

Item 23.**Traffic Treatment - Raised Intersection with Progress Pride Flag Artwork - Bourke and Forbes Streets, Darlinghurst**

TRIM Container No.: X100801.002

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee endorse following traffic treatments and parking changes:

- (A) The installation of a raised intersection treatment in Bourke and Forbes Streets, Darlinghurst.
- (B) The reallocation of parking on the northern side of Forbes Street between the 31.5 metres and 37.5 metres to "No Stopping" and the installation of a garden island.

Voting Members for this Item

| Voting Members | Support | Object |
|--|----------------|---------------|
| City of Sydney | [Insert] | [Insert] |
| Transport for NSW | [Insert] | [Insert] |
| NSW Police – Surry Hills PAC | [Insert] | [Insert] |
| NSW Police – Kings Cross PAC | [Insert] | [Insert] |
| Representative for the Member for Sydney | [Insert] | [Insert] |

Advice

Advice will be updated after the meeting.

Background

In October 2023, Council resolved to investigate more locations and opportunities for new Progress Pride Flag artwork installations on the roadway in the City's Local Government Area. After investigating several locations, the City has determined that the intersection of Bourke and Forbes Streets in Darlinghurst is an ideal location for installing the Progress Pride Flag artwork on the roadway.

The new Qtopia Sydney, the LGBTQIA+ museum is located on the northern corner of the Bourke and Forbes Street intersection. Qtopia Sydney is expected to transform the area into a cultural and tourist destination, attracting increased activation and pedestrian activity, drawing visitors (people walking and cycling) across Bourke and Forbes streets and Taylor Square from Oxford Street and beyond. Currently, there is no dedicated pedestrian crossing across Bourke and Forbes streets, tracing anticipated desire lines between Qtopia Sydney and Taylor Square.

A raised intersection treatment is proposed at the Bourke and Forbes Streets intersection to enhance road safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The treatment will elevate the existing road level to be flush with adjacent footpaths. It would allow seamless travel for pedestrians and cyclists and significantly improve universal access for the visually impaired and people in wheelchairs and prams. The raised intersection coupled with approach and departure ramps will act as traffic calming measures to encourage slower approach speeds.

To distinguish a change in the street environment, it is also proposed to install the Progress Pride Flag artwork along the road surface of the raised intersection. The artwork alerts drivers that there is a change in the road environment, encouraging them to drive at a slower speed.

Comments

Bourke and Forbes Streets are both two-way local roads under the jurisdiction of the City. The speed limit along both roads is 40km/h. An existing raised shared zone on Taylor Square connects one-way traffic from Foley Street towards the Bourke and Forbes Street intersection.

The existing "No Stopping" restrictions along the intersection is maintained.

An Ausgrid substation is currently positioned on the footpath on the southern side of Forbes Street, located east of the intersection. As part of the proposed road level adjustments to match the footpath level, Ausgrid has requested protective measures for the substation, including the installation of bollards and the provision of an additional easement to ensure the substation's safety in the event of a vehicle veering off course at the intersection. Modifications to the southern kerb line are necessary to satisfy Ausgrid's request.

Parking on the northern side of Forbes Street east of the intersection is signposted as "Mobility Parking, 60 Degrees Angle Parking Front to Kerb Vehicles Under 6m Only". The swept path analysis at the eastern end of the intersection showed that when the southern kerb line is modified, large vehicles may impede on the parked vehicles on the northern side.

To optimise the swept paths of large vehicles at the eastern end of the intersection, the traffic treatment proposal involves removing three angle mobility parking spaces and replacing them with a garden bed. The garden bed would prevent vehicles from parking in this area, increase sight lines to pedestrians and contribute to greening the area.

The City will commission a post construction Road Safety Audit after the raised intersection with Progress Pride Flag Artwork is completed.

Traffic Counts

Traffic counts were conducted at Bourke and Forbes Streets between Monday 5 February and Monday 12 February 2024. The counts indicated an Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) of 860 vehicles per day. The 85th percentile speed recorded at the intersection was 20 km/h.

Given that the traffic volumes and vehicle speeds are low, the Bourke and Forbes Street intersection is deemed suitable for a raised intersection treatment.

Traffic Calming and Road Safety

The raised intersection treatment with its approach and departure ramps would act as a traffic calming measure. It would improve general safety in the area by reducing the speed of traffic travelling along Bourke and Forbes Streets. This measure is part of the City's commitment to calm traffic and improve road safety for pedestrians and bike riders.

Consultation

The City conducted public consultation on the original Raised Intersection with Progress Pride Flag Artwork concept proposal of from 24 April to 8 May 2024 through the City's "Sydney Have Your Say" webpage. The original proposal did not include the removal of three angle mobility parking spaces on the western side of Forbes Street north of the intersection.

During the consultation period, 569 surveys were completed, and seven written submissions were received. 420 respondents supported the proposal, while 156 objected. 14 of the objectors expressed concerns regarding road safety.

