

BOROONDARA

Bicycle Users Group

Boroondara Bicycle Users Group
Response to:

Port Phillip Housing Association (PPHA)
Ashwood Chadstone Gateway Project (ACGP)

17 February 2010

Feedback to be sent to PPHA by 5pm, Friday 19 February 2010.

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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 PPHA for providing us with the opportunity to reply to the ACGP. BBUG will make this response available on its website.

Referenced documents:

“Ashwood Chadstone Gateway Project Information Sheet” - PPHA

“Ashwood Chadstone Gateway Project Frequently Asked Questions” - PPHA

“PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FIFTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
Wednesday, 12 March 2008
(Extract from book 3)”

“Reasons for decision to excise power of intervention
Under Section 20(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987
Monash planning scheme amendment C94”

Executive Summary

- The project area is well serviced by off road shared paths. However these paths are not well interlinked in the project area. Improvements can be made by implementing an “Urban Bush Path” along Warrigal Rd.
- Cycling as a means of transport and recreation should be fully integrated into the ACGP development – that includes pram ramps, shared paths, signage and parking. The development is in a prime position to take advantage of cycling.
- Some of the housing to be sold, is likely to become student housing. Holmesglen TAFE can take this opportunity, to encourage more cycling to the TAFE.
- Stonnington Council should be encouraged to improve cycling infrastructure in the area. They have space available to share with the local community.
- Any improvements to shared paths for cycling also benefit walkers, pram users, joggers and those forced to use electric scooters for transport such as the elderly.
- From the cycling perspective, Warrigal Rd itself is probably only suitable for experienced road cyclists and that’s questionable. The road acts as an impervious barrier to the majority of cyclists and pedestrians alike. Additionally and unfortunately, the road together with the creek, also act as a political divide in the State and Local Council arenas, complicating the issues. We just want to see a simple shared footpath implemented for all to use.
- Any future rebuild of the road bridge over the creek would result in the bridge being made wider on the Monash Council side – land has been reserved for same.

BBUG suggested recommended actions

1) In recent times funding has been made available with the help of Bob Stensholt to link the lower and upper Gardiners Creek Trail via Markham reserve. Also recently, as we understand it, Stonnington Council has employed “Vic Land Rehabilitation” to dump some hundreds of tons of dirt on the Malvern Valley Public Golf Course in various locations. Their aim is to produce visual/sound barriers along the length of Warrigal Rd in the east and the M1 freeway in the south. This will improve the ambience for golfers and other users of the course. It’s a Public course, so you will find local residents walking their dogs there and cyclists using it to get from A to B – the TAFE Holmesglen campus being a popular destination.

The section of Warrigal Rd between Gardiners Creek and the TAFE has been an eyesore for years. One long cyclone fence with not a tree in sight. On a hot summer’s day, you often see students walking between their digs and the TAFE, without the benefit of any shade whatsoever along the way. The roar of the passing traffic adds to the drudgery. Little wonder Stonnington Council have decided to block out this sad vista from the course itself. Rather than just blocking it out – how about improving it for all?

The newly built dirt mound between the course and Warrigal road presents the perfect opportunity to build an “Urban Bush Path” linking the Gardiners Creek Trail at the Creek in the north, down to the The Boulevard in the south, near the TAFE and shopping Centre. It would also provide a link to the Waverley Rail Trail, that terminates at Holmesglen Station. Further still it would provide a link to the East Malvern Station area, via the path at the end of Argyll St. The East Malvern Station is the central hub for the many cycling paths, on and off road, in the area.

Recently Stonnington Council made public their draft “Public Realm” strategy - our response to that document is available on our website. The strategy is about having a holistic approach to Public spaces in Stonnington and how these spaces, including private spaces, can be shared. Somewhat surprisingly, in a document 158 pages long, the Public golf course is allocated one sentence and the TAFE doesn’t even get a mention. The Council, through its Municipal Strategy Statement, has an obligation to also consider the needs of citizens that reside outside of its Council Realm.

