

Frequently Asked Questions provided during engagement

Project rationale

1) Which option is the preferred design and why was it chosen?

Option 1B, a separated bike path narrowed to retain parking, was chosen from the original consultation based on community feedback and a road safety audit. The primary concern raised from the first round of consultation for the initial shared path proposal was about potential collisions between people walking and people riding on a shared path. The selected option minimises pedestrian conflict, parking loss, and tree removal.

In recent years, there has been greater awareness in the importance of providing people with safe and convenient options to walk and bike ride for short trips, especially with accelerating climate change and the growth of new technologies such as e-bikes. The preferred option for key bike routes and main roads where on-road speeds exceed 30km/h is a separated bike path with priority through intersections with crossing side streets, as currently proposed in the revised design. This type of infrastructure will maximise potential ridership and cater for emerging forms of micromobility. This is in line with Transport for NSW's **Road User Space Allocation Policy** well as guidance from their **Cycleway Design Toolbox** and **Movement and Place Framework**.

2) Why this route?

This route connects existing and planned bike routes outlined in the Northern Beaches Bike Plan. It provides essential links to Manly, Dee Why, Brookvale, schools, beaches, and sports fields (refer to the **Bike connections map**). It is noted there is an existing shared path connection at Freshwater Village for access to Queenscliff and Manly

3) Why has the proposal been changed to the eastern side of Oliver Street and northern side of Bennett Street?

We are proposing to place it on the eastern side of the street, as it has fewer side street crossings (11 on the western side and only 6 on the eastern side), improving safety and rideability.

Placing it on the northern side of Bennett Street allows for greater connectivity to the current and future bike network as well as road safety by allowing for additional lane width at the bend near the intersection of Bennett Street and Oliver Street.

There will be a new raised shared-user crossing at the intersection of Bennett Street and Brighton Street to facilitate the bike path's change of side.

4) Why is this project needed and what is the benefit?

This is an important local street upgrade to improve the amenity and safety of people walking and bike riding and living in the area. The driver is to get more children walking and riding to school in a safe environment with a separate footpath,

pedestrian crossings, and calm attractive streets. By making it easier for people of all ages and abilities to walk and ride, this project will offer a new travel option for local trips such as the school run, the local shops, commuting to Manly Wharf and for quick trips to the beach.

Five crashes involving people walking and bike riding have been reported along the project route in the last five years.

5) How is the project funded?

The original concept design was entirely funded through the Federal Stimulus – School Infrastructure Program.

However, a revised design was developed in late 2024 in response to independent design reviews and community feedback. The revised design, while superior in its outcomes, is a more expensive solution and as such the entire project scope is not able to be delivered under the current funding arrangement. As such, it is proposed to progress the project in stages subject to appropriate grant funding being available and the outcomes of the 12 November 2024 Council meeting.

Cycleway design and safety

6) What are the benefits of a separated cycleway?

This project is not a standalone bike path but a local street upgrade that will benefit people walking, bike riding and living in the area by calming the street and making it more attractive. The driver is to get more children walking and riding to school in a safe environment, separated from traffic. Not many people feel safe or comfortable enough to ride on the road next to moving vehicles, this will offer the community a new option to travel, particularly for short trips.

7) Is the preferred design safe given it is within the 'door zone' of parked cars?

This option reduces risk as riders approach parked cars in front of drivers' view. Passenger side doors are less frequently used, further reducing collision likelihood.

8) What about people getting in and out of the passenger side of vehicles (next to the cycleway)?

As with shared paths, all users should exercise caution. Adequate visibility is provided for safe movements in and out of parked vehicles.

Car passengers and bike riders are to look out for one another and negotiate the space accordingly. Bike riders have an interest to ride with care and avoid a car door. Where there are vulnerable passengers, we recommend that people consider their needs, and use off-street parking where available.

9) What happens at bus stops?

Where the bike path crosses a bus stop, bus platforms will be installed to provide a safe area for bus passengers separate from bike traffic (refer to the Bennett Street Bus Stop photomontage). This will occur in 2 locations, one in each travel direction.

We are proposing to remove one underutilised bus stop (Oliver Street before Wyuna Avenue) to improve traffic flow and reduce parking loss, as alternate stops are available within 100m of this location. There may be some other minor adjustments to shelters and seating.

10) Will car parking be affected?

Parking will be retained on both sides. Some spaces may be removed for safer intersections and wider lanes (refer to maps in the document library).

11) How is car parking and cycleway infrastructure prioritised?

The Transport for NSW **Road User Space Allocation Policy** considers all road users.

Road uses are ranked in this order in the policy: walking (including equitable access for people of all abilities), cycling (including larger legal micro-mobility devices), public transport, freight and deliveries, ahead of general traffic and then on-street parking.

