

BOROONDARA

Bicycle Users Group

Boroondara Bicycle Users Group
Response to:

City of Stonnington
Stonnington Cycling Strategy
2013-2018

1 June 2014

All feedback on the Draft Structure Plan must be sent to Council by 2nd June 2014

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Introduction

BBUG thanks Stonnington Council for providing us with the opportunity to respond to the draft Cycling Strategy 2013-2018. BBUG may make this response available on its website and Facebook page.

Executive Summary

BBUG commends Stonnington Council for its production of this bicycle strategy after two years of research. The new Draft Bicycle Strategy is an improvement on the previous Bicycle Strategy and if followed, should result in better facilities for bike riders in Stonnington.

The strategy has much to commend it but is underfunded and does not go far enough. The budget consists mainly of consultations, investigations and maintenance. Given the five year time frame, Council will not keep up with the rest of Melbourne.

Many of our comments relate to the Action Plan and are identified as such with the relevant section and number.

Recent events:

- BBUG welcomes Council's part funding of Ted Baillieu's promised new footbridge at Glenferrie Rd on the Gardiners Creek Trail.
- We also welcome the good work put into new parking facilities around Stonnington. Please continue with this work.
- The crossing at Ivanhoe Grove is also welcome. This will be of great benefit to bike education program at the Malvern Valley Primary School by providing safer and improved access to the nearby Scotchmans Creek Trail. The users of the skate park at Phoenix Park are also benefiting.
- And more recently the Yarra River Biodiversity Project work around Kanteen is a positive. For a simple example; this associated road crossing is now improved. It's flat and the handrail obstruction/hazard has been removed – attention to detail is important:

<http://goo.gl/DsgrZo>

- Removal of most of the bluestone pitchers by VicRoads on the north section of Chapel St is a significant improvement.

BBUG suggested recommended actions

- **Greater transparency with regard to the Cycling Reference Group.** As Stonnington is our neighbouring municipality, we maintain an interest in the municipality. Boroondara BUGC believes the names and positions of members of the Cycling Reference Group should be Public, and that access to information about meeting times, and minutes should also be Public. Transparency, open consultation and debate are hallmarks of our democratic society.

This information is freely available for Boroondara's Bicycle Advisory Committee, on the Council web site at <http://boroondara.vic.gov.au/our-city/cycling-walking/cycling/bicycle-advisory-committee> Boroondara BAC meetings are also open to observers and people with various and sometimes opposing viewpoints do come to see it in action.

An improvement would be to replace the Cycling Reference Group with a body constituted along similar lines to the Boroondara Bicycle Advisory Committee. Members of this group can submit suggestions for projects and this has proved to be very productive. (Relates to Network Management 7 in Action Plan)

- **Funding.** The program needs to be more heavily funded to obtain optimum outcomes and to fund other initiatives. Of all the vehicles entering the CBD Hoodle grid; fifteen percent are now bicycles. Melbourne City Council has reacted by focusing on the movement of people rather vehicles. Eventually Stonnington will also have to adapt to its new circumstances as Melbourne pushes past 4 million people.
- **Closer liaison with Boroondara Council on issues affecting our shared boundary.** Much of this boundary coincides with the route of the Gardiners Creek Path. Liaison could include combining of safety audits, and consistency with solar lighting, signage and line-marking. Such closer cooperation could result in monetary savings as well as better overall results. (Relates to Network Management 3 in Action Plan)
- **Gardiners Creek Trail.** There are six old, narrow, arched bridges between Solway Bridge and Nettleton Park that require bike riders to simultaneously negotiate tight turns, poor sight lines and steep grades. If some of the informal paths along the south, Stonnington side of the creek, were converted to sealed shared paths, the number of cyclists using these bridges would be significantly reduced. The footbridges would have far less bike traffic and would significantly improve the trail for pedestrians.

