

Project Scope - O'Dea Avenue Cycling Connection

File No: X090338.003

Summary

This report describes the proposed new permanent cycleway on O'Dea Avenue, Waterloo. The project will deliver a safe connection for people riding between the existing cycleway on O'Dea Avenue in the east and to Bourke Street and cycleways on Short, Allen and George Streets to the west.

The O'Dea Avenue cycleway is part of the City's broader Cycling Strategy and Action Plan, the NSW Government's Co-designed Bicycle network (Principal Bicycle Network). The proposal aligns with a well-used bike commuter route between Alexandria towards the University of NSW.

Community consultation for the project was undertaken in May 2023. There was general support for the cycleway. However, there was strong opposition to the turn ban at Joynton Avenue intersection. There were several suggestions to improve the design and scope.

In response to feedback, additional investigations are being undertaken to work with Transport for NSW on retaining the right turn at Joynton Avenue.

This report recommends that Council endorse the concept design for the cycleway on O'Dea Avenue, Waterloo.

Recommendation

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) approve the concept design for O'Dea Avenue cycleway as shown in Attachment B to the subject report for detailed documentation and construction tender;
- (B) endorse undertaking additional investigations with Transport for NSW on retaining the right turn at Joynton Avenue, in response to community feedback;
- (C) note the estimated project costs as detailed in Confidential Attachment D to the subject report; and
- (D) note that the City will be applying for construction phase funding from the NSW Government.

Attachments

Attachment A. Sydney Bike Network Map

Attachment B. Concept Design - 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 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 5 in the City's Community Strategic Plan is to make Sydney a city for walking cycling and public transport. Its targets include a minimum of 10 per cent of City trips will be made by bicycle and 50 per cent by pedestrian movement by 2030.
5. O'Dea Avenue is a regional bike route connecting Alexandria (and Waterloo/Green Square) towards the University of NSW via the planned Todman Avenue Cycleway by Randwick Council. At the western end it connects to Bourke Street and, via Short and Allen Street Cycleways, to the George Street Cycleway and Alexandria Cycleways which connect to Erskineville.
6. O'Dea Avenue is a Tier 1 connection in the NSW Government's Co-designed Bicycle Network (Principal Bike Network) for Inner Sydney.
7. 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.
8. There are currently over 200 bike trips on O'Dea Avenue during 6am to 9am and 4pm to 7pm peaks. The separated cycleway could initially expect over 500 daily bike trips. In general, 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.
9. The design approach is consistent with the NSW Government's Movement and Place Framework, its Road User Space Allocation Policy and its hierarchy of road users, which prioritises people walking. The City collaborated closely with NSW Government agencies on the reallocation of road space for the cycleway.
10. The proposed design and traffic signal changes have agreement in principle from Transport for NSW. The proposal will be reported to a future meeting of the Local Pedestrian, Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee for endorsement once the detailed design has been completed.

Concept Plan and Scope of Works

11. The proposal comprises a separated two-way cycleway along the northern kerb of O'Dea Avenue between Bourke Street and Gadigal Avenue.

12. The northern kerbside lane on O'Dea Avenue is proposed to be re-allocated to create the separated two-way cycleway. Between Bourke Street and Joynton Avenue, the cycleway on the northern side will replace one parking lane. Between Joynton and Gadigal Avenues, the cycleway will reduce the number of westbound travel lanes from two to one.
13. At the intersection of O'Dea and Joynton Avenue, the concept design includes a protected intersection that will enable people riding to bypass the traffic lights.
14. A new signalised pedestrian crossing leg is proposed at O'Dea Avenue north of Joynton Avenue.
15. To minimise impact on the existing bus services, Transport for NSW requested the following traffic changes:
 - (a) a right-turn ban from O'Dea Avenue (eastbound) into Joynton Avenue (buses excepted)
 - (b) left-turn ban from O'Dea (eastbound) to Gadigal Avenue
16. The turn restrictions will have some impact to people driving. It will add a delay to some driving trips into parts of Green Square which will be an inconvenience to some residents.
17. The City will continue to work with Transport for NSW during the detailed design phase to minimise impacts to people driving, including additional investigations on retaining the right turn at Joynton Avenue. However, the City's Strategic Direction 5, to make a *city for walking, cycling and public transport*, will sometimes necessitate some inconvenience for driving as our constrained space makes room to improve conditions for walking and cycling and avoid impacting buses.
18. Relocation of the eastbound bus stop on O'Dea Avenue between Bourke Street and Joynton Avenue (outside Kennards Storage on O'Dea Avenue), to nearby Bourke Street just north of Elizabeth Street has the following impacts:
 - (a) Route 348 will utilise the relocated bus stop on Bourke Street just north of Elizabeth Street
 - (b) Routes 320 and 392 will utilise the alternative existing bus stops nearby.
19. A short section of shared path at the bus stop near Sam Sing Street to accommodate bus function and to suit the current footpath width.
20. The concept design proposes the removal of 16 time-restricted parking spaces, and the relocation of one car share space.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision

21. Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision renews the communities' vision for the sustainable development of the city to 2050. 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 5 - A city for walking, cycling and public transport - 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; and promoting green travel.

As a key part of the bike network, the cycleway proposed in this project will complete missing links, which will provide a viable, sustainable transport alternative that will contribute to lower carbon emissions and reduced pollution.