We need to consider this policy when planning and balance these needs to ensure all users have adequate and safe facilities.

12) Will the travel lanes be wider?

In response to community feedback, the new travel lanes will be 3m wide. This is 10cm wider than the previously proposed design and 10cm narrower than the existing street layout.

Due to the geometry of the bend, we will provide wider 3.5m travel lanes at the bend of Bennett and Oliver Streets, to ensure the safe movement of vehicles including buses. To further improve safety at the bend, Council is proposing to install a 'No Parking Motor Vehicles Excepted' restriction on the southern side of the bend.

Take a look at the "Typical cross-section showing lane width" document under Civil Plans.

User responsibilities and safety measures

13) What are the responsibilities of users of the driveways?

Cars entering or exiting driveways must give way to pedestrians and bike riders. The proposed location of the separated cycleway will be located further from the property boundaries and in front of parked vehicles. This will provide better visibility of bike riders for drivers entering and exiting driveways compared to the existing configuration.

14) What happens with the bins for rubbish collection?

There will be minimal impact for residents to bin collection. Suggested bin collection points will be marked out on the street, with bins to be placed against the bike path separator in line with parked cars (similar to when they are placed against the kerb). Please check out the 'Bin Collection and Driveway Access' tab on the project page and fill out the survey at the bottom of page to share your thoughts on waste management solutions.

Community engagement and updates added throughout the engagement period

15) Where are other sites in Sydney that have a similar design in front of houses?

While this is the first separated bike path through a residential area on the Northern Beaches, a range of similar projects have been successfully completed across Sydney including:

- Doncaster Avenue Kensington has been recently constructed by Randwick Council; this route is similar to what we are proposing with regards to driveway layouts. Doncaster Avenue (between Alison Road and Todman Avenue) in Kensington is classed as a regional road by Transport for NSW, the same classification as Oliver Street, and is a major through road in the Randwick LGA. They have recently opened the project, which includes a two-way separated bike path with raised separators as well as on-street parking on both sides.
- Sutherland St Neutral Bay has been in place for over 10 years in a low-density residential street. There are multiple residential driveways on the bike path side of this street. This carriageway is the same width as Oliver Street, and its cross-section is similar to what we are proposing.
- Ridge Street and West Street North Sydney are examples of how cycleways work in busier streets with fewer but more heavily utilised driveways serving apartment buildings. Ridge Street (between Miller Street and West Street) in North Sydney has medium-density residential properties on both sides of the road and is also a similar cross-section to what we are proposing including a two-way separated bike path and on-street parking on both sides. This street includes some driveways and a bus stop platform.
- Bourke Road (between Coward Street and Wyndham Street) through Alexandria and Mascot is an example of an established two-way separated bike path with raised separators. This street has regular bus services, multiple driveways and services an industrial area with many heavy vehicle movements.
- Queens Road Westmead is an example in a higher-density environment with a lot of apartment buildings.
- Oxford Street Bondi Junction has been recently constructed and offers a good example of the arrangement we propose for buses with bus platforms and buses stopping in-lane.
- Epping Road (between Moore Street and Longueville Road) in Lane Cove is an example of an established two-way separated bike path with raised separators. This is a key arterial state road with multiple residential driveways, frequent bus services and a 60km/h speed limit.

- Railway Avenue (near Liberty Street) in Stanmore is an example of a street with a new two-way separated bike path with raised separators. This street has a similar width/cross-section as what we are proposing for Oliver Street, including some driveways.
- George Street (between Raglan Street and Bourke Street) in Waterloo is an example of an established two-way separated bike path with raised separators. This street has a similar width/cross-section as what we are proposing for Oliver Street, including some driveways.
- Bourke Road (between Coward Street and Wyndham Street) through Alexandria and Mascot is an example of an established two-way separated bike path with raised separators. This street has regular bus services, multiple driveways and services an industrial area with many heavy vehicle movements.

16) How will drivers safely enter their cars if the carriageway width is reduced?

As with many other busy roads across the Northern Beaches, drivers must take care and look out for traffic before entering and exiting their vehicle that's parked on-street. Nearby pedestrian crossings will assist with providing gaps in vehicle traffic, allowing time between moving cars to safely exit parked vehicles.

17) How will buses blocking traffic at bus stops be avoided?

New bus stop platforms between the bike path and travel lane will enable quicker boarding and alighting of passengers and ensure bus priority on departure as buses will stop in lane. It is anticipated there will be minimal impact on traffic flow, as there will only be a maximum of one bus stop platform in each direction. It is unlikely that every bus service will stop at these stops (based on Opal usage data) and as services are Opal/contactless only it is not envisaged that buses will be stopping for extended periods of time. This already occurs in other places within the local area with similar bus service levels such as in North Steyne, Manly.

18) What is the overall free space between vehicles when two buses are passing each other?