The corresponding sections on the Boroondara side could then be mainly used by walkers. This would take some cooperation by various parties but would eliminate the pedestrian cyclist conflict that is inherent in the design of these narrow and arched bridges. Boroondara Council could extend the existing “bushy feel” of the south side, created over time by the excellent work of Mr Trevor Phillips and Friends, on the north side, leaving the footbridges primarily for walkers.

- **Gardiners Creek Trail at Brixton Rise.** (Network Management 10, Action Plan) BBUG believes that walkers, joggers and cyclists should be prioritised over motorists here as they undoubtedly make up the great majority of road users. This would be inline with the Delivery Priority outlined in Council's Sustainable Transport Policy.

A fully separated, two-way shared path should be installed here, even if this means cars being squeezed to the maximum. This should be on the creek side of the road to avoid having cyclists and walkers cross the road. The current very unsatisfactory situation could be improved in the short term by the removal of the two centre bollards currently making access to and exit from Brixton Rise so difficult and dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians. Motorists should also be directed to give way to cyclists and walkers by signs at both ends of this section.

Another option is a shared space – a prime example being Settler Crt in Monash CC, on the Scotchmans Creek Trail. The road, without the traffic calming, effectively operate in the manner at the moment. See link to Settler Crt image:

<http://goo.gl/pc5PpG>

- **Sir Zelma Reserve.** There appears to be a duplication in monies allocated to these two projects: items 38 & 67
- **Chadstone Rd.** There appears to be a duplication in monies allocated to these two projects: items 21 & 69. However what item 69 refers to is unclear?

Update: item 69 appears to be for head start boxes on Waverley Rd eg as seen at the Scotchmans Creek ped xing. These will be good for cyclists (as per the cycling the sport) but will do little to help the 8 to 80 year olds that we actually want to encourage. Super Tuesday counts show that the Scotchmans Creek Trail is far better patronised than Waverley Rd by ten to one.

- **What is item 16?** What is the route? How will bike riders benefit? How much of the monies are going to fencing and environmental interpretation?
- **Dunlop Street.** The bar and bollard obstructing safe passage on the Gardiners Creek Trail at Dunlop Street should be removed immediately. These are hard to see in some lighting conditions and constitute a hazard to cyclists rather than a protection for them.
- **High St Underpass.** *Investigate realigning the Gardiners Creek Trail westbound adjacent to the Eric Raven Reserve and realign the existing path. Seek grant for construction.* (Major Shared Path Renewal Projects 32) This is an important project and consultation with all interested parties, including cyclists who use the path, is essential as there may be more than one possible solution to the current problems.

Work with VicRoads to have lighting installed under the High St underpass to ensure pedestrian and cyclist safety at low light levels.

- **Scotchman's Creek Trail.** *Reconstruct and widen path between East Malvern Station and Warrigal Road to a minimum 3 meter width, including concrete edging, appropriate lighting and tree removal.* (Major Shared Path Renewal Projects 37) Another important project. A safety audit is needed prior to this work being carried out to identify any additional hazards near the path.
- **Scotchman's and Gardiner's Creek Trails.** *Develop a wayfinding strategy for off-road trails shared with the City of Boroondara.* (Wayfinding 48) This is a very worthwhile project. An important point to note here is the need to identify all roads and streets over or under which the trails pass. For example road name signs are needed on bridges. It is also highly desirable that signs indicate facilities such as toilets, picnic tables and shelters in the vicinity of shared paths, ie up to 500m away, that may be needed by cyclists or walkers but not readily apparent to them.
- **Warrigal Road Path.** *Provide a shared path along the west side of Warrigal Road to connect the Gardiners Creek Trail and Holmesglen TAFE.* The GCT in Boroondara has been constructed with a splayed end in anticipation of this path being constructed.

