

12 ADOPTION OF THE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE STRATEGY (AUGUST 2017)

FILE REFERENCE INT1754182

RESPONSIBLE GENERAL MANAGER Andrew Paxton; Jenny Scicluna

AUTHOR Emily Killin

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the feedback received during community consultation on the draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy (January 2017) and support a number of changes to the strategy as a result of the feedback received.
2. Note the Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy Consultation Report (May 2017).
3. Adopt the Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy (August 2017).
4. Support officers conducting broader targeted community consultation on the naming of the Gembrook to Emerald multi-use trail.

Attachments

1 Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy (August 2017)	130 Pages
2 Pedestrian and Bicycle Consultation report (May 2017)	26 Pages

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council successfully sought \$30,000 of funding as part of Sport and Recreation Victoria's 2015/16 Community Facility Funding Program. Council contributed an additional \$30,000 and a budget of \$60,000 was used to engage a qualified consultant to develop a new Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy for the municipality. In late 2015 Council engaged Tract Consultants to work with Council officers to prepare this Strategy.

In January 2017 a draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy was finalised and released for public comment for a period of six weeks from 20 February to 3 April 2017. Council received 539 responses to an online questionnaire and had approximately 20 attendees at Open House sessions at Emerald, Pakenham and Koo Wee Rup. Council also received a total of five submissions from community groups and Victorian Government agencies.

As a result of the submissions received a number of changes have been made to the draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy (January 2017). It is recommended that the finalised Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy (August 2017) be adopted by Council.

BACKGROUND

Council considered a report on the Bicycle and Pedestrian strategy at its meeting held on 19 June and resolved to defer this matter to allow further consideration of all abilities access and a request to rename the Emerald to Gembrook Trail.

Cardinia Shire Council's current Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy was developed in 2003. Since the development of this strategy, Cardinia Shire has experienced significant population growth which has resulted in population projections well above those that informed the 2003 strategy. The rapid rate of urban development in Cardinia has resulted in a need to prepare a new strategy aligned with current growth projections. This will ensure the delivery of an integrated paths and trails network.

Council successfully sought \$30,000 of funding as part of Sport and Recreation Victoria's 2015/16 Community Facility Funding Program. Council contributed an additional \$30,000 and a budget of \$60,000 was used to engage a suitable qualified consultant to develop a new Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy for the municipality. In late 2015 Council engaged Tract Consultants to work with Council officers to prepare this Strategy.

The consultants were provided with a project aim; to provide a guiding framework for Council to undertake incremental development of a comprehensive walking and cycling network throughout the Shire and to identify the future development needs for the expected rapid population growth. The vision that the strategy is seeking to achieve is; to develop Victoria's premier shared pathway network for all abilities where practicable to connect Cardinia's residents, businesses and visitors to town centres, schools, and main tourist attractions.

To achieve the vision, six principles provide a guiding framework for the development and implementation of a successful trail network:

- The Cardinia experience
- Health and wellbeing
- All abilities access
- Safety and perception
- Connecting people and places
- Awareness and education

A draft Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy was finalised in January 2017 and is a big picture, 20 year (or more) visioning strategy that focuses on a proposed regional trail networks to link Cardinia's townships and major recreation and tourism offerings. The 11 regional trails proposed in the Strategy are ambitious and will require external funding support in the form of grants or contributions. The intent of the Strategy is to guide investment and to act as the strategic justification for Council to seek this funding. This Strategy is not committing Council to the funding for the delivery of this path infrastructure; rather it provides the strategic justification for the funding to be sought.

Community consultation on the draft Strategy was conducted for a period of six weeks from 20 February to 3 April 2017. Council received 539 responses to an online questionnaire and approximately 20 people attended Open House sessions at Emerald, Pakenham and Koo Wee Rup. Council also received a total of five submissions from community groups and Victorian Government agencies.

A Consultation Report (Attachment 2) was prepared by the consultants which groups the submissions received into themes and lists a number of recommendations as to how the Strategy should be amended to address these themes. Table 1 outlines the recommendations and subsequent changes that have been made to the draft Strategy.

