

Submission on: Proposed improvements for traffic and transport in Alexandria and Erskineville

By: Friends of Erskineville

26 June 2023

General

1. FOE acknowledges the work done by the city council to ameliorate the impact of WestConnex on residents. This has involved listening to residents' concerns and encouraging the use of active transport in the area.
2. FoE supports the re-introduction of two-way traffic to Railway Parade however the removal of the bike lane on the Swanson St bridge has made this important link for cyclists unsafe. The footpath on the northern side of the bridge is also too narrow. We support the widened shared path solution promised to the community by TfNSW on 30 November 2022 which retains two-way traffic on Railway Parade.
3. Collectively, however, the proposed improvements outlined in the current traffic study lack continuity and cohesion and therefore do not address the many negative impacts of motor vehicle traffic (noise, danger, air pollution, etc.) across Alexandria and Erskineville.
4. Some of the proposed traffic calming and turn restrictions are welcome, although the piecemeal approach will simply divert through-traffic onto other local streets.
5. To create people-centred, low-traffic neighbourhoods, a comprehensive and area-wide scheme is needed that prevents all through-traffic from using local/residential streets while maintaining access to all properties.
6. The proposed traffic calming measures are welcome, though insufficient, and will be undermined by the proposal to replace roundabouts on Mitchell Road with signalised intersections. (Maddox Street and Harley/Ashmore Streets)
7. Only one new continuous footpath and no new zebra/wombat crossings are proposed but they are needed at all side streets and lanes.
8. FOE understands that continuous footpath treatments and new zebra/wombat crossings on local streets are now exempt from review by the Local Traffic Committee (LTC) process, so more of them can and should be proposed.
9. Coulson Street was included in the previous Erskineville and Alexandria Traffic and Transport Study area. Why is it not included in the current proposal?

Proposed signalized intersection at Mitchell Road, Ashmore and Harley Street

10. FOE strongly objects to the proposal to signalise the intersection at Mitchell Road, Ashmore Street and Harley Street.
11. Traffic signals here:
 - a. imposes even more delay and inconvenience on people walking (i.e., having to activate a beg button and wait for a green signal – or two signals if crossing diagonally). This would discourage people from walking for short, local trips by their having to wait at traffic signals and potentially increase total walking times.
 - b. Would result in more peak-time motor vehicle traffic on Mitchell Rd. This is because replacing roundabouts with traffic signals effectively increases road capacity, which induces/encourages higher traffic demand – in the same way that road widening does e.g., with increased traffic capacity, navigation systems will send even more non-local traffic along Mitchell Rd.
12. The existing roundabout has a positive traffic-calming effect. Removing it would undermine the other traffic calming measures proposed for Mitchell Rd.
13. The existing roundabout and crossing have a very low safety risk - zero crashes or injuries involving pedestrians or people cycling in the five years to 2021.
14. The existing roundabout and crossing are affected by current traffic speed limits and frequent driver non-compliance at the crossing.
15. The risk should be mitigated, e.g., by:
 - a. Reducing the posted speed limit of Mitchell Road to 30 km/h.
 - b. Implementing traffic calming on all approaches to the roundabout/crossing.
 - c. Improving sightlines and lighting.
 - d. Installing wombat crossings on all other arms of the roundabout (i.e., fully protected roundabout).
16. Upgrading the roundabout could be done at a significantly lower cost than replacing it with traffic signals.

Traffic calming scheme on Mitchell Road

17. FOE strongly supports a traffic calming scheme on Mitchell Road although more detail will need to be provided.

18. FOE sees the existing roundabouts (Ashmore/Mitchell/Harley and Maddox/ Mitchell and eventually MacDonald Street) on Mitchell Rd have a positive traffic-calming effect so should be retained/upgraded.
19. FOE supports a reduction to the posted speed limit of Mitchell Road to 30 km/h to match the limit on streets feeding into existing roundabouts.