This path will benefit students and their families from Solway Ward, enabling them to ride to Holmesglen College and also Holmesglen Station. It will also benefit Stonnington residents wishing to access Markham Reserve and its magnificent adventure playground. There is lazy space on the roadway at the bridge which would enable this path to be constructed. (Connectivity - Missing Links 20)

- **Urban Forest and Boyd Park paths.** These paths provide an important link between the Scotchmans Creek/Gardiners Creek trails, and the Rosstown Rail Trail through Glen Eira. This is a connection used by large numbers of recreational cyclists as well as commuting workers and students. There is a need for better wayfinding signage, especially through the Urban Forest where sight lines are poor. A better crossing at Dandenong Rd, properly aligned between the two paths and with more space for cycling groups to wait than the current awkward and misaligned crossing, is needed. See footbridge discussion further below and item 61.
- **Chadstone** The budget seems to have concentrated substantial monies in the Chadstone area in a location that is already fairly well served. For example the Urban Forest path is already well used. Apparently this is seen as unsuitable for cyclists, so a new path is going to be built in parallel along the Sydare Ave alignment (item 13 & 51). And again parallel to Sydare Ave will be an improved route along Chadstone Rd (item 21) and also a link from Sydare Ave (item 15). Then further links item 11 at Quentin Rd
- **Chadstone.** *Investigate, and if feasible, continue a shared path connection from Phoenix Park Community Centre and adjoining Malvern Valley Primary School via Quentin Road to Chadstone Shopping Centre.* This needs to include wayfinding signage. A well signed link could be beneficial for Boroondara residents wishing to shop at Chadstone or visit the cinema etc. The Rebecca Road route from the footbridge should also be considered as a quiet back street route to Chadstone as it has a good connection to the nearby footbridge.

A simple quick improvement would be a pram ramp shown in the link below. This path provides very good access to the shopping center from the Scotchmans Creek Trail:

<http://goo.gl/KoMVca>

(Connectivity - Missing Links 11)

- **Chadstone.** Any developments to Chadstone Shopping Center should incorporate improved bicycle access s per item 12. One should be able circumnavigate the center on a proper bicycle path. The path in item 15 from Sydare Ave to the center will need good access to Middle Rd.
- **Chadstone.** *Work with development proposals for Chadstone Shopping Centre to improve cycling access into / out of, around and through the Shopping Centre site,*

including provision of bicycle parking facilities based on planning conditions.

Current bike parking (other than the secure staff facilities) is exposed and not secure or well lit. (Connectivity - Missing Links 14)

- **Chadstone Road.** *Investigate opportunities to provide an exclusive on road bike lane, including shared path connections at the northern and southern ends of Chadstone Road. An exclusive bike lane is needed here with no parking. The traffic is too heavy to expect cyclists to weave in and out of parked cars. (CoS Managed On-Road Strategic Routes 21)*
- **Peeverill Park.** *Investigate the provision of a safe cycling route from Warrigal Road to the Scotchmans Creek shared trail at Peeverill Park.*

Work with Monash Council and VicRoads to provide a legible route from Peeverill Park to the ped xing at Warrigal road and onwards to the path on the north side of the Monash Freeway, which starts at the west end of Westbrook St.

This trail (the Holmesglen Trail) runs some distance and could be further extended in Monash by VicRoads east of Huntigdale Rd. This route is highly underutilised due to poor connectivity and legibility at Warrigal Rd. The route gives pretty good access to Holmesglen Tafe and shopping center via the back streets in the vicinity.

Looking south: shared path on the left and Peeverill park on the right near freeway.

<http://goo.gl/UXK7Pg>

This path would link with the footbridge and link on to Chadstone shopping centre and transport hub. (Connectivity - Missing Links 18)

- **High Street.** *Liaise with VicRoads regarding the need to provide for improved and safer cyclist travel along High Street given the priority afforded to this route as per VicRoads Bicycle Priority Route. Consider quiet back street route alternative with signage. (Project Development and Advocacy on the VicRoads Managed Network 54)*
- **Alexander Pde and Chapel St.** *Hopefully the imminent work on the intersection of Alexander Pde and Chapels St will finally see the removal of the last remaining bluestone pitchers and the installation of green paint treatment and wider pram ramps to facilitate access from Chapel St to the Yarra trail.*
- **Darling Gardens shared path.** *This path is quite steep, particularly as you approach Darling Rd. If the path is not realigned to reduce gradients to five percent or less then the proposed expenditure will be wasted. There is a good opportunity to connect this path to the ped xing at Yarra St by formally extending the path along the south side of Alexandra Ave under the rail line bridge – giving access to the Yarra trail and the playground in the Gardens.*

The project at \$40,000 appears to be under budgeted to achieve a good outcome for bike riders and pedestrians.

