

Concept Plan Feedback Summary Report: Waverley Rail Trail upgrade, between Jordanville and Mount Waverley stations

Executive Summary

This report summarises the community engagement feedback received for the proposed capital works project to construct the missing section of the Waverley Rail Trail, between Jordanville and Mount Waverley stations.

The project aims to create a shared path for cyclists and pedestrians, improving connectivity and safety along the rail corridor. Council has received funding from the Victorian Government to build a shared path, connecting Jordanville and Mount Waverley stations. The shared path will be located along the railway line (north) side of Windsor Avenue on Council's nature strip and railway land managed by Metro Trains Melbourne.

The project includes following features:

- A 3.0 metre wide shared path for walkers and bike riders on the railway (north) side of Windsor Avenue
- Minimised tree removal, by locating the path between trees and the railway line
- Lighting every 30 to 40 metres
- Fencing along the railway line
- Additional safety measures at driveways and road crossings.

Construction of the shared path is expected to begin in mid-2025, subject to funding and approvals.

The key themes of feedback are outlined below and will be discussed in this report.

1. Safety concerns:

- Multiple concerns were raised about the safety of the Alvie Road crossing, particularly due to blind spots under the railway bridge. Suggestions included installing mirrors, traffic lights, or even a pedestrian/cyclist bridge to improve visibility and safety.
- Concerns were also raised about the trail ending at Arthurson Street, which is seen as unsafe due to traffic and parking issues. Many respondents suggested rerouting the trail through the Mount Waverley Station car park for better connectivity and safety.
- There were suggestions to separate cyclists and pedestrians to reduce conflicts and improve safety.

2. Connectivity and design concerns:

- Many respondents questioned the trail ending abruptly at Arthurson Street without a clear connection to the existing trail on the other side of Mount Waverley Station. Suggestions included extending the trail through the railway car park or aligning it with existing paths.
- There were also concerns that cyclists would likely bypass the loop trail on the south side of the 'big tree' opposite the Jordanville Station platform, leading to potential conflicts with pedestrians.

3. Environmental concerns:

- Respondents were concerned about the removal of mature trees and requested that tree removal be further minimised. Suggestions included using boardwalks to protect tree roots and planting indigenous trees to replace any that are removed.
- There were also requests for more greenery and landscaping along the trail to enhance its aesthetic appeal and provide shade.

4. Infrastructure improvements:

- Requests for improved lighting and amenities such as drinking fountains, bins and exercise equipment.
- Some respondents also suggested to improve signage at key junctions like at Jordanville Station and Stephenson's Road.

Summary of Feedback

Methods of engagement and stakeholders

The consultation period for this engagement ran from **3 February to 9 March 2025**.

We received 78 responses via our online survey, and nine responses from residents via email, phone, mail and in person.

The key stakeholders targeted included residents living near the proposed trail, cyclists, walkers, and local community groups. Methods used to engage these stakeholders included:

- Council's internal eBulletin
- Monash Bulletin
- Shape Monash project page
- a postcard drop to residents within a 200m radius of the proposed trail
- On-site signage for local residents and regular users.

Key themes and Council responses

1. Safety concerns:

- **Alvie Road intersection:** Due to road geometry and space constraints at this location, traditional raised priority crossing treatments are not feasible. Instead, we will implement slow-treatment measures, including road humps, improved line marking, additional signage, and upgraded lighting to enhance visibility and safety for all users. Other options, such as convex mirrors, were considered but were found to be less effective in this context.
- **Trail endpoint at Carmel Avenue:** Based on community feedback, we have reconsidered the endpoint. The trail will now terminate at Carmel Avenue, west of the VicTrack commuter carpark entrance. We explored the possibility of directing pedestrians and cyclists through the carpark with VicTrack and Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM); however, this was deemed unsafe due to potential conflicts with vehicles. Instead, a ramp access will be provided at the endpoint, allowing cyclists to safely transition onto the street. Bike sharrow line markings will also be installed to guide cyclists along a preferred route.

Council does not have authority to undertake works in the station car park and agrees that the most desirable path alignment should go through it. We will advocate to the Victorian Government for a dedicated path connection to be provided as part of any future upgrades to Mount Waverley railway station.