We would like to see an “Urban Bush Path” built along Warrigal Rd. There is not doubt that the future residents of the AGCP, together with the local community, the shopping strip and the many students living in the area, could benefit from this path being constructed. Even passing motorists would note the improvement. While the implementation of other needed shared paths through the golf course remain contentious eg “The Golfers Choice” – refer link below, we see little reason why this path could not be built. The Council has spent years dodging the need for path(s) at the golf course. However in no way could this proposed path be construed as being detrimental to the golf course. Stonnington Council could be recognized for improving its Public spaces for all – even if they just face on to the Monash and Boroondara Council areas.

Such a path would:

- Consist of “Lilydale toppings” or similar, while the newly placed earth compacts down – subsequently to be replaced with saw cut concrete in the future.
- The existing fencing be moved further away from the road and be hidden from view on both sides by vegetation. It’s currently an eyesore and sends a strong message – “keep out !”– even though it’s a Public space ie for all to share.
- Indigenous shade trees be planted along the path with the occasional park bench.
- The path be a shared path and be 3 metres wide – the width providing optimum passing room for cyclists and pedestrians.
- A one metre clear area either side of the path – ie shy zones.
- Connect to the Gardiners Creek Trail in the north and arrive at the shopping center and TAFE in the south

2) All of the ACGP lots are very well placed to take advantage of the Gardiners Creek Trail and the Waverley Rail Trail. Shared path access should be provided or facilitated, where appropriate to these trails from the ACGP lots. It would be a great loss if the ACGP did not take full advantage of its location amongst the plethora of trails in the immediate vicinity.

3) As the buildings are multi story, the ACGP should incorporate copious bicycle parking both indoor and outdoor, at ground level, for residents and visitors alike.

4) The ACGP should incorporate signage to the different paths in the area. This helps to indirectly advertise cycling as a mode of transport – refer link below for ideal examples:

5) Access to the Waverley Rail Trail should be improved at Elliot St and Power Ave. Not only does this provide access to the trail and shopping strip, it also provides access to the underutilized footbridge that crosses Warrigal Rd to Holmesglen Station and the TAFE. Long term and since the land is available, there is the possibility of extending the Waverley Rail Trail through to East Malvern Station area. Additionally the railway pedestrian crossing and Collins St provide a safer “back street” route to the bridge over the M1 at Atkinson St and onwards to places such as Chadstone shopping center (a 2030 Principal Activity Center), Monash University Clayton campus and the Oakleigh Aquatic & Recreation Centre.

6) Residents of the ACGP and the many students in the area could also benefit from the completion of the path on the north side of the M1 between Huntingdale Rd and Mayfield Drv. We, in conjunction with the Monash Bicycle Users Group, have written to Monash Council twice re: this path and received no reply.

Background:

Trails in the immediate area of the ACGP – refer to links below for map and descriptions:

- Scotchmans Creek Trail
- East Malvern Station to Centre Rd Trail

- Anniversary Trail
- nearby - the Ferndale Park Trail
- Gardiners Creek Trail - upper and lower
- Waverley Rail Trail
- East Malvern Station, Belgrave Rd/Murrumbeena Rd/East Boundary Rd exclusive bike lanes (EBLs) to South Rd

The paths listed above together with our proposed new path will facilitate access to:

- East Malvern, a premium station & Holmesglen station
- Holmesglen TAFE
- Chadstone shopping center - a 2030 Principle Activity Centre
- Malvern Valley Primary School
- Stonnington Council's Phoenix Park Neighbourhood centre
- Solway Primary School
- Stonnington Council's BMX circuit
- the considerable amount of student housing in the area

These locations are within easy reach of the ACGP by cycling:

- Deakin University
- Ashwood Secondary School
- Monash University - Caulfield Campus
- Melbourne University - Hawthorn Campus
- Hawthorn Secondary College
- Oakleigh Aquatic & Recreation Centre

Refer to this online map of the off road network in the vicinity of the ACGP:

<http://www.bigyak.net.au/trails/biketrails.html?ll=-37.87538,145.094501&z=15>

For written descriptions of the trails in the ACGP area refer to their Wikipedia entries:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Template:Bicycle_Trails_in_Melbourne

Recommended signage as seen throughout Perth, WA:

http://bit.ly/Design_details_for_path_signage_in_Perth_WA

Discussion and map of the “Golfers Choice” – another proposed path at the golf course:

http://boroondarabug.org/wiki/Golfers_Choice