

"May sustainable transport systems be at the heart of Adelaide's success as a people-friendly and environmentally responsible city."

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Keswick Creek Open Space Concept Plan

Bike Adelaide wishes to express support for the Keswick Creek Open Space Concept, creating a new walking and cycling link in West Torrens and valuable new public green space. In relation to the consultation of the concept plan, we submit the following feedback for consideration.

Strategic value

Strategically, the Keswick Creek corridor presents a major opportunity to significantly enhance the safety and amenity of walking and cycling infrastructure in West Torrens, which currently has among the highest rates of car ownership per household in South Australia. Improvements like this will improve the livability and accessibility of the area for residents by offering better transport options for people of all ages and abilities without the reliance on a car. Beyond active transport journeys, corridors like this also facilitate decisions to walk to public transport services when the routes are safe, direct and interesting.

Relating to safety and interest, the Concept Plan offers a rare opportunity for the City of West Torrens to develop new open green space, enhance biodiversity, and increase access to nature for residents. This is an exciting opportunity to further enhance liveability and desirability of living in West Torrens through high quality green spaces. The Coastal Path, Mike Turtur Bikeway and Torrens Linear Trail have all strongly demonstrated their high value to the community as linear parks to walk and meet other residents. This will be especially valuable for residents along Keswick Creek who have very low access to nearby parks or green spaces.

The concept relates strongly to the intent of the Lower Brown Hill Creek shared path proposal to create safe and useful east-west active transport corridors. Importantly, the Keswick Creek corridor will begin to link the western suburbs better with the existing (and well-used) Westside Bikeway, and future paths alongside the Torrens-to-Darlington project. Keswick Creek as an active transport route will provide a safe and attractive alternative to the unprotected bike lanes on Sir Donald Bradman Drive, which itself is a major inhibitor to cycling adoption.

Functionally, this corridor will also provide an important link to the growing employment zone at Adelaide Airport which has limited capacity to accommodate ongoing increases in car traffic without significantly compromising the required efficiency and reliability of road-based movements there. We are aware that Tesla, based at Adelaide airport, already has incentives for employees to cycle to work, recognising concentrations of employment create demand problems on roads.

Concept Design Considerations

We wish to posit the following design considerations to maximise the safety, utility and accessibility of the proposed open space development. Overall the design appears to encourage a safe shared environment, allowing good line-of-sight and high green space amenity. The various pavement treatments are likely to encourage relaxed cycling movements consistent with other park pathways.

We note the concept images include bollards at some of the nodes (below). While concept images are indicative only, bollards in shared spaces are extremely contentious in active transport and are often found to create unnecessary hazards for path users. Austroads guidance for some time has been to not install bollards unless a demonstrated hazard exists, which should be recorded in a Traffic Impact Statement. The Austroad guidance stipulates design elements which reduce the risk posed by bollards themselves if used, none of which are indicated in the concept images.

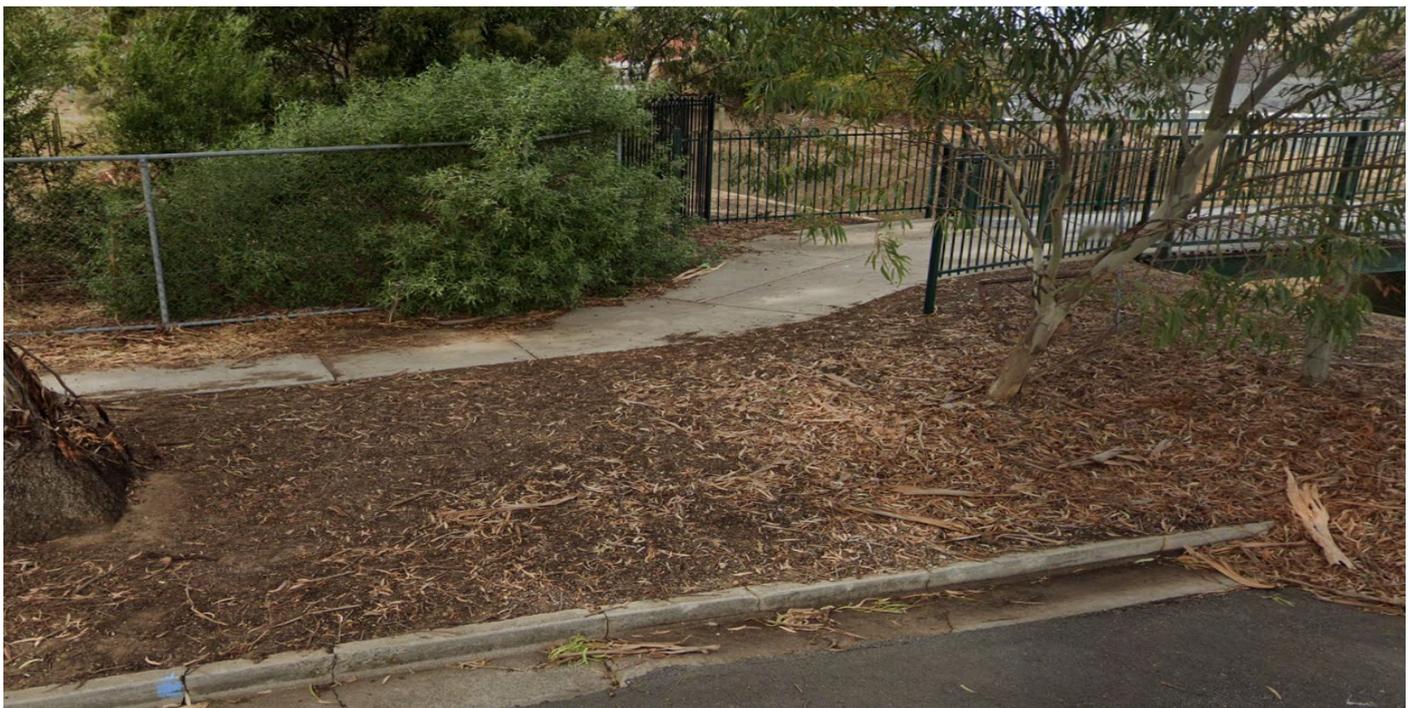
Bollards create clipping hazards with handlebars, pedals and panniers. International evidence demonstrates bollard collisions cause cyclist injuries including death. Bollards in the centre of paths, or narrowing paths, along Little Para River trail in the City of Salisbury have been progressively removed to avoid further incidents in that area.

