

BOROONDARA

Bicycle Users Group

Boroondara Bicycle Users Group
Response to:

City of Stonnington
Draft Budget

18 May 2010

All feedback on the Budget must be sent to Council by 5 pm, 24 May 2010

The Chief Executive Officer
Budget Submission
City of Stonnington
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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 provide a submission to the draft budget. BBUG will make this response available on its website.

Referenced documents:

City of Stonnington - Council Plan 2009-2013
City of Stonnington - Draft Public Realm Strategy
Victorian Cycling Strategy – Mar 2009
Stonnington bicycle Strategy - 2005
Parks Victoria document - Linking People and Spaces (2002)
Stonnington Planning Scheme - 3 Jan 2008
City of Stonnington - Sustainable Transport Policy - September 2008
City of Stonnington - Municipal public health plan
Ashwood Chadstone Gateway Project Information Sheet - PPHA
Ashwood Chadstone Gateway Project Frequently Asked Questions – PPHA
Public_Realm_Strategy_BBUG_Response.pdf
AECOM, City of Sydney: 15 April 2010, Inner Sydney Regional Bicycle Network - Demand Assessment and Economic Appraisal
Refer also to images included in this document

Executive Summary

BBUG requests that Council finances and implements the shared path as described below. To this end, the monies for the project, need to be included in the 2010-2011 budget. Rough estimated cost - \$134k. Round up to say \$150k.

BBUG would like to reserve the right to speak at the Council meeting; re: this budget submission.

Cost benefit analysis

A very recent report from AECOM (April 2010) has established a cost benefit ratio of 3.88 for local area shared paths. While the report is targeted at inner Sydney, Melbourne would not be too dissimilar in this regard. The report refers to a proposed network but a network is made of pieces such as the path in this proposal. The report goes to suggest the ratio may be as high as eleven.

Relative to doing nothing, the development of the Inner Sydney Regional Bicycle Network is estimated to generate net economic benefits of \$507 million in today's prices at a benefit cost ratio of 3.88.

The proposal:

Council finances and implements an urban bush shared path along the west side of Warrigal Rd starting at the Gardiners Creek bridge and finishing at The Boulevard.

Such a path would have at least the following characteristics:

- it would be a shared path and be signed and line marked as such
- its length would be about 210 metres

- it would be 3 metres wide with a one metre shy zone on either side
- it would be made of saw cut concrete or bitumen with concrete edging for low maintenance
- it would be shaded by shade trees of an appropriate indigenous variety to be determined. Native deciduous trees may be an option.
- the current chain mesh fencing on the edge of the Council property to the west would be moved further westward to make room for the path, shy zones, shade trees and shrubbery
- the vegetation planted would help shield the new fence from view when standing on the path or from the recreational facility to the west
- the fencing would be a 2 metre high chain mesh with black or green PVC coating or similar. The height of the dirt mound itself and other existing fencing together with tree plantings revokes the need for a fence of any greater height.

What's wrong with the current path?

The existing path is highly hostile to the human spirit:

- the path is simply an unpleasant place to walk – this can be improved upon
- the path is not signed as a shared path. Consequently cyclists are expected to use the highly trafficked four lane arterial road. When heading south from Markham reserve, that means crossing a four lane arterial first. This includes any cyclist over the age of twelve
- the existing poor quality path has no associated vegetation except for weeds
- stark fencing sending a strong message of keep out, you're not welcome – a total eyesore
- it serves merely as a way of getting from A to B and no more – it can be much more

What has changed to make this proposal possible?

Council has organized for many tons of dirt to be placed at the recreational facility to the immediate west of Warrigal Rd forming a large dirt mound along the length of the proposed path. The aim is to improve the ambience at the recreational facility by blocking out the view of and the noise from Warrigal Rd. This makes good sense. It is clear that with a bit more thought, the ambience can be improved on the east side of the dirt mound immediately adjacent to Warrigal Rd as well.

The dirt mound and a new dam nearby were constructed in the winter of 2009. It's unclear how any of this was financed, as none of this appears in the Council's budgets, including a newly completed bridge over Scotchmans Creek. But regardless, the new dirt mound along Warrigal Rd represents an opportunity that will allow other members of the Public to utilize and share this area, via the proposed shared path.

Are there any examples in Melbourne?

