

JULY 2019

Draft Cycling Strategy 2019 – 2024

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Improving safety for people on bikes	4
Managing the impacts of growth.....	5
Improving community health & wellbeing	7
Prosperity	8
Community input	9
The strategy	12
A change in approach	12
Initiative 1: safer cycling on Chapel Street	13
Initiative 2: building on the success of ‘paths for everyone’	20
Initiative 3: support State investment in strategic infrastructure.....	22
What else will Council do?	22
Information and recommendations made in this report	22
Supplementary material that informed the Strategy (including Technical Appendix)	23
Context.....	23
Chapel ReVision	28
Lessons from previous Stonnington Cycling Strategy	29
Development of Actions	29
In detail, initiative 1: safer cycling on Chapel Street	30
In detail, initiative 2: build on the strength of the shared path network.....	41
In detail, initiative 3: support state investment in cycling	43

Introduction

Stonnington's population is expected to grow by 25,000 people over the next two decades. This growth will provide new opportunities and bring more people to local businesses and services, but it needs to be handled in a way which preserves the liveability of the community.

Increasingly, people are frustrated by Melbourne's congested roads. Yet in Stonnington, over 40 per cent of trips under two kilometres are made by car. However, in some parts of Stonnington (such as near Chapel Street), almost half of households (46%) do not own a car.

Policy at all levels supports getting more people cycling, but progress has been very slow, with only 1 in 30 Stonnington residents choosing to cycle to work. This is in part due to the fact that one person per month on average is hospitalised while riding a bike within the municipality.

The community has asked for better road infrastructure, including facilities which make cycling safer and more comfortable. The current design of the road network limits the ability for a wide range of people to safely access the nearby businesses and services they need by bicycle.

Part of the effectiveness of the Stonnington Cycling Strategy (the strategy) is recognising things that Council will do, but also won't do, over the next five years to ensure resources are focussed on delivering the actions that are committed, and that realistic outcomes can be achieved.

Considering the key challenges facing Stonnington both now and into the future, the aim of this five-year strategy is to ***increase the number of people cycling in Stonnington, with a focus on improving safety.***

Lessons from implementation of previous strategies is that a list of actions which is too aspirational, or commits to do too many things, leaves the difficult major issues unresolved. That is, 'doing everything' is not a strategy. The evidence-base supporting this strategy suggests that if we focus on tackling three major issues, we will have greater impact. Therefore, the strategy specifically targets:

1. Safer cycling along the Chapel Street corridor
2. Paths which everyone can feel comfortable using
3. Delivery of the Strategic Cycling Corridors through state investment

These are not easy actions, and will require resources, listening and a commitment to our aim.

The challenges

Improving safety for people on bikes

It is unsafe to cycle in key areas of Stonnington

People riding bikes in Stonnington to many key locations are required to share road space with vehicle traffic. There has been a total of almost 1,400 crashes in Stonnington over the past five years, of which almost one in five involved a person riding a bike – more than one bike crash every week on average. Of these crashes, two people were killed while riding their bikes, including a tragic death last year in the bike lane on Chapel Street, and 68 crashes resulted in a serious injury which required hospitalisation – about one per month on average.¹

The five most frequent causes of crashes involving cyclists in the last five years in Stonnington include:

1. Car door opened onto bike path – 85 crashes
2. Vehicle & bike travelling in opposite directions, and one vehicle turning right across the path of the other – 59 crashes
3. Out of control on carriageway – 26 crashes
4. Side swiped by a vehicle making left turn – 17 crashes
5. Vehicles travelling in perpendicular directions (at right angles to each other) at an intersection – 13 crashes

Of those crashes involving cyclists which result in serious injury or death, the top three causes include:

1. Vehicle & bike travelling in opposite directions, and one vehicle turning right across the path of the other – 17 incidents resulting in serious injury or death
2. Car door opened onto bike path – 15 incidents resulting in serious injury or death
3. Out of control on carriageway – 12 incidents resulting in serious injury or death

Particular issues raised by people who currently, or want to, ride bikes include:²

