

Community Consultation Summary Report

Preston to CBD Safety Improvement Project

June 2018

Connecting
our communities



Preston to CBD Safety Improvement Project

Community Consultation Summary Report

Table of Contents

1.	Introduction	3
1.1.	Background	3
1.2.	The Project	3
1.3.	How we engaged you	3
2.	Summary of Feedback	5
2.1.	St Georges Road and Merri Parade intersection	5
2.2.	Merri Parade Intersection to Edinburgh Gardens (on and off road segments)	5
2.3.	Edinburgh Gardens to CBD via Napier Street	6
2.4.	General	8
3.	Next Steps	8

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The Preston to CBD Safety Improvement Project is funded through the Victorian Government's \$100 million Safer Cyclists and Pedestrian Fund. The fund targets a reduction in the number of lives lost on our roads to fewer than 200 and the number of serious injuries by 15 per cent by 2020.

We're making safety improvements for cyclists and pedestrians travelling along the Preston to Melbourne CBD cycling route from the intersection of St Georges Road and Merri Parade in Northcote to the intersection of Macarthur Street and Spring Street in the CBD.

The \$9.1 million dollar project will make it safer and easier for cyclists to get from Melbourne's inner-north to the CBD. It also improves connections to busy areas like Brunswick Street and Smith Street, Australian Catholic University, St Vincent's Hospital and local shopping centres and schools.

In the last nine years (2008-2016) there have been 235 reported crashes along this stretch of road and tragically three lives lost. Cyclists are particularly vulnerable with 138 (59%) of these crashes involving cyclists.

1.2. The Project

We're working closely with the City of Melbourne, City of Yarra and City of Darebin to investigate and deliver important safety improvements for cyclists and pedestrians long the Preston to CBD cycling route (see next page).

Our aim is to:

- Significantly improve safety for cyclists
- Encourage increased cyclist volumes and promote active transport modes
- Create a connected bicycle network that gets cyclists to their destination quickly and safely
- Improve safe crossings for cyclists and complete missing links in the corridors

To inform the investigations, we collected feedback from local residents, cyclists, pedestrians, drivers and key advocacy groups on the proposed improvements, issues and recommended solutions. This report summarises this feedback and has informed our progress in creating a safer, more functional and attractive cycling route.

