

The other alternative proposed by Council is the “shared” Regional Pathway. Again, at 2.8-3 metres in width is well below the Australian standards of 3.5 to 4 metres.

Rather than give you what was in the view of a Council Officer as my own biased & subjective view let me quote from a recent letter to Marrickville Council from Harold Scruby of the Pedestrian Council of Australia:

Mackay (sic) Park and its central pathway, has long provided an important pedestrian connection between Marrickville South and Tempe/Sydenham. The pathway supports a busy flow of commuters to and from Tempe Railway Station. It also provides a safe and direct route for the many school children and their families who walk to Ferncourt Public School.

The proposed alternative walking routes are circuitous and unsafe. The first, which forces pedestrians to a “shared” regional cycleway along the Cooks River, raises safety concerns because of the volume of cyclists currently using the path at high speeds, and the potential influx of additional pedestrians and small children. It also poses a safety risk at night, and adds additional time to the journey.

The Pedestrian Council’s concerns about shared paths include:

- Lack of enforceable speed limits
- Poor lighting
- No indication in the event of an accident
- No risk analysis

Legal advice provided to the Pedestrian Council confirms that Councils can be liable for injuries & fatalities on shared paths.

It is obvious from the original proposal & from the Submissions Report that no proper risk analysis has been done on the pedestrian options proposed by Council.

There is an alternative.

The central pathway can be preserved while still ensuring the outcomes of enhanced sporting facilities. It will meet the needs of the community & assist in enhancing the use of parking facilities at Tempe so reducing the impact on the local area. Alternative plans have been sent to all Councillors.

Thanks you for the opportunity to speak to you tonight. As I said in my submission to Council:

The redevelopment should not be about winners and losers – Council needs to be seeking outcomes that meet the needs of all.

Justin McGuire gave the following speech to the Technical Services Meeting 11 August 09 regarding the Mackey Park proposed upgrade.

I speak tonight not to oppose, pan or try & discredit the proposal, but to mourn the waste of opportunities:

- The opportunity to redevelop Mackey Park in away that meets the needs of the whole community.
- The opportunity to provide safe compliant access via the traffic lights to Tempe Station & the Concordia Club.
- The opportunity to minimise parking in local streets by encouraging the use of the commuter car park at Tempe Station for weekend visitors.
- The opportunity to preserve several mature healthy trees within the park & to enhance the visual amenity of the area by sensitive siting of structures such as the water tank.
- The opportunity to actually hear the views of the community.

Mackey Park is a highly used facility, particularly in the winter months by organised sport & the local populace who use the playground. It is also used by dog owners, walkers, kite flyers etc. It is bordered by the Cooks River & a regional cycleway on the southern side. On its northern edge is Richardson Crescent that forms a major access point from the southern end of Marrickville to the Princess Highway.

What this proposal will do is skew the usage of the park towards greater year round use by organised sports. It will exacerbate the parking & congestion issues in local streets. The proposal to close off the access at the eastern side of the park will, in fact, deny direct access to the park from the parking at Tempe Station regardless of advisory signs.

I would now like to turn to the issue of walking access. These comments are on the basis of able-bodied pedestrians, however Council does not appear to have considered their compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act in analysing these access options.

Council in its report specifies that access from Carrington Road, Cary Street and Premier Street should either by the “shared regional pathway” on the southern side of the Park or via Richardson Crescent to the north.

Let me first look at Richardsons Crescent. The pathway along Richardsons Crescent is extremely narrow and abuts on a busy road. At regular intervals along its length, power poles & other signage’s encroach onto the path making it impossible to wheel a pram. There is nowhere to go, should a vehicle mount the kerb as has happened in the past near the roundabout at the top end of the park.

At just under 1 metre in many places, it does not meet the relevant industry standard – the AUSTROADS Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice, Part 13 Pedestrians. This guide states that a minimum standard of 1.2 metres is required for road & street situations. This raises significant liability issues for Council.