ITEM 2. UNION STREET CYCLEWAY PYRMONT – DETAILED DESIGN

FILE NO: S061945

SUMMARY

On 2 April 2007, Council adopted the City of Sydney Cycle Strategy and Action Plan 2007-2017 (the 'Cycling Strategy'). The Strategy establishes a long-term vision for cycling in the City of Sydney and aims to encourage and increase cycling. Sustainable Sydney 2030 incorporates this adopted Plan into its larger vision for the City, as a key action for achieving two outcomes: Integrated Transport for a Connected City and A City for Walking and Cycling (Liveable Green Networks).

Union Street is part of a key cycle route in the Cycling Strategy, connecting the suburbs of the inner west to the CBD. It enjoys strong patronage already. The portion between Union Street and Pirrama Road/Murray Street is a critical network gap, where levels of safety for cyclists are low and the risk of conflict with pedestrians is high.

The City prepared a concept design and undertook community consultation for a proposed separated cycleway along Union Street from Pyrmont Bridge to Union Square. The design has now been further developed and resolved, incorporating responses to community feedback, and a detailed cost plan for implementation has been prepared.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that Council endorse the Developed Design for the Union Street Cycleway, as described in the subject report and shown at Attachment C to the subject report, for tendering and construction.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Design Summary Report

Attachment B: Concept Design Public Information Brochure

Attachment C: Developed Design Plans

Attachment D: Environmental Management Plan Compliance Schedule

Attachment E: Consultation Summary

BACKGROUND

Strategic Context

1. On 2 April 2007, Council adopted the *City of Sydney Cycle Strategy and Action Plan 2007-2017* (Cycling Strategy). The Cycling Strategy establishes a long-term vision for cycling in the City of Sydney and aims to encourage and increase bicycle use.

2. The Bureau of Transport Economics has estimated that if we do nothing, congestion alone will cost Sydney $8 billion per annum in 2020. Cycleways provide a responsible and sustainable transport option that reduces congestion and environmental impact.

3. The Cycling Strategy identifies a range of network and infrastructure priorities, which include education initiatives, and provides action plans to deliver the vision.

4. The Cycling Strategy outlines transport, health and environmental benefits which align with the Sustainable Sydney 2030 vision for a more liveable City. The 2030 Vision, in Direction 4 – *a City for Walking and Cycling,* identifies separated cycleway routes as part of the liveable networks or 'Green Streets'. The 2030 Vision and Cycling Strategy aims are to:

   (a) establish a long term vision for cycling;

   (b) encourage more people to cycle as a means of ordinary transport;

   (c) provide a physical cycling environment in which people feel confident to ride the City's street in safety and comfort;

   (d) establish a coherent network and priority for implementation;

   (e) promote an environment of mutual awareness and respect between cyclists, pedestrians and other road users;

   (f) support cycling as a legitimate use in all local streets, parks, squares, plazas and other public places, while recognising that pedestrians have priority over cyclists; and

   (g) continue to ensure walking and cycling facilities and networks are designed so that they are safe enough for children to use and meet the needs of people with disabilities.

The Two-Way Separated Cycleway

5. The preferred treatment identified in the Strategy is a separated two-way cycleway, rather than shoulder lanes, shared paths or separated contra-flow lanes.

6. A separated cycleway is a bicycle path on a road, and provides exclusive use for bicycle riders.

7. The selection of this treatment is a response to the Cycling Strategy community consultation process, which identified perceptions of safety were a strong impediment to the attractiveness of cycling to the public, and particularly to women and children.

8. The intent of the two-way separated facility is to significantly reduce the current risk of serious injury to cyclists through collision with car doors and moving cars. The design proposals create this safer operating environment for the cyclist by:

   (a) maintaining separation between the footpath, parked vehicles and the cycle facility;

   (b) locating cyclists away from moving traffic and driver's doors;

   (c) reducing the likelihood of collision with car doors by consolidating cyclists to one side of the street and in the direct sight-line of passengers alighting a vehicle;

   (d) providing visual clues to denote the cycleway facility and increase awareness when approaching or crossing the facility;

   (e) improving driver and cyclist sightlines at intersections and at the passenger side of vehicles;

   (f) controlling intersection treatments to reduce vehicle speed and manage priority according to the street conditions and traffic volumes; and

   (g) creating/maintaining a generally traffic calmed street environment.

9. The design seeks to mitigate risks where possible. The key pedestrian access issue occurs along the length of the block, and centres on the ease of crossing the cycleway and the ability to alight from parked cars. The design incorporates measures to facilitate these activities.

10. These and other general issues are discussed in the *Design Summary Report* at **Attachment A**, which introduces some of the typical treatments for this type of facility and discusses the design and management of a range of associated issues.

