

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

Adelaide Aquatic Centre - Public Consultation

Bike Adelaide is the leading voice engaging with local governments on cycling for transport issues across Greater Adelaide on an ongoing basis. I would like to present these comments in feedback to the consultation on the relocation of the Adelaide Aquatic Centre thus far.

General Comments

In principle, Bike Adelaide would prefer that a site outside the Park Lands be developed to allow the Park Lands to retain its function and character as a National Heritage Place of unique national and global significance. We share the broad community perspective that consultation on a new site should have included viable options outside the Park Lands, recognising the availability of brownfield sites suitable for redevelopment.

We note that a Community Reference Group (CRG) will be established to consider the feedback from this present consultation on the relocation. We wish for our comments regarding cycling access and paths to be fairly considered by the project team and the CRG alike.

Effects on Park Lands space and vegetation

We further note that the proposed new sites are of comparable size to the existing Aquatic Centre. This implies the project intends to undertake a 'no net loss' approach in relocating the Aquatic Centre. Bike Adelaide is of the perspective that if the Aquatic Centre *must* be built in Pardipardinyilla (Park 2) that there must not be an increase of surface area of hard surfaces. With particular concern towards historical and contemporary transport and land-use practices in Adelaide which fail to mitigate car-dependency, Bike Adelaide especially does not support any increase of Park Land space converted to car parking. We consider this land inconsistent with the purpose of the Park Lands as free, open and accessible public green space.

Consequently, Bike Adelaide urges the formal adoption of a 'no net loss' of Park Lands through this project and a formal commitment to reduce the surface area of car parking in Pardipardinyilla.

With reference to implied no net loss of Park Lands, we also wish to echo concerns over loss of vegetation. We do, however, accept that development often requires vegetation removal. Keeping in mind the special character of the Park Lands, Bike Adelaide expresses its preference for comprehensive exploration of opportunities to vegetate the new site, preferably incorporating as many of the extant mature trees as possible. We note the car park at the current site is furnished with a fair number of semi-mature trees, demonstrating one simple way this can be achieved. Although, we do not consider car park trees to be a sufficient measure to *offset* the conversion of Park Lands to car parking.

With reference to Figure 1, Pardipardinyilla measures approximately 16. ha of which approximately 2.1 ha (12.7%) is occupied by the existing Aquatic Centre and 0.95 ha (5.8%) is car parking. This indicates that the current car park occupies almost half as much space as the Aquatic Centre but nearly 6% of the park's surface area. This is an unsettling figure and highlights concerns that the relocation may increase the footprint of car parking.



Figure 1: Approximate footprints of the Aquatic Centre and car park in Pardipardinyilla (Park 2).

Bike Adelaide subsequently urges that revegetation in Pardipardinyilla take a much more altruistic approach with tree replacement in recognition of the continued use of Park Lands space for development, the ongoing encroachment of development reducing the overall size of the Park Lands, the importance of the Park Lands in providing public green space and natural habitat, the role the Park Lands play in climate action and urban cooling. To achieve this, we strongly recommend the project adopts tree replacement rates of:

- 1.5 new trees per amenity tree removed
- 3 new trees per significant tree removed

We further recommend the implementation of bioswales with diverse native planting throughout the development site to counteract the inevitable hard surfaces in this project.

Effects on walking and cycling facilities

From a cycling perspective, the Aquatic Centre relocation options within Pardipardinyilla sever existing walking and cycling paths, including the Park Lands trail which circumnavigates the entire Park Lands, and paths connecting inner northern suburbs with North Adelaide.

With reference to *Figure 2*, various cycling options can be seen for accessing the current Aquatic Centre. These are colour coded to indicate the overall level of safety and utility of each route where:

- **green** is separated from motor traffic, very low conflict between cyclists and pedestrians
- **yellow** is separated from motor traffic but has some conflict with pedestrians or uses low motor traffic streets
- **orange** is separated from motor traffic but often has conflict with pedestrians or uses motor traffic streets with common conflict with parked and moving motor vehicles
- **red** is roads with no cycling facilities or facilities that are unsafe to use due to motor traffic

This colour-coded map demonstrates there are some good cycling connections to the Aquatic Centre and Pardipardinyilla but these are hampered by poor connections *into* the park from Prospect, Fitzroy Gardens, Medindie and Ovingham. With the exception of Braund Ave which is a City of Prospect designated bicycle route, there are no safe approaches to the Aquatic Centre by bicycle from the North. This is due to the separated paths terminating at Park, Fitzroy and Robe Tce and being separated from the north by very wide roads and intersections with high vehicle volumes and speeds. Access is further made difficult by long wait times and poor crossing connections at several intersections (eg Park Tce/Torrens Rd, O'Connell St/Main North Rd). This low amenity amplifies the danger of accessing the area by bike or by foot.