The path between Canterbury Rd and Albion Rd beside Middleborough Rd is a reasonable example and serves similar needs, by hiding a fence and improving the amenity on either side of that fence.

Given that the Council is required to follow its Council plan and associated strategies, we examine the proposal in that light:

Council Plan 2009-2013

Key strategic objectives – the proposal is supported by the four central pillars of the Council Plan as described below:

1. Environment

This path certainly addresses bio-diversity. It would extend the wildlife corridor that exists along the banks of Gardiners Creek, the wetlands on the east side of Warrigal Rd and the corridor along the Alamein Train line and further a field Stonnington's own "Urban Forest" and the corridors either side of the M1.

Walking and cycling are sustainable methods of transportation. This path leads directly to Holmesglen station. Mixed mode transport options are enhanced. If walking or cycling and not driving, then that's less congestion, less emissions.

On a hot summers afternoon the shade trees would provide welcome relief to those using the path.

2. Community

This path would help link four off-road trails in the immediate area. These trails are utilised by many walkers and cyclists. Often these outings are organized by community groups or simply amongst friends.

School children can safely access the local schools. Mature students can more easily access the TAFE. Malvern Valley Primary has been teaching kids to cycle for sometime and these children use the local paths as their training ground. This path would enhance that experience.

On the weekend families often cycle together. This path will facilitate access to surrounding trails via a safe off-road path. Warrigal Rd is not an alternative option for these people.

The "Ashwood Chadstone Gateway Project" will house people that may have never experienced a sense of community. This path will help them to do so. A bit of a walk or a

quick cycle will lead them to the Markham reserve and the Sunday footy at the oval. With a bit of luck, they may be able to get a plot at the communal veggie patch nearby the oval. They may develop a sense of belonging.

3. Liveability

This path would enhance the Public realm – *“attractive spaces and streetscapes.”* The current path represents urban design at its worst. This proposed path connects recreational facilities, other paths and parks. The Holmesglen shopping centre has some of the best Asian dining in the area. This path is about sharing Public open space and maximizing its use by all citizens.

Phoenix Park neighborhood house and the skate park are in easy range and this path will help connect to these facilities to the community. *“Valuing the right for people who live, work or visit in Stonnington to access the services and facilities they need to support their health and wellbeing.”*

4. Prosperity

Making the area more people friendly should well increase the local foot traffic and be good for local traders. On a grander scale we would like to think that the many international students that go to the TAFE would be able to report back home that Australia is beautiful place to come to, whether that be for studying or just for tourism purposes. Currently they will report on the dreary daily drudge from their digs to the TAFE. This path will help *“Improve the quality of Stonnington’s retail precincts.”*

Other applicable strategies:

Virtually every major policy the Council has, supports this proposal.

Municipal public health plan

Public health is improved through walking and cycling. This proposal provides the facilities to participate in these healthy activities in this area.

Sustainable Transport Policy

Deliver Priority

In recognising that travel relates to the movement of people (and goods where appropriate) and not to the movement of vehicles, priority will be given to transport modes in the following order:

- *Walking*
- *Cycling*
- *Public Transport*

It’s totally clear this proposal is supported by Council’s Sustainable Transport Policy

Public Realm Strategy

There are any number of statements in the PRS that support this proposal. A couple are provide further below. A more in depth discussion can be found in BBUG's response to the PRS.

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

p154, 10

Improve the ecological sustainability of the course, particularly along Gardiners Creek.

p8, 1.2 THE FUTURE: A SHIFT IN THINKING

“Inner urban areas are being influenced more and more by the ‘borrowed landscape’. The borrowed landscape consists of private outdoor spaces that contribute to the character and functionality of the adjacent public realm. For example, private gardens, landscape setbacks to buildings, and green walls all add value to the public realm. These elements should be viewed as part of the public realm and the objectives of this Strategy.”

The word private in the paragraph above can be readily replaced with fenced Public spaces.

Bicycle strategy

Table 22 item 34

“Work with Monash City Council to widen path along the east side of Warrigal Road and connect to Gardiners Creek Trail and sign as a shared path.”

Since the bicycle strategy was written, circumstances on the west side of Warrigal Rd have changed. The route cited in the Bicycle Strategy can now be more readily located on the west side of Warrigal Rd, eliminating the need to work with Monash Council and providing additional benefits, such as improved visual amenity, etc, as a byproduct.