- **Yarra St.** The new intersection of Yarra St with Alexandra Ave needs a head start box. Motor vehicles in Yarra St will be turning left or right into Alexandra Ave. However riders in Yarra St will be heading straight (north) on to the Yarra Trail. They need a head start box to protect them from vehicles turning left or right.
- **Critical Route Corridor.** Work with VicRoads, VicTrack and Glen Eira Council to improve the connection from Balaclava Rd to the on road bike lanes at Toroonga Rd via the train line underpass (a Critical Route Corridor). The route needs to be more obvious/legible to the uninitiated. Suggest green paint across Dandenong Road with bike logos and across Normandy Rd as well next to the ped xings. Image via the links:

<http://goo.gl/a4cXpg>

<http://goo.gl/eGpxfp>

- **Belgrave Rd to Sycamore St.** (Missing links) The on road bike lanes on Belgrave Rd are well utilised by riders, as Belgrave Road leads to the extensive off road network accessible via the footbridge at East Malvern Station. To the south the road leads to East Boundary Rd and Charman Rd then Beach Rd.

However the transition from Belgrave Rd to the East Malvern Station off road path is via this ped xing and the footpath. You can see the desire line in the image (the dirt patch on the right of the pram ramp. The connection between the ped xing and Sycamore St and should be formalised as a proper shared path.

<http://goo.gl/pXBqby>

Note that the path next to Waverley Oval along Sycamore St is already a shared path. This short section of Waverley road is unsafe to ride on as it is too narrow and very busy – note the truck in the image:

- **Como Ave.** There is a good opportunity to connect the north end of Como Ave at the playground to intersection of Bruce St and Williams St. It would be important to optimise the grades of such a path. Such a path would provide a good route from Toorak Rd and the Yarra Trail.

<http://goo.gl/HXCZdj>

- **Flying Duck Hotel.** The connection between Bendigo St, Murray St and Bang St should be improved for walkers and bike riders. The future of these connections

should be carefully monitored given recent suggestions that the Flying Duck Hotel may be redeveloped.

<http://goo.gl/Ev789t>

- **Bang St.** Continuing the above – note the chevron sharp edged road signage, short white bollard, lack of a pram ramp at the desire line and in the rear of the image, the lack of connecting path way – refer desire line in the shadows. Improve access from road and work with Public Housing to improve the internal pathways.

<http://goo.gl/HNmKhe>

- **Rockley Gardens.** Connect Time Lane to Rockley Gardens. Perhaps the current informal access can be formalised:

<http://goo.gl/GR6tae>

- **Dandenong Rd footbridge.** The footbridge across Dandenong Rd in Windsor should have its stairs replaced with ramps – work with VicRoads and Port Philip to achieve this.

Refer Chapel Vision documentation: "Enhanced pedestrian/cycle linkages to Presentation College & Dandenong Rd footbridge."

Traffic Engineering Manual Volume 1 - Traffic Management, Oct 2001 Ed 3 Rev A
Ch 4 - Pedestrian Facilities 4.6 Grade separation

"To give equal access for all users it is generally necessary to use ramps and not stairs to access the overpass"

This would then lead into Hornby St in the north and the off road routes to the south accessing on road lanes at Alma Rd.

<http://goo.gl/311SQk>

- **Central Gardens.** Riders using Hedgeley Dene Gardens often continue to Karadella St then the ped xing across Burke Rd to Central Gardens, then the footpath to Central Rd and Finch St giving pretty good access to Monash University and Caulfield Station. The footpath section along Burke Rd could formalised as a shared path and a better pram ramp installed here:

<http://goo.gl/c5QtHp>

- **High St underpass.** This location has seen a number of accidents due to the steep grades present. BBUG welcomes any improvement to this location (item 32).

