

10 May 2023

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Dear Arusha

CURLEWIS STREET UPGRADE REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS | REVIEW OF PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

1. Introduction

Waverley Council has proposed upgrades to Curlewis Street, Bondi which include, in summary, a new road surface, new footpath surfaces, new landscaping, and a dedicated cycleway. The upgrades are proposed to be undertaken pursuant to Part 5, Division 5.1 of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act. 1979 (EP&A Act), which necessitates the preparation of a Review of Environmental Factors (REF). Waverley Council engaged GYDE Consulting (Gyde) to provide an ongoing review of the REF.

To date, Gyde has reviewed a draft REF and Waverley Council has publicly exhibited the REF. We are advised that Council received 29 public submissions during the REF's exhibition period. Council has forwarded to Gyde content for all the submissions, including copies of two (2) actual submissions.

The purpose of this correspondence is to review the submissions and provide Council with any relevant commentary which may alter the draft REF.

2. Summary of Engagement

Waverley Council publicly exhibited the proposal between 5 April 2023 and 2 May 2023. Exhibition took place on Council's website, through Council's social media channels, a media release, a letter box drop to nearby businesses, email's directly to respondents who provided feedback to the scheme as part of its previous exhibition phase, as well as direct emails to key stakeholders and relevant organisations such as BIKEast and Bicycle NSW.

We are advised that a total of 29 submissions were received by Council during the exhibition period. The majority of submissions supported the proposal. There were several submissions which raised queries in relation to the proposal, and there were a relatively small number of submissions not in support of the proposal.

In summary, the matters raised in support of the proposal include:

- Additional greenery.
- Renewal of pedestrian walkways and consequent safety improvements.
- Safety associated with dedicated and separated cycleways.
- Improved accessibility.
- Benefits to the local economy.
- Climate benefits.
- Reduced traffic congestion.
- Consistency with NSW State Government cycling strategies.

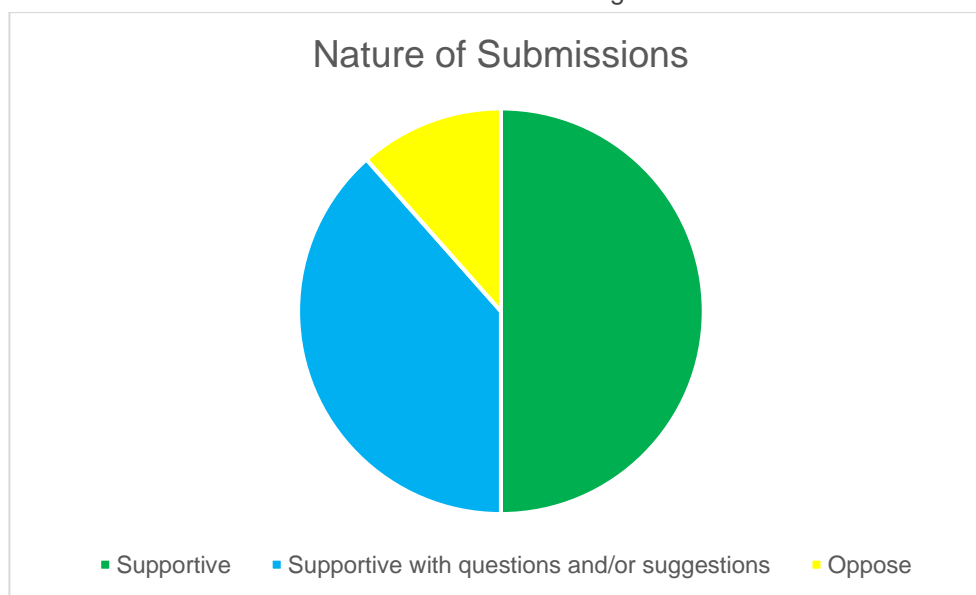
The queries raised by some submissions can be summarised as follows:

- How will safety be ensured for cyclists along those portions of the cycle way which are not completely separated from pedestrian pathways or road ways?
- Can additional lighting be provided around existing or proposed 'zebra crossings' to improve safety particularly for pedestrians?
- Will any new street trees will be installed in accordance with relevant guidelines or best practice?
- Will any upgrades address existing flooding conditions?
- Can the cycle lane way be extended to Bondi Junction?
- Have construction related impacts been considered, particularly with regard to noise impacts to residents?
- Has adequate bike parking been provided in support of the cycle way?

The issues raised against the proposal can be summarised as follows:

- Additional vehicle-related traffic congestion, particularly at key existing intersections.
- Insufficient cycling demand to warrant the proposal.
- Conflicts between cyclists, pedestrians and vehicles.
- The proposal would increase cycling activity.
- Reduced lines of sight.
- Reduced on street vehicle parking.