Table 1: Recommendations in the Consultation Report and changes to the draft Strategy

Recommendation	Any change to the draft Strategy?	Reason
Executive Summary Ensure the scope of the strategy is clearly outlined in the Executive Summary.	Yes Add text in the Executive Summary that clearly outlines the purpose and scope of the Strategy.	This will ensure the purpose and scope of the Strategy is clear to readers from the outset.
Section 1.2 - Benefits of Walking and Cycling Acknowledge that behaviour change can be a result of increased pedestrian and cycling activity.	Yes Add a paragraph to Section 1.2 which outlines that increased walking and cycling activity in the Shire will lead to mutual recognition between vehicles, pedestrian and cyclists.	The Strategy did not mention behaviour change and this is an important benefit of increased walking and cycling activity particularly in relation to increased safety for all road users.
Section 3.1 - Understanding the needs of Walkers & Cyclists and Section 5.1 - Signage and Wayfinding Add a notation that outlines the degree of difficulty will vary for different trails and this will be indicated to users through signage.	No	The intent of this Strategy is not to consider the format of way finding signage. It is identified in the Strategy that way finding signage is important however the format and design of this will be considered as part of the project development process.
Section 4.2 - Guiding Principles Identify that the Principles are not in order of priority	Yes Add a sentence that explains the Principles are not in order of priority and will all be considered equally in the implementation of the proposed trail network.	There was a significant amount of feedback in relation to the priority of the principles. There was never a priority order to these, however this did not seem to be clear in the Strategy.
Section 4.2 - Guiding Principle 5 Connecting People & Places Add further information about the benefits the proposed trail infrastructure could have for tourism.	Yes Add a sentence that identifies that the delivery of the proposed trail infrastructure could result in Cardinia being a walking and cycling destination as well as increasing patronage to townships and activity centres.	Tourism was mentioned in the Strategy although it was not clear on the types of tourism benefits the delivery of the trail infrastructure may evoke.

Recommendation	Any change to the draft Strategy?	Reason
<p>Section 4.2 - Guiding Principles</p> <p>Amend guiding Principle 1 - The Cardinia Experience to acknowledge the communities concern for the preservation of the natural environment.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Rename Principle 1 from 'The Cardinia Experience' to 'The Cardinia Environment' and include reference to ensuring the proposed trail infrastructure does not negatively impact on environmentally significant areas.</p>	<p>There was a considerable amount of concern from the community that environmental preservation had not been addressed in the Strategy.</p>
<p>Section 4.5 - Regional Trails</p> <p>Acknowledge a potential connection to Tooradin as part of the Southern Rail trail.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>In the 'wider network connectivity' section of the summary table for the Southern Rail Trail acknowledge a possible connection to Tooradin.</p>	<p>There was a number of comments and discussion at the Koo Wee Rup Open House session about the potential to connect to Tooradin.</p>
<p>Section 4.5 - Regional Trails</p> <p>Acknowledge that a variety of users will be considered at the detailed design phase.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>In the summary table of each of the proposed trails acknowledge that a variety of users will be considered when detailed design of the paths is being carried out.</p>	<p>There was concern from a number of users including horse riders, BMX bike riders, mountain bike riders, hand cyclists and speed skaters that the Strategy did not consider them.</p>
<p>Section 4.5 - Regional Trails</p> <p>Change the delivery priority of three of the proposed trails to reflect the community feedback.</p>	<p>Yes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the delivery priority of the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deep Creek trail from medium to low - Pakenham to Railway Towns trail from medium to high - Beaconsfield to Emerald trail from low to medium 	<p>Priorities were changed as a result of the community feedback in relation to how they were scored and the number and type of comments provided.</p>
<p>Chapter 5 - Supporting Network Infrastructure & Implementation</p> <p>Add a 'Next Steps' section to clearly outline the key implementation stages and actions, as well as the</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Add a paragraph to Section 5 that identifies the purpose of the Strategy as an advocacy tool to seek funding to deliver the path infrastructure. Funding will be advocated for</p>	<p>Chapter 5 relates to Implementation, but it was not clear in this section what the purpose of the Strategy is and how it will be used moving forward.</p>

