

BOROONDARA

Bicycle Users Group

Boroondara Bicycle Users Group
Response to:

City of Boroondara
Hays Paddock Plan Draft Report

April 2011

All feedback on the Draft Report must be sent to Council by 18th July 2011

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Introduction

Boroondara Bicycle Users Group exists to promote cycling and to advocate for improvements to cycling infrastructure in Boroondara and surrounding areas. BBUG thanks the council for providing us with the opportunity to reply to the draft plan. BBUG will make this response available on its website.

Referenced documents:

Hays Paddock Plan: Draft Report, April 2011
Boroondara Bicycle Strategy, September 2008

Executive Summary

Boroondara BUG generally supports the recommendations in the draft plan. In particular we endorse the plan to retain the shared path along the eastern side of Hays Paddock and to improve it in a number of ways. This path is an important link in the shared path network and identified as such in the Boroondara Bicycle Strategy. We also support the idea of a shared path alongside the main southern entrance to the park but would not like to see the roadway made less bike friendly on the assumption that all cyclists will use the

shared path. We also strongly urge that the number of toilets available for use by members of the public should not be reduced below their current number of five.

BBUG recommended actions

Eastern Shared Path

The path along the eastern side of Hays Paddock is already well used by cyclists, and provides a safe route for students riding to Kew High School. It is part of a link between the Koonung Creek Trail and the Anniversary (Outer Circle) Trail which is identified in the Boroondara Bicycle Strategy, Table 4, no 20, as needing further development, although it is already known and used as such by many.

It is pleasing to see that the draft plan includes, in Section 9 'Melbourne Water Culvert and Silt Pond', the provision 'Improve the main pathway access at the boundary fence squeeze point'. This squeeze point is a very dangerous one at present, and its elimination will make this route much safer for both pedestrians and cyclists.

It is also pleasing that Section 12 'Lister Street Open Space Edge' includes the recommendation 'Investigate with VicRoads ways to extend the footpath/bicycle trail link along the freeway reserve behind the houses to the Old Bourke (sic) Road footpath which links to the Koonung Trail to the east. Although there is a fairly safe on-road route, via Keystone St and Keystone Cr, families with children and less confident cyclists prefer to stay off-road and it is generally a safer option for them. The off-road link would also be simpler and easier to follow than the present on-road route, a great advantage for first time users.

It should be noted however that until such a link exists, and if, when it exists, it is to be closed during archery sessions, the road route will still be used at times and there may also be some local cyclists who will wish to enter Hays Paddock via the Lister St car park. The short path providing access from the car park to the park is currently very narrow and requires cyclists to execute a sharp turn. Widening and flaring of this entrance path should be undertaken as soon as possible and should certainly be a part of any plan for alterations to this car park. Similarly the park entrance at Newbury St will continue to be used by local cyclists and should be made as bike friendly as possible.

Boroondara BUG does not believe that all the paths in the park should necessarily be sealed. Sealed paths make for better cycling, and sealing assists other wheeled users such as those in wheelchairs, however gravel paths in the park have a distinct appeal. The more popular through route on the east would benefit from being sealed with lower maintenance being a side benefit to Council.

According to VicRoads [Cycle Notes 12](#) (PDF 337KB) 'Paths need to allow space for pedestrians to walk two abreast and leave room for on-coming traffic or bike riders to overtake. 2.5m is the desired minimum for local access paths but 3m is the preferred minimum on paths with moderate levels of usage. Whatever the width of your path you

will need a good reason not to paint a centre line.’ Part 14 says ‘It is recommended that shared use paths are designated with a separation line’.

The eastern path needs to be signed as a shared path, and directional signage to indicate the other paths and roads to which it links is also required.

Southern Entrance

While the proposed unsealed, shared path for pedestrians and cyclists alongside the main road entering Hays Paddock from the south will be useful for many cyclists it should not be assumed that all cyclists will prefer using this to the road. Cyclists are entitled to use the road if they prefer to do so. At present the entrance road has a series of speed humps which pose a hazard for cyclists. Any traffic calming devices installed on this entrance road should be designed to be bike friendly.

Public Toilets

Appendix C: ‘Pavilion Upgrade Plan’, shows only two public toilets which appear to have hand-washing facilities included inside the cubicles. This is a very marked reduction from the present provision of five cubicles with two sets of external hand-washing facilities. We understand that there is the possibility of public access to the ‘Alternative Amenities’ shown on the plan. However we question how helpful this will be given that these amenities are likely to be allocated to sports teams at just the times when the park is most crowded.

With Boroondara’s population density and that of surrounding areas predicted to increase significantly in future years, it seems certain that park usage by the public will increase rather than decline. It is difficult therefore to understand the reasoning behind this significant reduction in public toilet facilities. This reduction is in stark contrast to the far more lavish provision for the sporting teams, who only use the park for limited periods.

According to Section 4 ‘Hays Paddock Playground’ this is to be a key playground for children of all abilities. This means that it will continue to attract busloads of disabled children from far afield as well as locals. This fact alone should be sufficient to warrant more generous provision of public toilets than that proposed.

In addition Hays Paddock, like many such parks situated on shared paths, will also continue to attract sizable groups of walkers and cyclists who will find queuing for two toilet cubicles somewhat problematic.