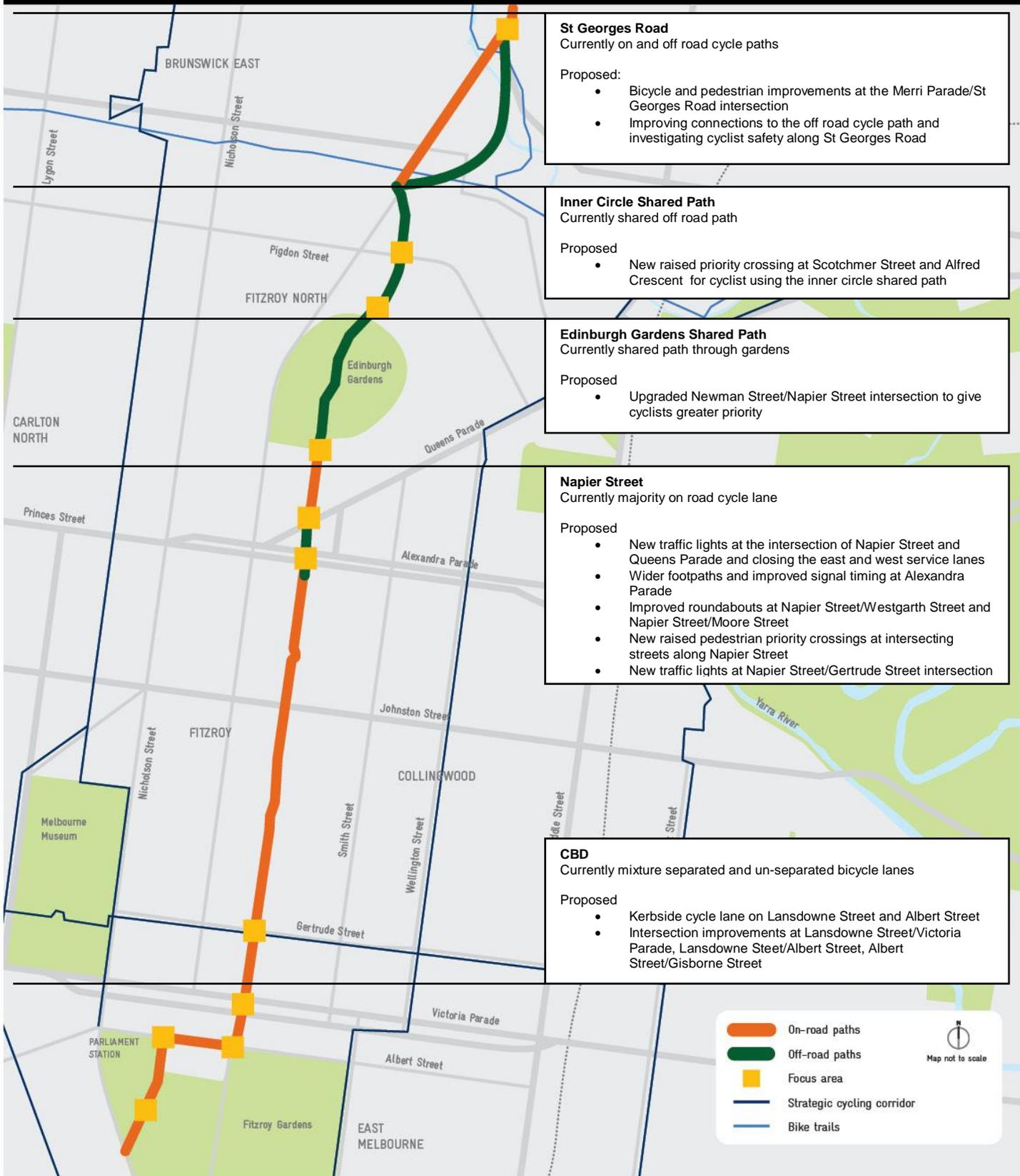
1.3. How we engaged you

In mid-December we held two community workshops at the Merri Creek Primary School and Fitzroy Bowls Club. The workshops were designed to gather comments from the community in multiple ways. Community members were invited to provide comments on the cycling route by pinpointing issues/solutions on large maps and to provide feedback on draft concept design plans. We also received feedback through the phone and via email.

Our geographically targeted social media campaign via Facebook reached more than 18,000 people. We also reached the community through a local media campaign which included advertising in the local paper, at local schools and shopping precincts.

PRESTON TO CBD CYCLING CORRIDOR

SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT



DEC/JR/11/26/202 05:18

2. Summary of Feedback

Overall there was positive sentiment towards the project and community concerns were primarily raised at specific sections or with elements of the proposed concept designs. This report outlines those concerns with feedback separated into three route sections; each section includes a description of the proposed concept designs shown at the community information sessions, specific feedback on the design and general feedback on the route section.

2.1. St Georges Road and Merri Parade intersection

Proposed design for St Georges Road/Merri parade intersection

New traffic lights and pedestrian/cyclists crossings and U turn ban from St Georges Road south bound to St Georges Road north bound to improve cyclist and pedestrian safety.

Feedback:

- The proposed U turn closure is not supported due to significant impacts and no viable alternative for Elizabeth Street residents
- Too many crossing stages proposed for cyclists to reach the shared median path
- Insufficient storage at the proposed crossings

General Feedback

St Georges Road/Merri parade intersection

- Conflicts between trams and cyclists and cyclist and tram users due to:
 - poor sight lines;
 - convergence of tram stop and shared path;
 - minimal pedestrian refuge and storage;
 - long signal phasing at pedestrian crossing;
 - tight bicycle turns at the tram stop
- Poor visibility and pedestrian/cyclists/vehicle conflict on the north bound shared path at/near Elizabeth Street
- Narrow northbound cycle path approach to Merri parade
- Consider diagonal crossing from St Georges Road to (north and south) to the existing shared median path.
- Widen the shared path north bound and south bound on St Georges Road
- Consider cyclists travelling to and from Charles Street (east-west)
- Install kerb ramps from St Georges Road to Merri Creek Trail south bound.

2.2. Merri Parade Intersection to Edinburgh Gardens (on and off road segments)

Proposed concept design for Scotchmer Street and Alfred Crescent

Raised priority crossing at Scotchmer Street and Alfred Crescent intersections at Inner Circle Trail to give priority to cyclists and pedestrians.