Recommendation	Any change to the draft Strategy?	Reason
proposed implementation timeframes.	in the order of the priority of the proposed trails but may also be influenced by other external factors.	
Section 5.4 - Other Actions Add an action to develop a marketing strategy to inform user groups and the community of the construction timelines, implementation progress and completion of the trails.	No	This is not the intent of the Strategy. It is already identified in the Strategy that community consultation will be undertaken as part of the detailed design of each of the paths once funding has been received. This consultation will be promoted to the community and inform the community of these factors.
Section 5.4 - Other Actions Add a notation to identify that the use of separated bikeways should be considered where there is a high chance of potential conflict between pedestrians and cyclists.	No	This is beyond the scope of the strategy as this level of detail will be considered at the detail design phase. There will be further consultation carried out during when the detailed design of each of the proposed paths is carried out.

A number of minor changes have also been made to the draft Strategy as a result of internal consultation, these changes are independent of the feedback received from the community engagement process:

- Modifications to clarify some content.
- Correction of typos and inconsistencies.
- Addition of a new row in each of the trail summary tables to identify factors that will be considered when detailed design is being completed for each of the paths. This change was introduced to ensure accessibility is captured in more detail in the Strategy. The opportunity was also taken to identify a range of other factors that also need to be considered at the detailed design stage.
- Greater consideration of potential environmental constraints to be considered when delivering some of the trail infrastructure including significant vegetation, habitat for the southern brown bandicoot and ensuring vegetation offset sites are protected.

Following outstanding issues raised in June 2017 in relation to all abilities access and the naming of the Gembrook to Emerald multi-use trail, additional internal consultation was conducted. Further changes were made to the draft Strategy to strengthen its consideration of accessibility. These are outlined in table 2.

Table 2: Further changes to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy in relation to accessibility

Component of the document	Change proposed
Page 93 - All Abilities Access	<p>Change the first Action so it reads; <i>when undertaking detailed design of the proposed trails considered suitable for all ability access, engage a qualified consultant to review all documents in conjunction with the Pedestrian and Cycle DDA framework endorsed by Council's Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee.</i></p>
Page 93 - All Abilities Access	<p>Change the word 'considerations' to 'actions'.</p>
Summary tables for all paths	<p>A notation has been added in the Detailed Design Considerations of the Summary Tables of each of the proposed paths. The notation reads:</p> <p><i>Pedestrian and Bicycle strategy paths will be designed in accordance with the future paths performance standard articulated in the Pedestrian and Cycle DDA framework endorsed by Council's Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee.</i></p>

In relation to the naming of the Gembrook to Emerald multi-use trail, a submission was received suggesting this trail be renamed to the Eastern Dandenong Ranges trail. It is recommended that broader targeted community consultation be conducted to determine if the Eastern Dandenong Ranges trail is the communities preferred name for this trail.

Next Step

1. Following the adoption of the *Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy (August 2017)* broader targeted community consultation will be conducted to determine the communities preferred naming of the Gembrook to Emerald multi-use trail as a result of a submission to rename it to the Eastern Dandenong Ranges Trail.
2. Following Council adoption of the *Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy (August 2017)* the Strategy will form the strategic justification for Council to submit applications for state and federal government grant applications to seek funding to assist in the delivery of the proposed trail network.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This project has positive policy implications as the Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy (August 2017) will ensure that Council has a more relevant and up-to-date strategy to guide the development of an integrated pedestrian and bicycle network across the Shire. Council's current strategy was developed in 2003 and is no longer considered relevant due to the rapid population growth experienced since its preparation.

RELEVANCE TO COUNCIL PLAN

The preparation of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy (August 2017) supports several initiatives of the Council Plan:

1.4 Improved health and wellbeing for all

- Source funding and deliver a range of initiatives that promote healthy living.
- Support children, young people, families, older adults and people of all abilities by providing a range of accessible services and facilities.