However “*seek grant*” as seen in the funding schedule, to have this rectified, may be insufficient approach. What grants does Parks at Council have in mind?

- **Hugesdale to East Malvern Station.** The funding (item 61) speaks of a pedestrian crossing at Dandenong Rd. A more economically sound approach is to construct a footbridge. It avoids bike riders holding up six lanes of traffic on a regular basis and will attract far more bike riders as it will be quicker to cross the highway. Glen Eira Council should be added to the partners list. A bridge would benefit both Councils.

It has been our experience that riders transfer between train lines using this route to optimise their travel. Other examples of such transfer routes include Richmond to Jolimont and East Malvern station to Almein Station.

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Off road paths:

In general we prefer 3m wide paths. 2.5m paths result in more conflict and angst between riders and pedestrians. Particularly if the path is tightly curved, has poor sight lines or steep grades and ped/bicycle traffic is high. Narrow paths result in more letters of complaint going to Council. This occurs to a lesser degree with the wider paths.

Contraflow lanes:

Currently riders in the Chapel St area have no choice but to use Chapel St itself to access the surrounding areas. Most of the one way streets that run parallel to Chapel St, on the east and west sides of Chapel St, should have contraflow lanes installed for bike riders. Hornby St, item 23 is a starting point.

This has become more urgent, as the number of riders being doored on Chapel St, has been significant in recent times:

<http://goo.gl/Q76HK8>

Stonnington Leader May 19, 2014

"Seven cyclists 'doored' in a month on Prahran's busiest street"

Refer to our previous submission: “*Contraflow in Stonnington SBUG submission*”

Stations:

Access to all stations should be reviewed and improved (as suggested in the strategy). For example Glen Iris station has an off road connection to the Gardiners Creek Trail but no signage indicating same. Ditto for East Malvern Station at Solway St. Sometimes, without appropriate signage, it doesn't just “click” that a station is nearby.

Sections of the all most continuous path next to the railway line from Caulfield to South Yarra could be improved, not just for walkers but also bike riders. This would include any new development at the old SKM site in Orrong Rd. The paths are ideal for short trips that make up the majority of trips, when riding.

Council's website:

The spreadsheet starting on page 31 of the strategy should be made separately available on Council's web site. It is virtually unreadable when contained within the strategy document.

Ideally the two referenced reports should also made be available on Council's website.

- Cycling Discussion Paper, CDM Research (March 2012)
- A New Future for Cycling in Stonnington 2013-2023 and Beyond, GHD (April 2013).

Miscellaneous obstacles:

Instigating a bollard removal/replacement program would be useful. Remove unnecessary bollards and for those that must be retained; replace with a bollard that is round with a rounded top, complete with bright paint work and reflectors. Have a look at the bollards being installed by Monash Council.

Here we have two bollards obstructing a path where it crosses Glenbrook Ave. They serve no purpose but to restrict the movement of all users; ie those who may be pushing prams or using a mobility scooter or even riding a bike. In fact the central traffic island shows evidence of many bike tyre impressions. These bollards will not stop motorised vehicles as the gardens aren't fenced. These bollards are prime candidates for removal.

Another example of a bollard that could be removed – it's almost “spear” shaped:

<http://goo.gl/N6Q3yo>

Here is another example of two steel bollards with sharp edges. Notice the person on the mobility scooter had to negotiate a turn around these from the street footpath, while entering Chadstone Shopping Center.

<http://goo.gl/08L8BO>

While Council may not approve of riders riding through Hedgeley Dene Gardens many people do. The pram ramps and bollards at the associated road intersections with the gardens need to be improved to make it safe to do so.

In this image directly behind the tree, to the left of the private fence, is the end of a footpath. It's not connected to Malvern Rd. The desire line indicates a connection is warranted. It continues the connectivity to Hedgeley Dene Gardens.