11. Similar cycleway treatments have been used in other cities around the world however, it is new to Sydney. An education campaign will be undertaken to accompany the introduction of these new facilities. The campaigns will target the wider cycling community and all street users to raise awareness regarding cyclist obligations, the road rules and the benefits of cycling. They also seek to encourage considerate, responsible sharing of the public space by all road users.

Union Street Cycleway Proposal

12. For the Union Street project, the separated bi-directional cycleway improves the poor cycling connection between the Pyrmont Bridge and Union Street, along Pyrmont Bridge Road. It safely caters for cyclists on the north side of Pyrmont Bridge Road, by separating it from pedestrians and other moving vehicles. During morning and evening commuter peaks, bicycle movements along this route are already in excess of 300 per hour.

13. This cycleway treatment is proposed to continue through Union Street to Union Square, where cyclists can transition at Harris Street to on-road cycle lanes on Miller Street. The future extension of a two-way separated treatment down Miller Street to Saunders Street is foreseen in the Cycling Strategy.

14. The Concept Design was prepared and exhibited in November 2008 and is described in the *Concept Design Information Brochure* at **Attachment B**.

15. In summary, the Concept Scheme provided for a two-way separated cycleway along the northern side of Union Street and Pyrmont Bridge Road, from Union Square to Murray Street. The treatment of the cycleway varied, in accordance with the principles set out in Attachment A: a two step cross section employed adjacent to parking areas, and a median island cross section proposed in areas without parking. On the footpath adjacent the two-step treatment, the buffer zone was treated with contrast pavement and intermittent planting to accentuate the separation between pedestrians and cyclists, and introduce a new landscape amenity to this popular pedestrian/cycle corridor.

16. In addition, a number of associated public domain improvements were integrated with the proposal, including footpath widening on the congested approach to Murray Street; a raised pedestrian crossing on Union Street at Pyrmont Bridge Road; and planting of ten new advanced Golden Rain Trees, which included replacement of 5 small poorly performing specimens. Existing trachyte kerbs and bluestone kerbs will be retained and reused.

17. Between Union Square and Pyrmont Street, parking was relocated to the southern side of the street, and the existing kerb in this location realigned to accommodate this relocation.

18. All the aspects of the Concept Scheme described above have been retained in the Developed Design (refer **Attachment C**).

19. The Concept Scheme also proposed the removal of the right turn from Union Street into Murray Street to delete an existing traffic lane at this intersection and reallocate the space to the proposed two-way separated cycleway. In this proposal, traffic wishing to access Murray Street was directed to use Pyrmont Street and Bunn Street. This single aspect of the design produced the majority of community concern (refer **Attachment E**) about the impact of additional traffic on these local streets.

20. In the Developed Design, an alternative intersection design is proposed that retains the facility to turn right from Pyrmont Bridge Road into Murray Street. The Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) has provided an in-principle approval of this reconfiguration of the intersection, following modelling of weekday morning and evening peak periods as well as Saturday late night/early hours to ensure an accurate reflection of traffic using this area was captured.

21. The retention of the right turn is achieved in the Developed Design proposal by the reduction to one lane of through westbound traffic on Darling Drive. A dedicated right turn lane is provided and the existing dedicated left turn lane is retained on this approach (refer page 5 of **Attachment C**). Darling Drive falls under the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority's (SHFA) jurisdiction and SHFA has confirmed they support of the finalised proposal The change does not adversely impact the overall performance of this intersection or related intersections within the precinct when compared to the Concept Design Proposal. A consequence of this design is the reduced capacity of right and left turning vehicles from Murray Street into Pyrmont Bridge Road. The size of vehicle able to turn is limited to an 8.5m small rigid vehicle. The impact will mean large vehicles either turning left from the second lane or selecting an alternative route, and will be managed with appropriate traffic signage.

22. Other refinements reflected in the Developed Design include:

    (a) an integrated rain water harvesting proposal to distribute water shedding from adjacent downpipes, footpaths and the cycleway to irrigate new street trees and low grass planting areas;

    (b) an enlarged slip lane island (corner Darling Drive and Murray Street) to improve pedestrian storage capacity and crossing times. In addition, new zigzag warning lines are proposed on approach to the crossing and nearby planting will be replaced with low planting to improve pedestrian visibility. Whilst the complete removal of the slip lane was explored in detailed design, due to the size and shape of the intersection, removal would increase pedestrian crossing times and impact on the efficiency of the intersection and was not recommended;

    (c) a new cycle commection at Darling Drive to better cater for cyclists using the Union Street cycleway wishing to continue along Darling Drive (an alternative cycle route) instead of accessing Pyrmont Bridge. This is a response to community submissions;