Narrowing of paths to a width that does not allow a cyclist to pass a pedestrian, a runner to pass someone with a pram etc inevitably leads to a conflict point in the path. We advise against the use of bollards along the path where they mostly serve as a hazard to path users. Additionally, frustration at their presence can result in some cyclists choosing to speed up to pass slower path users before the path narrows, creating the effect of a *less* calm and pleasant shared space. We strongly advise against the use of bollards given there is no clear hazard they intend to address and are counterproductive to safe and comfortable shared open space.



Concept image showing node space along path with dark-coloured bollards narrowing path.

The retention of the existing bridge at Wilson St is welcome, however; there is need for minor improvements to enhance the quality of this crossing. On the northern side of the bridge (below), the path kinks and is partially covered by overgrown vegetation. The fencing narrows the approach to the bridge, where the vegetation also makes it difficult to navigate on a bicycle without riding on unstable dirt and tree litter. People with prams or wheelchairs similarly must leave the sealed path in order to reach the bridge. The state of the path and its extant narrowness make it a difficult space to share, especially for cyclists, prams and mobility aid users which require comfortably wide and stable surfaces.



Northern portal to Wilson St bridge over Keswick Creek.

Contributing to the limited utility of the path is the lack of a kerb ramp (above) which would allow cyclists to immediately exit the path on the dead-end road and keep the path clear for other path users. The nearest ramp (below) is 45m north of the bridge at an access gate opposite Poynton St. Ideally, a new kerb ramp and path extension would be installed at the far end of Wilson St to access the bridge directly, along with widening the fencing approaching the bridge to allow safer and smoother access between the kerb ramp and the bridge.



Wilson St eastern footpath on approach to bridge over Keswick Creek.

Noting the potential for increasing access for locals to high quality open green spaces, new access bridges over Keswick Creek at Spencer and Turner Streets should be considered as part of the overall design. This increases the permeability of local streets, making it easier for residents to have safe and pleasant access to amenities such as Cowandilla Primary School and Hamra Centre Library.

The eastern exit point of the path onto Brooker Tce (below) would need a crossing installation. Preferably this would be a zebra or wombat crossing. Noting that cyclists travelling north or south from Brooker would also need to cross here to enter or exit the path back on the road at Brooker Tce. Currently there are no kerb ramps on the eastern side of Brooker Tce that would allow an accessible crossing for all users. It is worth noting that SA Government datasets indicate nine crashes (2018-22) near the two roundabouts north and south of the Keswick Ck/Brooker Tce junction, indicating that motorist behaviour in this area would warrant considering a safe pedestrian-priority crossing to further calm traffic, noting that Brooker Tce is a well-known motorist rat-run.



Brooker Tce over Keswick Creek looking south showing an existing ramp on the western side (right) and no ramp on the eastern side (left).

The Marion Rd environment (below) is particularly hostile to anyone outside of a car, with a large, heavily used 60kph road and median turn lane for every side street. A pedestrian automated crossing (PAC) should be considered on Marion Rd (below) to facilitate direct access into and out of the Keswick Creek corridor, noting there are existing PACs 180m north and 370m south from the Keswick Creek connection to Marion Rd. While there may be some concerns about PACs on this busy road being too close together, it is important to point out that the PAC to the north of the creek is only 130m from the next crossing at Sir Donald Bradman Dr. Between Lane St and Press Ave, 25 crashes are recorded (2018-22), one third of which included 2 pedestrian and 5 cyclist casualties, most of which were caused by motorists hitting those people as they drove into sideroads. This indicates that the road environment here is not conducive to a safe place for pedestrians or cyclists and a PAC would be necessary to ensure safe access to the pathway.

The PAC would likely require the removal of the right turn lane into Ralph St, noting that there is another turn lane into Trennery St only 100m further south, followed by another into Knight St only another 100m south. Access for motorists is already of such a high order with extremely limited opportunities for other road users by comparison. It would be unreasonable to expect the vast majority of cyclists to attempt a road crossing from across Marion Rd using one of these turning lanes given traffic speeds and volume.



Marion Rd over Keswick Creek looking south showing no existing crossings, and road environment barriers for non-motorists.

We wish to express our support for the concept given the extant lack of safe east-west active transport corridors in West Torrens, and the opportunities for greening, social and cultural space. We trust that our feedback will be given appropriate consideration.

Regards,

David Elliott, Chair