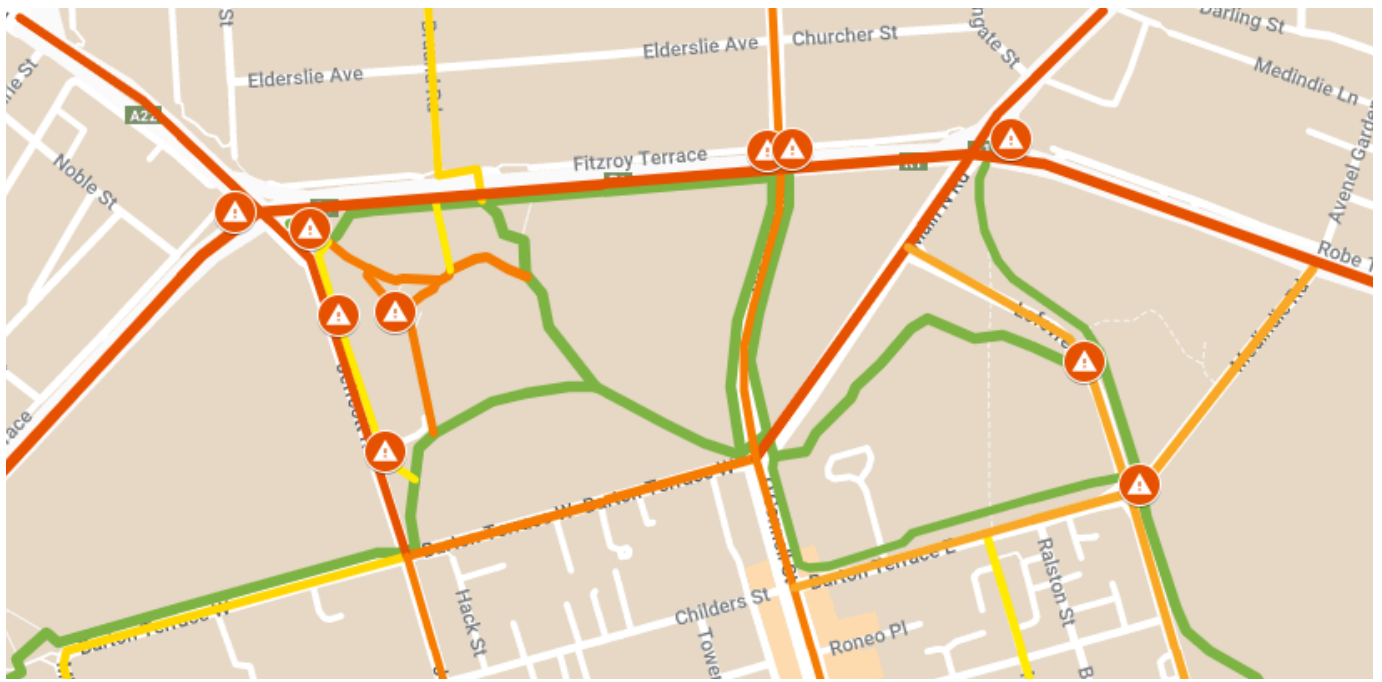


Figure 2: Pardipardinyilla (Park 2) and surrounding area with cycling routes and conflict points

The map indicates several on-road routes in red which very few cyclists use due to the motor vehicle speeds and volumes and the lack of on-road bike facilities or safe ways to traverse intersections. Several more routes in orange intersect these red routes, highlighting poor connectivity, relying on streets with high risk of conflict with motorists on narrow 50kph roads, motorists entering and pulling out of car parking spaces and with motorists suddenly opening car doors.

Figure 2 further highlights the locations of several well known conflict points along the Park/Fitzroy/Robe Tce corridor. Most of these conflict points are at left-hand slip lanes, through which motorists seldom slow down or give way to those crossing. This poses a significant disincentive to people who may walk or cycle to the Aquatic Centre through frequent, negligent motorist behavior inherent to slip lanes.

Of note are several conflict points where pedestrians and cyclists must interact with motorists. Two such spots are the current Aquatic Centre carpark entrance and exit on Jeffcott St. Motorists entering often do so with little warning and with little regard for path users about to or already in the process of crossing. Motorists exiting the carpark often queue over the path, blocking path users from safely crossing. As a result of there being two exit lanes, motorists will seldom look for path users before pulling out or moving forward in the queue (as path users navigate the blocked crossing).

