviewed by a planner to assess consent requirements for the project under the EP&A Act. A Review of Environmental Factors will be completed.
- 40. Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021.
- 41. State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021

Critical Dates / Time Frames

- 42. Key dates for the project:

Milestone	Target Dates
Design development, documentation and approvals	June 2023 - April 2024
Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee Approval	March 2024
Tender period and approval to appoint Contractor	May 2024 - September 2024
Construction commences	October 2024
Construction completion	June 2025

Options

43. Not building the proposed cycleway would prevent achieving the City's strategic objectives. The consequence of not building this connection will result in a delay to safe access for riders between existing cycleways, and decrease the rider uptake on linked cycleways including cycleways on King, Pitt and College Streets.
44. Not building or delaying the proposed cycleway may impact the availability of NSW Government funding for the project.

Public Consultation

45. The City exhibited the concept design for the proposed cycleway (refer Attachment B) and consulted with the community over four weeks between 20 February 2023 and 21 March 2023.
46. 1,050 letters were sent out to properties near the project requesting feedback on the proposal, and the design and details of the proposal were available on the Sydney Your Say website with feedback able to be provided via an online form and survey.
47. A total of 95 comments were received from 60 stakeholders on the map-based engagement platform Social Pinpoint with all responses either supporting the proposal or providing design suggestions and feedback on connections. A total of 23 written submissions were received with 85 per cent of the submissions supporting the project and 15 per cent were neutral or opposing submissions.
48. Approximately 90 people attended two information sessions at Queen's Square where the project team was available to discuss the project. The sessions were held on Tuesday 28 February 2023 (4.30pm to 6pm) and Thursday 1 March 2023 (8am to 9.30am).
49. The majority of the submissions were supportive of the proposed cycleway, with several suggestions made to improve the design.
50. Concerns regarding clashes between cyclist and pedestrians in Queen's Square were voiced in some submissions.
51. The key issues raised by the community and the City's responses are summarised in the attached consultation summary engagement report (refer Attachment C).

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