The nature of the submissions is also demonstrated in the following chart:



3. Response to Submissions

Submissions received indicate a relatively high level of local community support for the proposal. The submissions are summarised below and where necessary, a response is provided. Submissions both in support and opposing the proposal are addressed below.

Additional greenery

The REF provides that the proposal includes planting of approximately 83 trees, which will adequately compensate for 20 trees required to be removed. The REF provides that the proposed tree planting as well as other public domain improvements associated with the proposal, will result in a substantial upgrade to the overall streetscape. No change to the REF is considered necessary to address this submission.

Renewal of existing pathways

According to the REF, the proposal includes renewing existing footpaths on either side of the Curlewis Street road way. Existing footpaths are arguably in poor condition in certain areas and the renewal will improve accessibility for the community generally. No change to the REF is considered necessary to address this submission.

Safety associated with dedicated and separated cycleways

The proposal will increase the overall amount of separated cycleways. The draft REF includes a Road Safety Audit prepared by The Transport Planning Partnership (TTPP), which outlines a number of safety improvements as a result of the proposal.

Whilst the proposal provides various safety benefits, it may result in some adverse safety outcomes such as reduced sight lines or additional conflicts between cyclists, pedestrians, and motorists. Whilst such outcomes may occur, a shift towards additional bicycle transportation is a specific direction by Council and, on this basis, the outcomes are acceptable. Nevertheless, it is recommended that Council provide an education campaign prior to the operation of the cycleway to inform local stakeholders of these potential outcomes, and the operation of the cycleway generally. It is recommended that this form part of the REF's mitigation measures.

Benefits to the local economy

The REF provides that the proposal's additional street tree planting, upgrading of footpaths and dedicated cycleways should provide specific benefits to the local economy. No change to the REF is considered necessary to address this submission.

Climate benefits

The REF provides that the proposal may decrease private vehicle usage and subsequent carbon dioxide emissions. This may result in localised climate related benefits. No change to the REF is considered necessary to address this submission.

Reduced traffic congestion

The REF provides that the opportunity for increased bicycle transportation may decrease private vehicle usage. This may result in localised reductions in traffic congestion. It is noted, however, that SIDRA modelling accompanying the REF provides that intersection functionality will decline as a result of the proposal. The REF provides that any loss of functionality is minor and consistent with Council's direction to encourage a transport mode shift from vehicles to bicycles. No change to the REF is considered necessary to address this submission.

Consistency with NSW State Government cycling strategies

Waverley Council has several policies which encourage bicycle transportation, including *Waverley's People, Movement and Places*, which was endorsed by Council in December 2017, as well as *Waverley Council's Bike Plan 2013*, and the *Bicycle Strategy and Action Plan 2022*. Similarly, the NSW State Government has adopted several bicycle related transport policies, namely the *NSW Active Transport Strategy 2022*. No change to the REF is considered necessary to address this submission.

Safety along those portions of the cycle way which are not completely separated with a barrier or similar, from pedestrian pathways or road ways.

It is understood, according to the REF, that all options were investigated in relation to delivering an entirely separated cycle way. It is understood that, due to the width of the road reserve, not all sections of the cycle way could be entirely separated with barriers or the like. A dedicated area is nevertheless provided for those limited areas of the cycle way which are not separated by a barrier. Subject to consideration by relevant safety experts, we are of the opinion that this outcome is satisfactory. No change to the REF is considered necessary to address this submission.

Additional vehicle related traffic congestion, particularly at key existing intersections.

The traffic modelling provided as part of the draft, as well as the publicly exhibited REF, confirmed that some existing intersections along the cycle way route currently operate at or beyond capacity. The performance of such intersections is likely to become marginally worse as a result of the proposal according to the modelling. Council has advised that qualified engineers have assessed the proposal's traffic related impacts and that such, impacts are considered acceptable. Specifically, we were advised that any cumulative traffic impacts are minor and acceptable. Further, Waverley Council has adopted various strategies which aim to discourage vehicle use and a shift towards active transport. No change to the REF is considered necessary to address this submission.

The proposal would increase cycling activity.

It is highly probable that the proposal will increase cycling activity. In a general sense, such an outcome is acceptable given it is consistent with Waverley Council's strategic direction as well as policies issued by the NSW State Government. No change to the REF is considered necessary to address this submission.

Insufficient cycling demand to warrant the proposal.

Increasing cycling activity is a specific strategic direction by Waverley Council. Therefore, the proposal is considered suitable regardless of current demand levels. No change to the REF is considered necessary to address this submission.

Conflicts between cyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles.

Reduction in sight lines

Additional lighting for pedestrian crossings

The REF considers safety for pedestrians, motorists and cyclists, with specialist advice from TTPP. It is noted that the Road Safety Audit by TTPP raises several locations along the proposed route which would not satisfy technical requirements as provided by the Australian Standards, for example. Council's attention is drawn to these matters.

In general, however, the Road Safety Audit provides an overall assessment of the proposal's potential safety matters and provides various recommendations. These recommendations are included in the REF's mitigation measures as required.