- Risk of dooring, particularly along Chapel Street
- Drivers not giving enough space to vulnerable road users
- Absence of bicycle facilities in some locations, including 'disappearing' lanes or cars parking in bike lanes outside of clearway times
- Poor lane delineation on approach to intersections, with people cycling required to merge with traffic
- Missing or circuitous crossings across major roads
- Car parking manoeuvres creating dangerous conditions
- Drivers failing to check for people cycling or passing too close for comfort
- Pedestrians stepping into bicycle lanes, including from between parked cars
- Poor maintenance, uneven surfaces or assets creating hazards

² [BikeSpot](#) and Stonnington Cycling Strategy Survey

There is significant overrepresentation of crashes occurring on Chapel Street. This reflects both the higher volume of people riding to and through the area, as well as significant potential to improve conditions for bike riders.

There is also a perception that people riding bikes are 'less than human'. A recent Monash University study found that of more than 400 respondents, 55 per cent of non-cyclists and 30 per cent of cyclists saw people on bikes as 'less than human'. This can have implications for the safety of people on bicycles – the same study found that 17 per cent said they had used their car to deliberately block a bike rider, 11 per cent had intentionally driven close to a bike rider and 9 per cent had used their car to cut off a bike rider.³ People who are driving cars are often careless when it comes to cyclist safety.

In this context, it is not acceptable to treat the safety of bike riders as a 'nice to have', or 'if there's room'. Infrastructure needs to be provided as nobody should die or be seriously injured on their way to school, the shops or home from work, including those travelling by bike. Council has committed to ensuring that "the greatest emphasis is placed on protecting those who are most vulnerable when using Stonnington's roads".⁴ This requires a shift to prioritising safety and human life over other road functions, like free on-street car parking. Creating safer cycling environments will encourage more people to ride bikes and enable those already cycling to ride more comfortably and confidently. These behaviours will help normalise cycling and change perceptions of people on bikes, building a positive cycle of safety.

It is recognised that cyclists are also at fault on occasion, such as failing to observe controls or cycling too quickly for conditions, particularly on shared paths with pedestrians. The responsibility to create a safer environment is shared amongst all road and path users.

Managing the impacts of growth

Melbourne is forecast to reach a population of eight million by 2051 and become the most populous city in Australia in the coming decades.⁵

As an inner-city region with good access to public transport, jobs, education and services, Stonnington will have a role to play in accommodating a share of this growth, with the municipality's population expected to grow by 25,000 over the next two decades.⁶

In particular, areas in the west of Stonnington (including South Yarra, Windsor and Prahran) are continuing to transform – becoming home to people who seek an 'big-city' lifestyle, including living close to their daily needs and high-frequency public transport. Proximity to jobs and opportunities in the CBD and other inner-city areas, as well as attractiveness of shops and services along Chapel Street, are key factors for people to choose to travel more by bicycle in the west of Stonnington.

³ Delbosc, A., Naznin, F., Haslam N. & Haworth, N., 'Dehumanisation of cyclists predicts self-reported aggressive behaviour toward them: A Pilot Study', as referenced in '[Face Off – Cyclists not human enough for drivers: study](#)', Monash University, March 2019

⁴ [Draft Stonnington 'Towards Zero' Road Safety Strategy](#)

⁵ Victoria in Future (VIF) 2016

⁶ Stonnington Council Plan

By comparison, areas within the centre of Stonnington and towards the eastern end, including Glen Iris and Malvern East, reflect more traditional suburban Melbourne, with lower density development and a higher car use, including for trips to work. Despite this, greater use of e-bikes has the potential to enable more people to travel further by bicycle. Linking Stonnington through safe connections will be pivotal in supporting this uplift.

Increased density can bring more people to support local shops and services, attract benefits from businesses and workers being located close together ('agglomeration') and support the viability of investment in new infrastructure.⁷ As the area evolves, new developments and infrastructure can also bring more destinations and facilities for everyone to enjoy. However, this growth will also need to be accommodated in a way which makes the most of existing assets and preserves Stonnington as a great place to live.