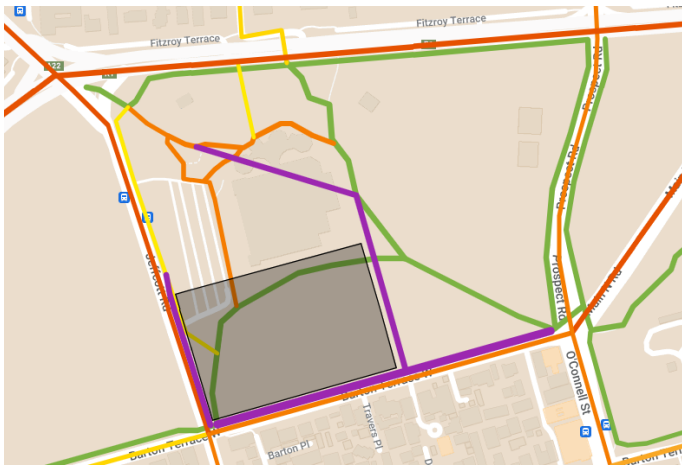
Opportunities for enhanced cycling access

The overall lack of safe approaches emphasises the importance of retaining and realigning the existing paths within Pardipardinyilla to encourage cycling to the Aquatic Centre. This would have the benefit of helping alleviate demand on car parking space, reduce use of and the need for on-street parking and improve the options for families and young people to access the Centre without a car at all.

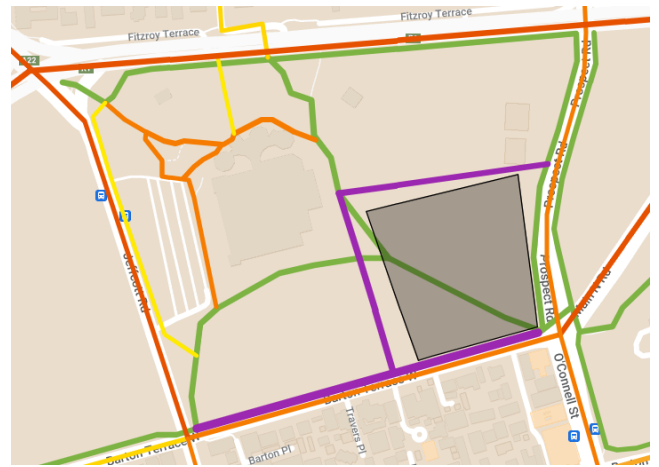
Each relocation option provides several opportunities for new shared-use paths and connections between new and existing paths, demonstrated in the following maps. Each of the three following maps shows the existing paths, the proposed Aquatic Centre sites (in black) and potential new path connections (in purple). In addition to these potential new paths, we strongly recommend that where paths cross a driveway into the Aquatic

Centre, it is made as a raised wombat crossing, affording priority to path users. This can positively affect access and safety for patrons but also ensure the path is able to flow freely when motorists are queuing to exit.

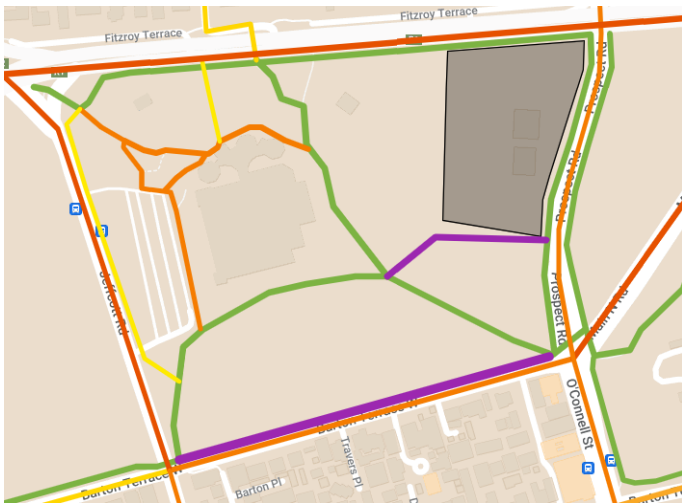
Option 1



Option 2



Option 3



In closing, whilst we prefer the site to be returned to open park lands free of car parking, we acknowledge the Aquatic Centre is an important aspect of Adelaide's social life and adds its own character to Pardipardinyila. We see potential for several fantastic improvements for active transport as part of this project that can help reduce the need for car parking in the Park lands and we have identified several opportunities for improving safety and access for cycling to the Aquatic Centre. We know that this can be achieved easily and can only contribute to the liveability and vibrancy of our city and to the future health of our open green spaces.

I trust you will give these comments due consideration.

Regards,

David Elliott, Chair