- **Pedestrian and cyclist separation:** While we recognise the benefits of separating cyclists and pedestrians, this would require additional open space, resulting in significant tree removal. In some areas, such as outside Jordanville Station, separation is not feasible due to space constraints. To mitigate conflicts, we will enhance signage and line marking to better improve safety for all shared user path users where possible.

2. Connectivity and design concerns:

- **Trail continuation and connection to Mount Waverley Station:** We explored the option of extending the trail through the VicTrack commuter carpark but were advised that this would create safety risks due to pedestrian and cyclist interactions with vehicles. Also, a 3m wide off-road shared path through the surrounding residential area is not feasible, as it would require significant tree removal and extensive civil works that do not align with the street environment. To ensure cyclists have a safe and continuous route, we will implement bike sharrow line markings to indicate a preferred cycling route via local streets leading to Mount Waverley Station. Additionally, we will assess opportunities to improve wayfinding signage to better guide cyclists and pedestrians to their destinations.

Council does not have authority to undertake works in the station car park and agrees that the most desirable path alignment should go through it. We will advocate to the Victorian Government for a dedicated path connection to be provided as part of any future upgrades to Mount Waverley railway station.

- **Jordanville Station loop path design:** The loop in this area was designed to preserve a significant tree. To ensure clear navigation for cyclists, we will install improved line marking and signage to clearly define separate paths for cyclists and pedestrians.

3. Environmental concerns:

- **Tree preservation and replanting:** We have designed the shared path to minimise tree loss. At some locations, the path will be less than 3.0 metres wide to ensure trees are retained. A total of 12 trees are identified for removal, to allow the shared path, fencing and lighting to be installed. Nine trees are located on Council's nature strip and three trees are located on the railway land managed by MTM. The possible removal of the Carmel Avenue section of shared path from the project will allow the retention of three more street trees (with nine (9) trees to be removed in total).

There will also be removal and trimming of shrubs and low tree branches to maintain adequate clearance around and above the shared path. Council's Horticultural Services team has determined that the trees to be removed have low to medium retention value. To offset the impact, 10 new trees will be planted along the nature strip of Windsor Avenue using a mixture of *Eucalyptus globulus* (Blue Gum) and *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (Red Gum).

- **Additional landscaping:** The majority of the trail is within VicTrack's rail reserve, limiting Council's ability to plant additional trees or introduce landscape treatments. However, we will seek opportunities to incorporate greenery along Windsor Avenue and other Council managed areas.

4. Infrastructure improvements:

- **Lighting upgrades:** New lighting will be installed approximately every 30-40m along the trail to improve safety.
- **Wayfinding and signage enhancements:** We will review and upgrade signage at key locations, including Jordanville Station and Stephensons Road, to improve navigation and ensure cyclists and pedestrians can easily follow the designated routes.
- **Additional amenities:** Due to budget and land ownership constraints, infrastructure such as drinking fountains, bins, and exercise equipment is not included in the current project. However, we recognise the value of these amenities and will explore potential future funding opportunities to enhance the trail experience.

Who we heard from

We asked respondents some demographic questions in the online survey, which are summarised below. Feedback from emails and phone calls are not included.

- **What best describes you:** 39 per cent of respondents live close to the proposed trail, while 28 per cent identified as cyclists and 28 per cent as walkers or runners.
- **Will the new path encourage you to walk or ride more:** The majority of respondents (60 per cent) indicated that the new shared path would 'very likely' encourage them to walk or ride more, with an additional 23 per cent stating it would 'somewhat likely' encourage them.
- **Age group:** The majority of respondents were aged 50-64 (36 per cent), followed by 65-74 (21 per cent) and 35-49 (17 per cent).
- **Gender:** 72 per cent of respondents identified as men, and 28 per cent identified as women.
- **Suburb:** The majority of respondents (83 per cent) were from Mount Waverley, with smaller numbers from Glen Waverley, Wheelers Hill, and other nearby suburbs.

Next steps

We appreciate the community's engagement in this project and are committed to delivering a safe, well-connected, and environmentally responsible shared user path. While some suggestions could not be implemented due to external constraints, we have made adjustments to improve safety, connectivity, and user experience based on the feedback received.

If you have further questions or require additional information, please feel free to reach out to Council's Transport team on 9518 3555 or at transport@monash.vic.gov.au