The frustration of congestion and poor reliability of travel

As population increases, Council (and other authorities) have a role in providing infrastructure which supports this growth, including transport infrastructure. The road network in Stonnington is currently at capacity in many locations and over various times of the day - including Toorak Road, High Street and Williams Road. Other areas, including Chapel Street, are also nearing capacity in some locations.⁸ When roads reach their capacity, the likelihood of delays increases and trips become less reliable – for example, a trip that might take 30 minutes on one day could take more than an hour the next. Research shows Stonnington has amongst the worst road travel reliability in Melbourne.⁸

Delays and uncertainty affect not only people who are driving, but also bus and tram services which mix with traffic, such as along Chapel Street and High Street. It can also introduce costs in time and fuel and generate carbon emissions and air pollution, which affect everyone.

Continuing to rely on car travel to cater for growth will continue to increase road congestion. There is little room for wider roads or intersections and improving vehicle capacity is not consistent with an inclusive and healthy community. Delivering changes which make it quicker or easier to drive (such as removing parking for car lanes or building more off-street car parking) encourage even more people to travel by car (including from surrounding areas), which further increases congestion and delays. These changes also make more sustainable modes (such as walking, cycling and public transport) less attractive or competitive.

Policy Context

These challenges are not new and to counteract them Council committed to our Sustainable Transport Policy in 2008. This plan prioritised walking, cycling and public transport over vehicle travel and aimed to 'reduce car dependence and to minimise associated impacts'.⁹ Our current Council Plan (2017-21) reaffirms our commitment to a "cleaner, safer and better environment for current and future generations", including by encouraging and enabling use of sustainable transport options across the city.¹⁰

⁷ Infrastructure Victoria, [Growing Victoria's Potential](#)

⁸ Infrastructure Victoria, Five Year Focus. Refer Technical Appendix for more detail.

⁹ [Stonnington Sustainable Transport Policy](#)

¹⁰ [Stonnington Council Plan 2017-21: Snapshot](#)

As such, our focus is to provide measures which improve the safety and reliability of public transport, walking and cycling so that these modes become 'the obvious choice' over car travel, particularly for shorter trips. It is recognised that a small group of people will still need to travel by car for various reasons (for example, people with limited mobility or to shift bulky goods). By improving the attractiveness of walking, cycling and public transport, more people will feel safe and comfortable to leave the keys at home and retain the limited road space for those who truly need to drive.

Improving community health & wellbeing

A healthy city

Australians are living longer than ever before, but half of us are living with at least one chronic health condition¹¹. Chronic conditions are Australia's leading cause of ill health and have serious implications for the health system. Many of these chronic conditions are linked to lifestyle factors such as insufficient physical activity, but there are signs of positive behaviour changes, including among young Australians.

People need at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise (jogging, cycling) five times a week to realise the health benefits of physical activity.¹² Almost half of Australian adults do not meet these requirements. More than 60 per cent of Australian adults and 25 per cent of Australian children are overweight or obese, and coronary heart disease continues to be the nation's single greatest cause of death.¹³ In a city where everyone is increasingly 'time poor', swapping to more active modes of travel to work, school or the shops is an easy way to increase physical exercise every day and decrease risk factors associated with major health issues.

These health challenges are compounded by a lack of areas for active or passive recreation and outdoor activities in our municipality. Stonnington has the second lowest amount of open space of any Council area in Victoria, at approximately 7 per cent of land area. As population continues to grow and demand for open space and recreational opportunities increases, public space will need to be used effectively and efficiently to provide opportunities for exercise and recreation. Improving access to paths where a range of users feel comfortable will help capitalise on existing infrastructure and natural assets.

Impacts on the environment

The consequences of climate change are becoming more evident, with warmer weather and a number of 'record' high temperatures and heatwaves. More frequent and more intense fluctuations in weather and increasingly severe weather events including droughts, fires, storms and floods may impact productivity, and lead to more hot-weather 'stop work' events that disrupt transport and electricity supplies.¹⁴

¹¹ Australia's health 2018: in brief, 20 June 2018

¹² ['Employee Health and Active Travel', Government of Western Australia](#)

¹³ [Australia's Health in Brief 2016](#)

¹⁴ ['What are the impacts of climate change?' Australian Academy of Science](#)

Transport and travel in Stonnington accounts for almost one-fifth of overall greenhouse gas emissions in the municipality,¹⁵ consistent with similar data for carbon emissions in Victoria and Australia.^{16,17} Private vehicle travel contributes to these emissions, and so reducing car travel and identifying opportunities to make short trips in other ways (walking or cycling) will help reduce the environmental and health impacts of emissions. For example, 43 per cent of trips less than two kilometres in distance in Stonnington are undertaken by car.¹⁸ With the right measures in place, these trips are within comfortable walking and cycling distance for many.

