

NOM50/19 INVESTIGATE IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS FOR CYCLING ON THE UPFIELD AS PART OF THE LEVEL CROSSING REMOVAL PROJECT (D19/341698)

Cr Natalie Abboud

1. Background

Cr Abboud's background:

Council welcomes the Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP) and looks forward to the commencement of works. Council also welcomes VicRoads survey about potential outcomes for a future plan for Sydney road. Both of these projects have serious implications for cyclists in the city of which there are many.

Council has noted that the LXRP project has an opportunity to enhance and improve the conditions of the Upfield Bike path which is at capacity and forms a crucial part of bike infrastructure in Moreland. This could include everything from an elevated veloway to prioritised signalling so that commuters who cycle along the path can do so in an efficient way.

2. Policy Context

Council Action Plan

This item relates to the Council Action Plan (CAP) 2019/2020, under Connected Community, specifically:

- CAP 41: Key Priority: P2. Facilitate a demonstrable shift to more sustainable modes of transport that also targets a long-term reduction in car use.
- Deliverable: P2d) Continue to advocate for level crossing removal in Moreland - Work with the Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) to maximise community benefit from crossing removals in Moreland.

The Level Crossing Removal Authority (LXRA) was renamed the Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP) following the November 2018 State Government election.

Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy (MITS) 2019

The MITS 2019 states that Council will, among other things:

- Prioritise access by walking, cycling and public transport over car-based travel;
- Seek best possible walking and cycling access, safety and amenity in state government projects; and
- Create a safer space for all users, day and night.

The LXRP is removing four level crossings on the Upfield railway line in Coburg, between Moreland Road and Bell Street. Council has been involved in this project as a key stakeholder and has been advocating on behalf of the Moreland community to achieve the best possible outcomes from the project.

Council's adopted advocacy position for the Bell to Moreland Level Crossing Removal

Council has previously resolved (DED16/18) to advocate to the LXRP for improvements such as separation of bicycle and pedestrian paths along the corridor, maximising light penetration through higher rail viaducts, and funding for 'left under' spaces including trees, landscaping, and active and passive public spaces.

Council also provided in-principle endorsement (UB2/19) of the Vision for the Upfield Corridor document prepared by the Upfield Corridor Coalition advocacy group, which seeks, among other things:

- An elevated 'veloway' for commuter cyclists running alongside the elevated rail structure;
- Separated paths for cyclists and pedestrians at ground level; and
- Traffic signals at each road intersection (Moreland Road, Reynard Street, Munro Street and Bell Street) to give greater priority for pedestrians and cyclists.

Level Crossing Removal Authority Urban Design Framework May 2018

The LXRP's Urban Design Framework outlines principles, objectives, measures and qualitative benchmarks to ensure that the various level crossing removals meet specific design outcomes.

The following measures relate directly to cycling design outcomes within the projects:

- M4.4 Pedestrian and cycling overpasses are provided at strategic points relative to pedestrian movement patterns and the existing and proposed street and cycle networks; where applicable.
- M8.2 The existing pedestrian and cycling network along the rail corridor and to the station precinct is maintained and enhanced, particularly strategically important cycling corridors (SICCs), priority bicycle routes, the principal pedestrian network (PPN) and pedestrian priority areas.
- M8.3 Identified issues and barriers for cycling and pedestrian connection are addressed by improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclist equally with continuous, more direct, safe and high-quality routes. Space is allocated at an early stage and the need to re-allocate space for motorised vehicles to achieve a sustainable outcome is actively considered.
- M8.4 Opportunities are investigated for new pedestrian and bicycle paths that maintain and extend local connectivity for all users, including linking to existing or new community facilities, open spaces, urban renewal areas or National Employment Innovation Clusters. Connectivity is achieved through an integrated and dense network that links people with destinations and with other modes.
- M8.5 Opportunities for grade-separated pedestrian and bicycle connections across the rail corridor and any cuttings are considered.
- M8.6 Transitions between pedestrian and cycling paths are safe, continuous and seamless. Routes are direct and consistent design elements assist legibility.
- M8.7 The design applies universal design principles that cater for all abilities and ages. Surfaces are designed to avoid unnecessary level changes.

3. Financial Implications

The preparation of this report has no financial implications, however may recommend or detail options for Council to consider co-contribution of funding towards improvements to be delivered as part of LXRP works on the Upfield railway line.

4. Resources Implications

The preparation of this report can be accommodated within existing resources.

Motion

That Council:

1. Receives a report analysing the benefits and disadvantages of a range of options to minimise delays at intersections for pedestrians and cyclists using paths to be constructed as part of the Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP) along the Upfield railway line. This report should include consideration of:
 - a) A continuous elevated 'veloway' for the extent of the elevated rail structure.
 - b) Pedestrian and cyclist bridges across Moreland Road and Bell Street.
 - c) Traffic signals for pedestrians and cyclists at intersections that minimise delay when crossing.
 - d) The potential for Council co-contribution of funding to increase the likelihood of improvements not previously within the project scope.