1.5 Variety of recreation and leisure opportunities

- Provide active and passive recreation facilities to meet the needs of our residents.
- Increase opportunities for our residents to participate in a range of sport, recreation and leisure activities.

2.2 Engaged communities

- Promote opportunities that encourage community participation in Council policy and strategy development.

2.4 Improved health and wellbeing of our residents

- Help establish partnerships and social infrastructure opportunities that improve health and wellbeing outcomes for residents.

3.2 Transport linkages connecting towns

- Prioritise multi-use pathways, where practicable, to create networks that connect destinations.

CONSULTATION/COMMUNICATION

External

The draft *Pedestrian & Bicycle Strategy (August 2017)* was released for public comment for a period of six (6) weeks from 20 February to 3 April 2017. The community had the opportunity to complete an online questionnaire and attend Open House sessions to provide feedback on the draft Strategy. The opportunity to view the strategy, complete the questionnaire or attend an Open House session was promoted through a range of methods:

- Available on the Cardinia Shire Council website for the duration of the exhibition period
- Location targeted Facebook advertising
- Brochures and a copy of the Strategy available at:
 - Civic Centre Customer Service
 - Pakenham library
 - Emerald library
 - Spider Bikes Beaconsfield
 - Life of Bikes in Pakenham (also promoted on their Facebook page)
- Advertisements in the following newspapers and local newsletters:
 - Pakenham-Berwick Gazette
 - Tynong Tabloid
 - Goon News
 - Bunyip News
 - Koo Wee Rup Blackfish
 - Beaconsfield Banner

- Direct Emails to:
 - Cardinia Shire Council Bicycle User Group contact list (approximately 20 people)
 - Neighbouring Councils (Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Casey, South Gippsland and Yarra Ranges)
 - Cardinia Casey Tourism Advisory Committee members
 - Environment and Landcare groups
 - Kindergartens and playgroups
 - Resident associations and community groups
 - Sport and Recreation Victoria
 - Government authorities

Council received 539 responses to the online questionnaire and approximately 20 people attended Open House sessions at Emerald, Pakenham and Koo Wee Rup. Council also received a total of five submissions from community groups and Victorian Government agencies:

- Cardinia Shire Bicycle Users Group
- The Tourism Advisory Committee
- Upper Beaconsfield Riding Club
- Parks Victoria
- VicRoads

A number of the 539 respondents provided their name and email address as they wished to be kept informed as the development of the Strategy progressed. These respondents have been emailed to thank them for their submission and with a link to this report.

Internal

Comprehensive internal consultation was carried out on the initial draft *Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy* that was received in August 2016. Feedback was sought from the following internal departments:

- Strategic and Economic Development
- Growth Area Planning
- Recreation
- Engineering
- Environments
- Community Strengthening
- Children and Family Services
- Communication

The draft *Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategy* (August 2017) was also circulated internally however the majority of internal departments did not provide comment as feedback had been provided previously. However, comments were received from the Environment, Community Strengthening, Engineering and Recreation departments which will be reflected in the finalised *Pedestrian & Bicycle Strategy*.

In June 2017 outstanding issues were raised in relation to all abilities access and the naming of the Gembrook to Emerald multi-use trail. Further Internal consultation was conducted with Council's Metro Access Officer to address these concerns. The response to these outstanding concerns was also presented to SLT on 11 July 2017.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

To date, the project has been completed within the operating and originally approved budget.

The proposed new paths outlined in the Strategy are currently unfunded within the capital works program. Having an updated strategy will assist in guiding further development of paths and provide sound strategic justification to support future grant applications.

Funding of \$1,545,000 has been received by both the State and Federal Government for the Cockatoo to Gembrook section of the Emerald to Gembrook Multi Use Trail.

CONCLUSION

Community consultation on the draft Pedestrian & Bicycle Strategy (January 2017) has been completed. A number of changes to the strategy have been made as a result of the feedback received. It is recommended that Council note these change and adopt the final Pedestrian & Bicycle Strategy (August 2017). It is recommended that Council support officers undertaking broader targeted community consultation in relation to the naming of the Gembrook to Emerald multi-use trail.