A summary of the objections and the City's response is provided below:

| Community feedback | Number of times mentioned | City's response |
|---|---------------------------|---|
| Multi-coloured crossings, instead of black and white, can negatively affect neurodivergent pedestrians, blind people, people with dementia, service animals and horses. | 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The raised intersection with Progress Pride Flag artwork is not classified as a pedestrian crossing (zebra crossing). There will be no standard line markings at the intersection to designate it as a zebra crossing. <li>• The aim of a raised intersection is firstly to act as a traffic |

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| | | <p>calming measure. The raised intersection coupled with approach/ departure ramps will act as traffic calming measure to encourage slower approach speeds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secondly, at a raised intersection the footpaths are at the same level as the road surface. As such, it facilitates a seamless travel for pedestrians and cyclists and improves universal access for the visually impaired and people in wheelchairs and prams. • The artwork alerts drivers that there is a change in the road environment, encouraging them to drive at a slower speed. • The artwork at the intersection does not designate it as a pedestrian crossing (zebra crossing). It highlights drivers and pedestrians that they are approaching an area with a change in street environment. • Pedestrians, including those who are mobility or visually impaired, neurodiverse individuals, people with prams, and those accompanied by service animals, as well as bike riders and commuters on horses, should cross the intersection when there is a safe gap in traffic, similar to crossing at an uncontrolled intersection. • There will be no standard line markings at the intersection to designate it as a zebra crossing. |
| Multi-coloured crossings are confusing for pedestrians and motorists | 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to previous response. • The Progress Pride Flag artwork at the intersection is not |

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| | | <p>designated as a pedestrian crossing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrians should cross the road while there is a safe gap in traffic. • The artwork alerts drivers that there is a change in the road environment, encouraging them to drive at a slower speed. • The City’s current rainbow artwork installed along the signalised pedestrian crossing at Bourke and Campbell Streets, Surry Hills has not created congestion. • The proposed raised intersection with Progress Pride Flag artwork is planned in an area with low traffic volume. As such congestion is not expected. • Given that this proposal will be the first of its kind in the city, the City will monitor traffic volumes in the area and if there is congestion, appropriate solutions to mitigate the issue will be considered. |
| <p>Multi-coloured raised crossings create congestion</p> | <p>1</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City’s current rainbow artwork installed along the signalised pedestrian crossing at Bourke and Campbell Streets, Surry Hills has not created congestion. • The proposed raised intersection with Progress Pride Flag artwork is planned in an area with low traffic volume. As such congestion is not expected. • Given that this proposal will be the first of its kind in the city, the City will monitor traffic volumes in the area and if there is congestion, appropriate |

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| | | <p>solutions to mitigate the issue will be considered.</p> |
| <p>The City of Sydney risks breaching the UN Convention on Road Signs and Signals by implementing this proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article 29.2: This article mandates that "road markings... shall be yellow or white." A rainbow crossing would violate this standardisation. • Article 27.4: This article directs that pedestrian crossings should be marked with "broad stripes, parallel to the axis of the carriageway." The inclusion of the chevron in the Progress Pride Flag on a crossing further jeopardises compliance. <p>I urge the City to familiarise itself with UN General Assembly Resolution 60/5, which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritises Road Safety: The resolution highlights road accidents as a critical public health issue, urging UN members to act. • Advocates for Standardisation: The resolution emphasises adherence to international conventions such as the UN Convention on Road Signs and Signals, designed to enhance safety through consistent road markings. Non-compliance with the Convention and the resolution's principles will compromise the safety of our roads. Please don't play with our safety! | <p>1</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The raised intersection with the Progress Pride Flag artwork is not designated as a pedestrian crossing. • Pedestrians should cross the road while there is a safe gap in traffic. • The artwork does not indicate to pedestrians that it is a pedestrian crossing. • The City will commission a Road Safety Audit as part of the design process. |

To optimise the swept paths of large vehicles at the eastern end of the intersection, the revised proposal for the Raised Intersection with Progress Pride Flag Artwork includes removing three angle mobility parking spaces on the western side of Forbes Street north of the intersection and replacing them with a garden bed. This garden bed would prevent vehicles from parking in this area, increase sight lines to pedestrians and contribute to greening the area.

The revised proposal was not reconsulted with the community as the detailed design was recently finalised. However, stakeholders and community members who had submitted feedback on the original proposal were informed about the changes and given the opportunity to provide additional input.

Currently, there are eight angled mobility parking spaces on the western side of Forbes Street. These parking spaces are within 200 metres of Oxford Street, and the Courthouse, providing access for Mobility Parking Scheme (MPS) permit holders to park and access these facilities.

The mobility parking spaces were installed over 20 years ago when there was a high demand for mobility parking from the surrounding land uses. Those land uses have changed over time and recent observations indicate the demand for mobility parking at this particular location has reduced. Although the proposal will remove three angle mobility parking spaces, five angle mobility parking spaces will be retained on the western side of Forbes Street and 32 ticket parking spaces on the eastern side of Forbes Street, where MPS permit holders can park for an unlimited time for free.

The City will monitor the impact of the loss of the three angle mobility parking spaces on Forbes Street. The City can consider installing more mobility parking spaces in Forbes Street or other or nearby streets if and where additional need is identified.

Financial

Appropriate funding for the proposal will be secured once greater certainty on the construction timeline is reached.

GANESH VENGADASALAM, SENIOR TRAFFIC ENGINEER