



19 June 2024

Sorell Active Transport Strategy

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Sorell Active Transport Strategy. It's a well-written document that responds to community needs and concerns by providing practical solutions to getting around the municipality.

Prioritising projects and creating a timeline is good practice for helping the council plan its workload and funding allocations and communicating with the community about what will be delivered and when.

The cycling projects that are identified make sense as Dodges Ferry and Midway Point are both close enough to Sorell for riding to be a popular choice, especially with an e-bike. They are also significant residential areas, with catchments that may want to use the services in Sorell or attend work or education opportunities.

Such infrastructure should meet the All Ages and Abilities standard of either being physically separated from traffic or on genuine low-speed, low traffic volume streets to ensure it can be used by everyone in the community. To be useful as transport routes such paths should be well lit and sealed to ensure regular use through winter months and female riders feel safe and comfortable using it on their own.

Desired width of a shared path is a minimum of 3 metres, which should be the goal for planning major routes like connections to Sorell; connections with lower demand areas could be 2.5 metres width if space is an issue. A painted centre line and signage also help with efficient and safe use of a path.

One to three years is a short turnaround time for projects of this length which still need investigation into a final route, land ownership, movement of other assets and detailed designs. It may be a good idea to break down the steps needed for the project to go ahead for better communication with the community, otherwise the council risks raising expectations and disappointing people.

In terms of prioritisation of projects, the connections between Sorell and Dodges Ferry and Midway Point are definitely high priority. Consideration should also be given to connecting schools as quickly as possible. A path between Sorell and Dodges Ferry would connect students in Lewisham to the primary school, but so would a Dodges Ferry–Carlton connection and so that should have a higher priority than its current position in the long-term list.

Once infrastructure is in place or about to be finished, it's a good time to offer rider education and other behaviour change programs to help people feel more confident in attempting to use the new paths. People don't always make the connection that new infrastructure is something they can use, sometimes they have to be guided to that realisation and helped along the way.

Secure bike parking is a key consideration to consider in any active transport network planning. E-bikes are more expensive than standard bikes so owners are reluctant to leave them parked where they may be stolen. There are products on the market that council could install that provide an added layer of security over a standard lock, which can unfortunately be cut by a battery-powered angle grinder. Such bike parking options should be considered in addition to the standard steel hoops that are suitable for short term parking with a good lock. Other elements to implement include good lighting, CCTV coverage and placing bike parking in areas with good passive surveillance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alison Hetherington', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Alison Hetherington

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