    (d) retention of the Darling Drive cycle lane to the Murray Street intersection and provision of additional hook turn to facilitate cycle access from Darling Drive into Pirrama Road . This is a response to community submissions;

    (e) An upgrade of existing Energy Australia lighting to meet required lighting levels and supplementary lighting along the cycleway. The rationale for the selected scheme is summarised in the *Environmental Management Plan Compliance Schedule* at **Attachment D**;

    (f) In addition, and in response to community submissions, the City is continuing to liaise with the RTA on a number of possible inclusions in the final design. These include:

        (i) Advance Bicycle Detectors, at signalised intersections, particularly on the approaches to the Union Street / Edward Street and Union Street / Pyrmont Street intersections to provide more responsive levels of service at intersections outside the commuter peaks when bicycle movements are more random and sporadic, and

(ii) increased priority to bicycle and pedestrian phase time at the Edward and Pyrmont Street intersections, given these volumes exceed traffic volumes on Union Street during certain periods of the day; and

(g) an independent Stage 3 Road Safety Audit will be completed prior to tendering for construction.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic

23. The project aligns with the following strategic directions of Sustainable Sydney 2030:

2 – A leading environmental performer;

3 – Integrated transport for a connected City;

4 – A city for walking and cycling; and

6 – Vibrant local communities and economies.

Social

24. The proposal manages the introduction of high quality, safe cycle facilities with minimal impact on other users of the street. General issues arising from these types of facilities for other users are discussed in Attachment A. In addition, the Union Street proposal offers specific benefits to pedestrians through reduced risk of pedestrian/cycle conflict on approach to Murray Street, improved pedestrian space allocation and enhanced pedestrian safety measures at some intersections. Facilities for vehicles are maintained largely unchanged, except as noted above, and the overall network performance remains acceptable to the RTA.

Environmental

25. A review of the proposal against the City's adopted Environmental Management Plan is provided in the *Environmental Management Plan Compliance Schedule* at **Attachment D**.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Capital

26. The 2008/09 Network Gaps has a capital works budget allocation of $3.4 million.

27. The Network Gaps budget was originally created to cover both the Union Street and Erskineville Road gaps in the cycling network. Both gaps are located at key intersections on routes for commuter cyclists. The scope of the Union Street project was extended beyond the intersection at Union and Murray Street to create a safe route and logical transition, therefore increasing the cost of the project.

28. The budget allocated for Network Gaps will cover the costs associated with construction and design of the Union Street cycle way. The cost plan estimates a project cost of $2.95 million. This is 10% of the capital works allocation for cycling in 2009/10.

29. This estimate, based on detailed design documentation, includes all construction works, preliminaries, traffic management, out of hour's works and contingency.

30. Construction of the Union Street cycle way will commence in 2009/10 and will be completed within the financial year.

31. As the Network Gaps budget is being absorbed by the Union Street Project, it may be necessary to allocate additional funding for the Erskineville Road project, once the scope of this project is determined.

Ongoing Costs to Council

32. This project will increase the value and complexity of the public domain asset, and an increase in the maintenance cost proportionate to this increase in value is anticipated, and will need to be absorbed into future operational budgets.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

33. NSW Roads Act 1993, for road related approvals.

34. Local Government Act 1993, for construction procurement.

35. Council and RTA guidelines for cycleway and streetscape designs.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

36. Following Council approval of the Developed Design, the project will be ready to issue for construction tender by 19 May 2009. The outcome of the tendering process is scheduled to be reported to the Corporate, Finance, Properties and Tenders Committee on 3 August 2009 to allow commencement of construction by the end of August 2009.

37. A total construction period of approximately eight months is envisaged.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

38. The public consultation process is detailed at **Attachment E**. In summary:

    (a) 7,700 flyers were distributed;

    (b) a public meeting was held on 12 November 2008, which was attended by over 38 people;

    (c) 93 submissions were received from community groups, individuals, local residents, cyclists, commercial business, SHFA, BUGs, and Bicycle NSW by e-mail, mail or feedback forms during the consultation period;

    (d) 249 signatures were submitted raising objection to the proposed removal of the right turn at Murray Street; and

(e) 77 submissions supported the project, four opposed the cycleway, and 12 did not express a preference.

39. In addition, direct consultations have been undertaken with the RTA, State Transit Authority, SHFA, and Ultimo Pyrmont Chamber of Commerce.

40. The key concerns have been addressed in the Developed Design.

MICHAEL LEYLAND
Director City Projects

Fiona Lewis, Project Manager
Adam Fowler, Senior Landscape Architect