To support the Road Safety Audit, we recommend that Council undertakes a local awareness campaign to make stakeholders aware of the modified conditions. The campaign should take place before the operation of the new infrastructure and include temporary and ongoing notification measures. Such measures may include notifications on Council's website and Council's social media channels, advertisements in local newspapers, letter box drops, signage, or similar. The campaign should raise awareness of key matters such as reduced sight lines, oncoming bicycle traffic at intersections and zebra crossings, and potential conflicts with opening doors from vehicles, for example.

Reduction in on street vehicle parking.

The publicly exhibited REF confirms that the proposal will result in the loss of five (5) on street car spaces. The publicly exhibited REF provides that any impacts would be negligible as the amount of car spaces lost is minor. It also provides that the loss is acceptable given bicycle related transportation is consistent with Waverley Council's strategic directions. No change to the REF is considered necessary to address this submission.

Confirmation that any new street trees will be installed in accordance with relevant guidelines or best practice.

The REF was exhibited with extensive information relating to existing and proposed landscaping for the subject route. This includes an extensive landscaping package prepared by Parallel 33. A planting specification did not form part of the package, however. It is recommended that the package be amended to include a planting specification. Alternatively, any final REF could recommend the preparation of a planting specification as a mitigation measure.

Flooding impacts

A submission refers to historical flooding events. The publicly exhibited REF did not rely on expert flooding analysis. The REF concluded that flooding impacts are negligible because the proposal maintains the existing overall carriageway width. Whilst this is plausible, it is recommended that advice be obtained from a civil engineer, or similar, to confirm the proposal's flooding impacts. This may occur prior to the finalisation of the REF or be incorporated into a mitigation measure requiring implementation of any recommendations of the subsequent advice.

Extend the cycle lane to Bondi Junction

This proposal relates to Curlewis Street's connectivity to existing shared cycling facilities along Campbell Parade. The proposal does not include any connections to Bondi Junction.

Increasing cycling related transportation is a key strategic direction by Waverley Council. We consider that broader cycling related opportunities, including potentially to Bondi Junction, can reasonably be considered by Council at an appropriate future time. No change to the REF is considered necessary to address this submission.

Construction related impacts.

The publicly exhibited REF provides that construction will be staged. In our view, this minimises construction related impacts adequately. The total construction timeframe is estimated to be 12 months according to the publicly exhibited REF. This time frame is not unreasonable, and when combined with the proposed staging process, will avoid unreasonable impacts.

It is noted that the REF includes a mitigation measure requiring public notification for various aspects of the proposal's implementation. The measure is suitable in a general sense; however, we recommend that it be supplemented with additional details. For example, we recommend that it be provided with time frames in relation to how much notice should be provided (e.g. minimum notice period of 10 days), and who will be notified (e.g. business and residents).

Ensure adequate bike parking is provided to support the cycle lane.

The specification to landscaping package, which formed part of the publicly exhibited REF, makes reference to ancillary bike parking. However, no such facilities appear to be shown on the plan. Ancillary cycle parking is likely to be in demand as a result of the proposal. Parking facilities are also likely to assist in maintaining coordinated and safe public areas such as footpaths in particular. As such, it is recommended that the plan be updated to specifically nominate where such parking will be provided. Alternatively, this could be required as a mitigation measure in any final REF.

4. Summary & Recommendations

This report has assessed all the public submissions received by Council during public exhibition of the REF. Our assessment concludes that the submissions do not raise any matters requiring further detailed analysis for the purposes of satisfying the requirements in Section 5.5 of the EP&A Act. Our assessment, nevertheless, considers that additional mitigation measures or additional clarification should be provided in the REF. These are outlined below.

Public awareness

In addition to the current mitigation measures arising from the Road Safety Audit prepared by TTPP, we recommend that the final REF includes a mitigation measure to implement an education campaign prior to the cycle lane coming into operation. The education campaign should highlight the change in conditions and raise awareness to key safety aspects. More details, as described in this report, should be provided in relation to public notification of construction related activities.

Specifications for tree planting

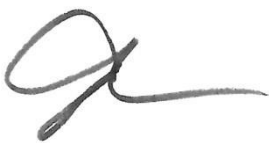
A mitigation measure should be included in the REF requiring the current landscaping strategy to be updated to include specifications on how the proposed new landscaping will be planted and maintained, and how existing vegetation will be retained.

Flood impacts

It is unclear whether commentary on potential flooding related impacts in the draft REF is supported by relevant specialist advice. Given that a portion of the route is flood affected, and that the matter has been raised in a public submission, it is recommended that advice be sought from a qualified engineer and incorporated into the final REF, inclusive of any recommended mitigation measures.

Please contact the undersigned should you wish to discuss the outcomes of our submissions assessment, or the subsequent recommendations.

Yours sincerely



David Ryan
Executive Director