The project supports behaviour change in the city and its villages and encourages a shift to sustainable travel modes.

Organisational Impact

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

Risks

23. Risks of not implementing the scope of these works include a reduced opportunity for connectivity between existing cycle infrastructure.
24. Risks of not implementing this scope of works could result in failure to meet community expectations and sustainability targets.
25. Risks associated with the proposal have been considered through the concept design phases. These include safety for pedestrians, cyclists and motorist, environmental and economic impacts and community concerns.
26. Road Safety Audits will be carried out on the developed designs and at the completion of construction to further identify any risks associated with the proposals and develop mitigation measures. These will build on the road safety assessments undertaken during concept design phase.

Social / Cultural / Community

27. People will have improved access to safe cycling infrastructure and 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.
28. By expanding the bike network, this cycleway will provide a viable travel choice for people to ride between Erskineville/Alexandria and Zetland and to University of NSW and free up capacity on public transport and roads for people who need them.

Environmental

29. The project aligns with the City's Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 Continuing the Vision goals which aim to provide a better environment for people walking and riding bikes, resulting in lower carbon emissions and reduced pollution.
30. Cycling and walking are integral to our transport future because they are the most accessible, equitable, sustainable and reliable forms of transport.

Financial Implications

31. The design phase is funded by Transport for NSW under their Get NSW Active program. The City will apply for construction funding in the future.
32. A total forecast project construction costs are based on the concept plans. A summary of the financial implications is included in confidential Attachment D.
33. 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.

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 to the subject report contains confidential information which, if disclosed would confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the 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. Road Act 1993 for road related approvals.
38. Local Government Act 1993 for construction procurement.
39. Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
40. Environmental Planning and Assessment (General) Regulation 2021.
41. State Environment Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

42. Key dates for the project are:
- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| (a) Detailed Design | August 2023 to early 2024 |
| (b) Tender | mid 2024 |
| (c) Construction start | early 2025 |
| (d) Completion | end 2025 |

Options

43. Proceed with the progression of the cycleway works as outlined in this subject report including relevant approvals, preparation of construction documentation, tender and construction.
44. Project does not proceed - this option is not recommended as it would not achieve the City of Sydney's strategic objectives and its positive impacts and outcomes.

Public Consultation

45. Community consultation was undertaken between 1 May and 29 May 2023:
46. Consultation activities included:
- (a) Letter posted to residents inviting them to give feedback on the proposal. 4,000 letters were distributed.
 - (b) A webpage on SydneyYourSay including an interactive map of the proposed concept design. People could insert their feedback directly onto the map and up-vote and down-vote ideas.
 - (c) Two information sessions were held at East Village where project team were available to discuss the project on-site; being an afternoon session on Tuesday 9 May, and a morning session on Thursday 11 May.
 - (d) The Sydney Your Say page was visited 1,043 times during the consultation period.
 - (e) 126 people left a total of 184 comments on the City's interactive map.
 - (f) 42 email submissions were received.
 - (g) Approximately 90 people attended the information sessions.

47. The main themes in comments received during consultation were as follows:
- (a) Opposition to the right-turn ban from O'Dea Avenue on to Joynton Avenue. While the City has worked with Transport for NSW to minimise impacts to people driving, at this intersection to achieve the City's Strategic Direction to make *a city for walking, cycling and public transport*, the turn ban may be required to provide priority to buses and allow safe and efficient bus movements through the intersection. During design the City will undertake additional investigations with Transport for NSW to look at retaining the right turn at Joynton Avenue
 - (b) Continuous footpath treatment at Sam Sing Street. A continuous footpath treatment will be investigated in the future with the completion of Sam Sing Street, and will be dependent on any future redevelopment of the Kennards Storage site at 40-42 O'Dea Avenue.
 - (c) Bus stop to have a bypass separated from footpath. The proposal includes a short section of shared path at the bus stop. There is currently insufficient space to provide a separated cycleway past the bus stop. Future redevelopment east of Sam Sing Street will increase building setbacks and provide the opportunity to improve the bus stop layout.
 - (d) Concern the reduction in traffic lanes will cause congestion at Gadigal Avenue. The City's strategic direction to make *a city for walking, cycling and public transport* prioritises retaining existing footpaths and using road space for cycling and walking routes. Separated cycleways provide a safe and convenient alternative for short trips. This enables more people to choose to ride.
 - (e) Prioritise and automate signal phasing for people walking and riding. We will further develop the intersection design in the detailed design which will include reviewing signal phasing.
 - (f) Opposition to moving or relocating bus stops. While we note there will be further distance to walk for some people using this bus stop, we are proposing the relocation of the east bound bus stop between Joynton Avenue and Bourke Street to provide more even spacing between bus stops, enabling more efficient bus operations.
 - (g) O'Dea and Gadigal Avenue intersection to be a protected intersection for cyclists. We will further develop the intersection design in the detailed design stage.
 - (h) Separate the cycleway from the roadway with a landscaped median. Where there is sufficient road space available, we will consider a planted median in the detailed design.
 - (i) Opposes the removal of parking. The proposed cycleway will be in the existing parking lane on the northern side of O'Dea Avenue. The proposal reallocates road space to prioritise active transport of walking and riding as well as public transport. The parking spaces to be removed are mostly outside Kennards Self Storage. Kennards has private parking available.

48. The key issues raised by the community and the City's responses are summarised in the attached consultation summary report (Attachment C).

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