<http://goo.gl/jB9Q1P>

There is an underpass of the Monash Freeway at Allenby Avenue. Currently to access the underpass from Allenby Avenue, you have to make use of this crossover/drive way. The owner of the house has to be very careful when driving in and out of their driveway. If asked, the owners will report to you, that their driveway is an area of conflict, that could be improved. A better arrangement is required when transitioning from the road to the access path leading to the underpass.

<http://goo.gl/Rj7x0B>

This hand rail near Como park was identified in the last bike strategy as needing removal. It's invisible to riders and is a clear hazard to riders given its placement in the middle of the path. Please remove it (assuming it's not been done already).

<http://goo.gl/GGwmoa>

The transition from the east end of "The Boulevard" and the footpath on the west side of Warrigal Rd needs to be improved. Currently riders go up the shallower kerb and then proceed under and between the "Burwood" signage and go left to the footpath. Move the signage, install a pram ramp and additional section of foot path. You can see a clear desire line here beneath the signage:

<http://goo.gl/L7PPAq>

Bike parking:

Chadstone Shopping Center has surprisingly huge shortage of bike parking facilities for shoppers. Those leasing shops at the Center are losing potential customers.

Bike parking is needed for the patrons of Kanteen and also for the users of the nearby pick-nick tables. This would be a good location for a **bike coral** (item 25) assuming it was placed directly in front of the outside seating area and to the east end of that area, where the patrons can keep an eye on their bikes. The toaster rack carried in and out of Kanteen staff everyday does not meet standards, nor does it have sufficient capacity for the number of bike to be found there on a sunny Sunday afternoon. Likewise work load in moving it in and out everyday is an unnecessary imposition on the staff!

You can see it here in the shade just to the right of the gum tree.

<http://goo.gl/YuFJ7h>

It does not meet Austroad standards:

11.2.2

In general, every bicycle parking facility should:

- *enable wheels and frame to be locked to the device without damaging the bicycle*
- *be placed in view of staff, customers and passers-by or covered by TV cameras*

Install bike parking here on the Gardiners Creek Trail here at the playground just south of High St.

<http://goo.gl/a7oN9Q>

This toaster rack in Beatty St behind the rear of the black car needs replacement (assuming it's not been done already – it may have).

<http://goo.gl/PW2WIN>

These toaster racks in Essex St outside the swim center need replacement (assuming it's not been done already)

<http://goo.gl/n8JcVa>

It is great to see that two sets of toaster racks at Phoenix park have been replaced but a least one set still remains and also need to be replaced. In some cases it's not possible to put a bicycle into them because they are not wide enough to accommodate the wider wheels found on some bikes.

Bike parking at all the railway stations needs to be accessed (as noted in the strategy). While not always Council's responsibility, Council can advocate for improvements. The Parkiteer bike cages have been very successful - there may be more stations in Stonnington that could make use of them. The Parkiteer cages are far better than the cheap equivalent erected at Prahran station. Regardless have a look at the bike parking at Malvern station on the south side. It needs improvement.

Solar Lighting:

The in ground solar lighting (solar road studs – item 33) seen on some shared paths is unsuitable for purpose. Such devices provide little light and only act as providing some guidance of the path's future deviation. When the path is resurfaced they become problematic – do you pull them out, tar the surface then reinsert them? What about repainting path edges. They all have to be masked off beforehand? Likewise as the tarred surface ages and moves, some are becoming a trip hazard.

Contemporary solar powered aerial LED luminaires should be utilised.

Referenced documents:

Stonnington Cycling Strategy 2013-2018

For additional information refer to our previous submissions:

http://boroondarabug.org/w/images/6/63/Contraflow_in_Stonnington_-_SBUG_submission.pdf

http://boroondarabug.org/w/images/9/93/Public_Realm_Strategy_BBUG_Response.pdf

http://boroondarabug.org/w/images/3/3f/Urban_shared_path_at_Warrigal_Rd_-_a_submission_from_BBUG.pdf

http://boroondarabug.org/w/images/f/fe/Port_phillip_housing_association-BBUG_response.pdf



BBUG's Boroondara and Stonnington members working together.