Feedback:

- Install speed bumps prior to the crossings to slow traffic down
- Include advance warning signs prior to crossings to avoid driver error
- Reduce speeds to 40km/h
- Could create confusion of who has priority creating extra risk for cyclists
- Could cause traffic congestion

General Feedback

St Georges Road

- Lower speed limits along St Georges Road to improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians
- Priorities (right of way) Capital City Trail crossings for cyclists and pedestrians
- Wait time for cyclist/pedestrians at Capital City Trail crossing too long
- Strategic cycling corridor should include St Georges Road as it's the most direct route
- Remove parking for safer cyclist movements
- Cyclists use Miller Street as a connection to/from Nicholson/Canning Street cycling routes, vehicles also use this east-west connection, concerns regarding conflict for north bound cyclists due to right turn vehicles

Merri Creek shared use path

- Consider Falconer St and Kneen Streets as alternative to connect Edinburgh Gardens to Capital City Trail
- Signage is very poor on the Merri Creek Trail
- The trail is in parts long and steep and not attractive to cyclists

2.3. Edinburgh Gardens to CBD via Napier Street

Edinburgh Gardens

General Feedback

- Need to moderate bike speeds through Edinburgh gardens
- Separate cyclists and pedestrians through the gardens
- Cycle path near tennis courts floods in storms and needs to be improved
- Cyclists prefer to go through gardens instead of Alfred Cres as it's more direct
- Conflict points for pedestrians and cyclists at intersections within the park

Proposed design for Freeman/Napier Street intersection

One-way restriction on Napier Street between Newry Street and Freeman Street and improved cyclist connectivity to Edinburgh gardens

Feedback:

- One way restriction not supported
- Improve safety for cyclists without restricting traffic
- Install speed bumps and reduce speed limit
- Conflict exists for north bound cyclists consider priority crossing
- Consider two-way path to eliminate conflict for north bound cyclists

Proposed design for Queens Parade/Napier Street intersection

New signals at the intersection of Napier Street and Queens Parade and east-west service road closures

Feedback:

- Concern traffic lights will extend cycle times and cyclists may in turn disobey signals, promoting a culture of road rule breaking
- Concern with heritage overlay, need to ensure heritage value remains
- Concern with loss of trees and vegetation
- Concern with noise impacts due to pedestrian push buttons
- Concern with potential loss of permit parking
- The new signals should be linked to Alexandra Parade signals to minimise rear end crash risk on Queens Parade east bound

Proposed design Alexandra Avenue/Napier Street intersection

Wider footpath and improved signal time for pedestrian and cyclists

Feedback:

- Consider separating cyclists and pedestrians at the pedestrian signal, similar to Canning Street pedestrian signal on Princess Street
- Consider widening the crossing, it's currently too narrow north of the pedestrian signal due to trees and the noise wall
- Ensure pedestrian push button is on the left at all crossings
- Consider widening the shared path south of the pedestrian signals, currently it's too narrow and not safe for pedestrians
- Stop congested traffic obstructing the crossing

Proposed design Gertrude Street/Napier Street intersection

New signals at the intersection of Gertrude Street and Napier Street.

Feedback:

- Concern traffic lights will extend cycle times and cyclists may in turn disobey signals, promoting a culture of road rule breaking
- Concern the signal will increase traffic volumes
- Concern the signals will impact the urban heritage environment

CBD

General feedback

- Poor connectivity and unsafe crossing from Napier Street to Lansdowne Street
- Consider separating cyclists and pedestrians at Napier Street Lansdowne Street
- Consider dedicated bicycle lane on the east side of Albert Street and hook turns for cyclists
- Extend dedicated bicycle lanes south along Lansdowne Street
- Poor visibility from Albert Street to Gisborne Street south bound
- Cyclists forced to break the rules and cycle along Treasury Place due to right hand turn ban from Spring Street to Macarthur Street

2.4. General

- Consider 30km speed reductions in high risk areas
- Increase bike and pedestrian storage along the route
- Look at international examples such as the Netherlands for best practice
- Consider improving Nicholson Street for cyclists
- Don't over-engineer the route, which may promote a culture of rule breaking by cyclists
- Consider cyclist handrails at signals
- Consider reviewing the necessity of parking along St Georges Road
- Concerns cyclists are likely to continue to use main routes and avoid purpose created paths because they are not direct enough
- concern that the many new developments long the route will increase vehicles and impact cyclist safety

3. Next Steps

We've incorporated community and stakeholder feedback in refining the plans for the Preston to CBD cycling route.

We're finalising the designs for locations between Napier Street and the CBD with construction expected to commence in late 2018.

We're improving the off road connections between the Merri Parade/St Georges Road intersection and Edinburgh Gardens and investigating ways to improve cyclist safety on St Georges Road.

Based on community feedback we're also investigating new ways to improve cyclist and pedestrian crossings at the Merri Parade/St Georges Road intersection, whilst balancing the need for all road users.

We will continue to provide updates as the plans are finalised and construction commences.

Contact mnw.communications@roads.vic.gov.au for further information