Municipal Strategic Statement

In two parts as presented further below: in addition the Council has an obligation to also consider its immediate neighbors and others not residing in Stonnington. This would include cyclists from all over Melbourne.

A recreational ride can often be 50 km or more. Miscellaneous train stations are regularly used as “bale out” points at different parts throughout the Metropolitan Bicycle Network. Recreational cyclists traverse all parts of Melbourne and Holmesglen station would be an example “bail out” point..

Local Planning Policy Framework

Stonnington Council's planning scheme: 21.05 INFRASTRUCTURE, 21.05-1 Transport, Key Issues:

"Better use of the public transport system needs to be encouraged, and provision for pedestrians and cyclists needs to be improved."

This proposed path does just as stated above.

State Planning Policy Framework

Stonnington Council is obliged to consider Melbourne 2030 in the normal course of assessing planning applications. As part of Melbourne 2030 the inclusion of a new Clause 12 into the State Section of the Planning Scheme has taken place.

Clause 12 includes these applicable objectives:

- *Clause 12.01 - to facilitate sustainable development that takes full advantage of existing settlement patterns, and investment in transport and communication, water and sewerage and social facilities.*
- *Clause 12.02 - to locate metropolitan growth close to transport corridors and services and provide efficient and effective infrastructure to create benefits for sustainability while protecting primary production, major sources of raw materials and valued environmental areas.*
- *Clause 12.03 - to develop Metropolitan Melbourne and the surrounding regional cities as a network of cities to provide a choice of places to live, set up business and find a job.*
- *Clause 12.04 - to create a strong and innovative economy.*
- *Clause 12.05 - to create urban environments that are of better quality, safer and more functional, provide more open space and an easily recognisable sense of place and cultural identity.*
- *Clause 12.06 - to provide fairer access to and distribution of social and cultural infrastructure.*
- *Clause 12.07 - to minimise impacts on the environment to create a sustainable path for future growth and development.*
- *Clause 12.08 - to create a more sustainable transport system by integrating land use and transport.*

Many of the clauses above apply directly to this proposed shared path.

Bicycle transport

18.03-2 General implementation

"Wherever possible, off-road bicycle networks should be planned for in new urban development."

This proposal is both possible and part of a new development ie the newly constructed dirt mound and associated landscaping.

Victorian Cycling Strategy

The strategy applies to the proposed shared path. It leads to Box Hill identified in the strategy as a Central Activity District (CAD).

Parks Victoria - Linking People and Spaces (2002)

The proposed shared path will directly link Holmesglen station to the Metropolitan Trail Network.

Please continue to costings and photographs on the next four pages:

Suggested costings, including labour.	
Refer to “Rawlinsons construction cost guide 2010” for a more accurate costing	
210 m length of 2.2 m PVC coated chain wire mesh fencing = 11 x 20 m rolls with barbed selvedge @ \$300 roll	\$3,300
Posts every 4 m with 600 mm footings @ \$300 a post = 53	\$15,900
Removal of existing path and fencing	\$15,000
Shaping of site / earthworks	\$15,000
3m saw cut concrete path at \$300 per m	\$63,000
Plantings and landscaping – site was always to be planted regardless of this proposal – therefore no additional cost	\$0
Associated signage	\$2000
Park bench	\$800
Miscellaneous	\$20,000
Total	<u>\$135,000</u>

Note: it may be possible to recycle some parts of the old fencing, such as the support poles or even the chain mesh itself?



Warrigal Rd looking north towards the Gardiners Creek bridge.

Current amenity is of extremely low quality – cyclists are not catered for. Any one over the age of twelve is expected to cycle on the four lane arterial.



Warrigal Rd looking south towards the Holmesglen station from the Gardiners Creek bridge.

New dirt mound. Note the height of the mound in relationship to the existing fencing at left. Immediately to the right of the trees, is another fence, to catch errant balls from the tee off point (just by the orange mesh).



The path between Canterbury Rd and Albion Rd beside Middleborough Rd looking north.

The path is a shared path and hides a chain wire fence. The area is shaded from the afternoon sun. Ambience and or amenity is improved on both sides of the fence. Particularly on hot summer afternoons.