Buses are 2.5m wide wheel to wheel. Given travel lanes will be 3m wide this provides sufficient space for buses to pass each other. Different buses have different mirror sizes that will fit within the road lane. Furthermore, a number of wider spaces for heavy vehicles exist along the route. The width of buses is based on national vehicle standards set by the Australian Government. Due to the geometry of the bend on Oliver Street, we will provide wider 3.5m travel lanes at the bend of Bennett and Oliver Streets, to ensure the safe movement of vehicles including buses.

19) What happens when bike riders continue to use the main carriageway?

Bike riders are allowed on the road, even when there is a shared path nearby. Most will choose to use the safer separated bike path, however, those that choose to use the road are likely to be more experienced riders travelling at speeds comparable to

vehicle traffic. This project aims to provide people who don't currently ride because they aren't comfortable sharing the road with cars the opportunity to ride.

Research by the City of Melbourne found that only 22% of people considering riding felt confident about riding on streets without a separated cycleway. However, if the cycleway was separated from road traffic, this improves significantly to 83% of people feeling confident.

20) What is the impact of reduced carriageway widths on people who have caravans or boats parked at their houses? Will they be allowed to stay?

We don't intend on making any changes to parking restrictions for caravans, boats and trailers along most of the route. The exception to this is at the inside of the bend at Bennett Street and Oliver Street to improve safety and sight lines in direct response to community feedback. The proposal is to provide 'No parking, motor vehicles excepted' signage.

21) How will my driveway access be maintained given the proposed setback distance of raised separators?

Driveway access will be retained for all properties, with the raised bike lane separator set 0.5m from each side of the driveway to allow additional space for turning ease. Following initial community feedback, further analysis was undertaken which has confirmed the originally planned offsets are adequate. It might be helpful to think of the separator between the bike path and parked cars as a 'second kerb' – they don't need to be any wider than your existing driveway. In response to community feedback, we have allowed additional space to ensure that residents can access their driveways easily. This additional space will allow room to place bins next to parked cars for weekly collection without impacting access to driveways.

22) Why are the pedestrian islands not being replaced in the new pedestrian crossing design, on the existing zebra crossings on Oliver Street which are being upgraded?

It is not a standard feature to include a pedestrian refuge on a raised pedestrian crossing. Instead, the kerbs will be built out at the raised pedestrian crossings to reduce the crossing distance for people walking, improve sight lines for drivers and slow down traffic in approach to the crossings. Drivers must give way to any pedestrian on a pedestrian crossing.

23) Does that mean you plan to reduce the overall number of bus stops?

Changes to bus stops are mentioned on page 11 of the Community Issues Report. There are seven bus stops along the project route, two will be upgraded to bus platforms (one in each direction) and four will remain unaffected by the project.

It is worth noting that in-lane bus stopping exists along North Steyne in Manly as well as in other high-traffic areas with frequent bus services such as Oxford Street

Bondi and Miller Street Pyrmont. Through traffic is encouraged to remain on Harbord Road or Pittwater Road.

Following discussions with the local bus operator, we are proposing to remove one underutilised bus stop on the eastern side of Oliver Street, the 'Oliver Street before Wyuna Avenue' stop. Alternate bus stops are available within 100m of this location, both outside Harbord Public School and on Wyadra Avenue. This will improve service reliability and stop-spacing as well as general traffic flow in this location. This proposal is subject to approval from Transport for NSW.

24) At the intersection of Brighton and Oliver Streets, will the give-way (edge) line on Brighton Street be moved to allow for a car space approaching the proposed crossing?

The give-way line (or edge line) on the eastern side of the Oliver Street and Brighton Street intersection will be moved out in a westerly direction to accommodate a holding space for one vehicle prior to the crossing. This will ensure vehicles crossing the intersection can do so safely and then wait for pedestrians and bike riders to use the raised crossing before continuing their journey. This is similar to the other proposed raised crossings in the project footprint, which will all provide a holding space.

25) Clarification: Artist impression – Harbord School

The images provided on this Your Say site are artist impressions and included for indicative purposes only. The artist impression that shows the area outside of Harbord Public School currently shows a green bike path marked on the pavement. This was recently updated in the revised design following engagement with industry experts and Harbord Public School, as per the **civil drawings** to a wide shared path (no green lane), to better manage the speed of bikes when there is high pedestrian activity. This shared path will have appropriate pavement markings on the Harbord Public School frontage to ensure a safe pick up and drop off area for school children.

26) Have the Emergency Services been consulted regarding the revised design?

Council has started dialogue with Fire Rescue NSW regarding the proposed design and has also received a submission to the public display of the revised plan.

Engagement is an ongoing activity and as a key stakeholder, we value their input to ensure we maintain safe access for emergency service vehicles.