Closing Maddox Street or banning the left turn from Euston Road into Maddox Street

20. FOE strongly advocates for measures that further reduce/divert through traffic whilst maintaining local resident access.
21. FOE strongly advocates traffic limiting measures such as
 - a. No Left Turn-Vehicles under 6m excepted.
 - b. Blocking through traffic on Belmont Lane, Belmont Street, Lawrence Lane, Lawrence Street and Euston Lane (where they do not already exist) in a way that maintains access to all properties.
 - c. Improved roundabouts and pedestrian crossings on Maddox Street
22. FOE does not support the introduction of a traffic signal to replace the roundabout at Maddox Street/Mitchell Road/future breakthrough of McDonald Street from the Ashmore Estate.
23. FOE acknowledges and supports the closure of Maddox Street at Euston Road or the banning of the left turn from Euston Road into Maddox Street as a necessary second-tier response if other measures (as above) fail to significantly reduce through traffic usage from the current level of about 50% of total traffic usage vs locally generated traffic usage.

A Traffic calming scheme for Maddox Street west of Euston Road

24. FOE strongly supports a traffic calming scheme on Maddox Street
25. A well-designed traffic calming scheme would improve safety, reduce traffic noise levels and provide space for landscaping.
26. FOE objects to options (raised threshold) that increase noise impacts on neighbouring properties.

Proposed closure of Harley Street at McEvoy Street or Mitchell Road

27. FOE does not support the closure of Harley Street at McEvoy Street while noting the negative impact of some through-traffic using Harley Street to move onto Belmont Ln, Lawrence Ln, and Euston Ln. Therefore, blocks to through traffic must also be installed on these lanes (where they

do not already exist) in a way that maintains access to all properties.

28. FOE supports the introduction of a no right turn from Harley Street into Mitchell Road and the installation of an extension to the existing road barrier to prevent a right turn.
29. FOE supports works that involve improving sightlines and lighting at the roundabout Mitchell Road, Harley and Ashmore Streets.
30. Installing wombat crossings on all other arms of the roundabout (i.e., fully protected roundabout).

Belmont Street north of Fountain Street – continuous footpath treatment

31. FOE strongly supports a continuous footpath on Belmont Street north of Fountain Street.
32. Continuous footpaths (or wombat crossings) should be installed at all side streets in Erskineville and Alexandria.

Dadley Street at Lyne and Renwick Streets – kerb buildouts / intersection narrowing.

33. FOE supports the kerb buildouts/intersection narrowing.
34. Similar treatments are needed on many other local streets (e.g., Renwick St, Coulson St) to slow traffic and reduce traffic noise levels.

Proposed no right turn on to Henderson Road from Park Street or close Park Street at Henderson Road to traffic.

35. There remains the risk of Park Street continuing to be a rat run for WestConnex traffic and with the 6m limitation on Railway Parade, continuing to be the heavy vehicle solution. This can only be solved by the full closure of the street.
36. FOE recognizes and supports the local Park Street Traffic Group in its endeavors to return Park Street to a safe residential street with no heavy vehicle traffic and minimal through traffic.
37. The closure of Park Street will provide an active transport link between Harry Noble Park, Solander Park, and the Explorer Street/South Eveleigh precinct. Once McPherson Park is developed this will also deliver minimal traffic, pedestrian friendly, green, park led precinct stretching from South Eveleigh all the way to Sydney Park.

FOE raises the following other matters for consideration:

1. Re-introduce two important recommendations of the earlier Erskineville and Alexandria Traffic

and Transport Study, missing from the current proposal:

a Road narrowing along Coulson St.

b Continuous footpath treatment on Coulson Street at Hadfields Street.

2. Blocks to through traffic on Euston Lane, Lawrence Lane and Belmont Lane while still allowing access to all properties.
3. Additional mid-block pedestrian crossings on Coulson Street and Mitchell Road. to improve walkability.
4. Reduce the kerb radius at all side streets as a traffic calming step to reduce the speed at which drivers turn in/out of them.
5. Introduce a raised bicycle/pedestrian crossing at Belmont Street, which is a school route to Alexandria Park Community School.
6. Traffic calming measures along the length of Fountain Street.
7. Wider footpaths along the length of Fountain Street.
8. Oppose the planned signalisation of the Lawrence Street/Fountain Street intersection.