

January 2024

SU9623 – Proposed Improvements on Parklands Avenue

Foreword

Better Streets for Lane Cove is a not-for-profit association of community members that champions the cause of better streets within and around Lane Cove. Our vision is for safe, healthy, people-centred, and climate-friendly streets that are accessible to all and provide more options to move around safely and enjoyably. Better Streets for Lane Cove was founded in 2023 by a group of residents passionate about better streets. Further information is available at www.betterstreetsforlanecove.org

Feedback

Better Streets for Lane Cove welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed road environment changes on Parklands Avenue. We generally prefer option 1 at location 1, however we strongly believe curb extensions and zebra crossings would be better than the proposed refuge islands.

Context and key issues

The intersection of Parklands Avenue, Landers Road, and Kara Street provides the primary gateway to the Lane Cove North neighbourhood and sets the expectation for the road environment and driver behaviour beyond. The intersection is also located on key pedestrian desire lines near the crossing of Epping Road and attracts a large number of pedestrians and cyclists, including school children. There is also a daycare centre located directly on the intersection, which presents a number place and access issues. On-street parking and landscaping provide important access and amenity features, but also a safety buffer for the daycare.

The proposal mentions the number of vehicles making U-turns in Parklands Avenue as a safety issue for vehicles and pedestrians. While the risk of serious injury or death to drivers is relatively low, we agree there are significant pedestrian safety and access issues in the area. Applying a safe systems approach, the safety of pedestrians and the daycare centre should be top priorities at this location.

In addition to the safety issues there are other amenity and performance issues. There are currently no curb ramps to cross Parklands Avenue, making it difficult for parents with prams, children, and less mobile people to cross the street. Vehicles generally travel at unsafe speeds, well above the recommended 30km/h for streets shared with people walking and cycling¹, and drivers typically fail to give way to pedestrians when turning². Parklands Road is also a bike route³, however traversing the area near Epping Road is daunting for low-skilled and low-confidence riders. Riding in mixed traffic,

¹ TfNSW TD 00030:2023 NSW Speed Zoning Standard 2023, p15

² ROAD RULES 2014 - REG 72, REG 73 Giving way at intersections

³ Lane Cove Bicycle Plan, p40

queued cars, and through the large signalised intersection is intimidating, difficult, and unattractive. This area presents a significant gap in the active transport network that needs to be addressed.

Providing integrate transport networks, encouraging more people to choose active transport, and improving our public domain are key priorities for Lane Cove Council^{4,5}. This project presents several opportunities to make walking and cycling safer and more attractive, and improve the public domain through paving, lighting, and landscape improvements.

There are also broader network issues in the area, with rat-running traffic and property access issues for residents on Epping Road. Changes at this location must also consider its potential impact and alignment with the Lane Cove North speed zone reduction proposal.

Location 1

We believe option 2, the roundabout, is unacceptable as it prioritises rat-running traffic turning from Landers Road into Parklands Avenue, would encourage more traffic to make U-turns from Epping Road, legally prioritises vehicles over pedestrians⁶, maintains excessively large curb radii, and potentially increases the safety risk to the childcare centre. This option does not present a desirable network outcome, pedestrian safety outcome, place outcome, or provide a sufficient gateway treatment for vehicles entering the precinct. This option generally creates a more hostile road environment, is uninviting to people walking and cycling, and doesn't align with the goals and objectives of the Lane Cove Community Strategic Plan, Sustainability Action Plan, and Bike Plan.

While the roundabout option is not supported from a network perspective, we recognise it could be improved with zebra crossings to improve pedestrian amenity and safety, and raised with a brick surface to create a gateway feature and vertical deflection to slow vehicles. See example below.



Example of a raised intersection with roundabout, Wilson Street Eveleigh

Option 1, refuge island, is preferred to the roundabout as it doesn't prioritise rat running traffic, is less likely to attract turning traffic from Epping Road, and the raised platform design provides a better gateway feature. However, we believe this option could also be improved with curb extension, zebra crossings, bicycle access, and a separate U-turn facility at Nundah Street. See sketch and details below.

⁴ Liveable Lane Cove 2035, p30, p32,

⁵ Lane Cove Sustainability Action Plan, p38

⁶ ROAD RULES 2014 - REG 72, Giving way at intersections



Sketch of revised layout with zebra crossings, curb extensions and shared path to Epping Road.

We recommend the refuge islands be replaced with curb extensions to narrow the intersection. This would reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians, retain on-street parking, limit the space available for illegal U-turns, and provide opportunities for landscaping improvements and placemaking.

The pedestrian crossings should be improved with zebra crossings on the primary desire lines, these are the southern and western legs of the intersection. Zebra crossings would reinforce road rule 72 and make the intersection far more comfortable and inviting for people walking, while encourage more sustainable travel choices.



Refuge islands are uncomfortable and less attractive to people walking, Mowbray Road



Raised intersections and crossings are more comfortable and attractive to people walking, Wilson Street Eveleigh

A shared path along Parklands Avenue between Landers Road and Epping Road would also address a significant gap in the bike network and make riding to the Lane Cove Village far more appealing for residents in Lane Cove North. The shared path could be accessed via a widened pedestrian crossing on the southern leg to accommodate a bike path.

The intersection could also be improved with brick paving to visually differentiate the raised intersection area. The small size and scale of brick pavers reinforces the desired slow-speed road environment and improves the gateway feature between road environments. The brick paving combined with landscaping within the curb extensions could create an iconic entry to the Lane Cove North neighbourhood.

Having prevented illegal U-turns at Landers Road a mini roundabout at Numdah Street could provide a safe turning facility. A roundabout at this location is more suitable as it doesn't prioritise rat-running traffic from Landers Road, it's more remote from Epping Road and less likely to attract turning traffic, and there are no pedestrian desire lines crossing Parklands Avenue or Nundah Street at this location. A mini roundabout layout should fit within the existing curbs and may only require minor changes to on-street parking, and is suitable for buses and other large vehicles as they can drive over the central island⁷.



Sketch of mini roundabout layout at Parklands Avenue/Nunda Street to facilitate safe U-turns



Concept image of a mini roundabout at Parklands Avenue/Nunda Street

⁷ ROAD RULES 2014 - REG 115(3)

Location 2

We support both options 1 and 2 as they prevent illegal U-turns near the intersection of Epping Road, and turning at driveways poses little safety risk to people walking, cycling or driving.

We suggest the decision to prevent turns at the driveways should be a matter for the residents and we hope their feedback is given the greatest consideration.

Other examples of similar road treatments

Below are examples of curb extensions used to retain on-street parking and a mini roundabout providing a safe U-turn facility.



Curb extensions and parking at a pedestrian crossing, West Street North Sydney



Mini roundabout U-turn facility, [Salisbury Road, Camperdown](#)