Prosperity

A shifting landscape for retail and small business

Stonnington's economy supports almost 69,000 jobs and generates a total gross regional product of \$9.5 billion.¹⁹ Retail is the largest industry of employment, with Chapel Street and Chadstone being two of the country's premier shopping destinations. Population growth has also supported the development of restaurants, cafes and bars in shopping strips and an expanding professional sector which leverages strong access and proximity to the CBD.²⁰

However, retailers currently face challenging trading conditions and local retail precincts will need to continue to evolve to meet market needs.²⁰ Online purchasing is changing how people shop for some goods. Studies of other inner-Melbourne shopping strips (in Richmond, St Kilda and Fitzroy) show that local residents account for most of the expenditure, in some cases up to 86 per cent of spending.²¹ Strong residential growth will provide further opportunities for retailers to service the local catchment. Recent evidence from London suggests that a 'healthy' street (as opposed to one that is full of traffic) will see a lower number of empty shops (17%) and an increase in footfall (93%) and spend (40%)²². Evidence from Lygon Street also suggests encouraging access for bicycles and more bike parking is good for business, but this needs to be trialled in Stonnington to see where and how it works.

The Stonnington Economic Development Strategy notes that traffic, congestion and parking availability were regularly raised as concerns by businesses and retail traders. In response, the Strategy emphasises the need to support sustainable transport initiatives as an "imperative" to make sure people can continue to access local businesses and services as population (and vehicle traffic) grows.²⁰

¹⁵ [Stonnington Sustainable Environment Strategy](#)

¹⁶ [Report on Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Victoria](#)

¹⁷ ['What's the Deal with Transport Emissions?', Climate Council](#)

¹⁸ VISTA 2012-16

¹⁹ [Stonnington Economic Profile](#), .id Consulting

²⁰ [Stonnington Economic Development Strategy, 2017 – 2021](#)

²¹ Lee, A. (2008), [What is the economic contribution of cyclists compared to car drivers in inner suburban Melbourne's shopping strips?](#)

Transport for London (2018) The Economic Benefits of Walking and Cycling, tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/economic-benefits-of-walking-and-cycling

Community input


In February 2019, Council asked the community to share their thoughts on cycling in Stonnington to inform the preparation of the cycling strategy. Almost 600 responses were received via the online survey platform, predominantly from people who currently cycle (78%), but also with representation from people who do not ride bikes (22%).

A summary of key findings from the online survey is outlined below. Responses received in other formats (i.e. email) were also considered in preparing this strategy.

<p>Four-in-five (78%) respondents are regular cyclists, riding at least a few times a week, mostly as commuters.</p>		<p>Improved on-road cycle lanes and off-road shared paths are the top two things that would encourage people to cycle more.</p>	<p>Chapel Street is a reoccurring theme from respondents, who find it dangerous to cycle on and therefore opt to avoid it.</p>
	<p>50% feel 'slightly' or 'not at all' safe cycling in Stonnington, with only 9% feeling 'very' or 'extremely' safe.</p>	<p>Nine-in-ten (89%) are supportive of removing parking on main roads to create safer bike lanes.</p>	
<p>The Gardiners Creek and Yarra Trial tracks are positively viewed by many respondents...</p>	<p>...Connectivity and access to bike tracks and across Stonnington could be improved.</p>		<p>Close to two-thirds (62%) are supportive of removing parking on main roads to create more bike parking.</p>

Who we talked to

4-in-5 respondents are 'regular riders' - cycling in or around Stonnington at least a few times a week



Regular cyclist profile:

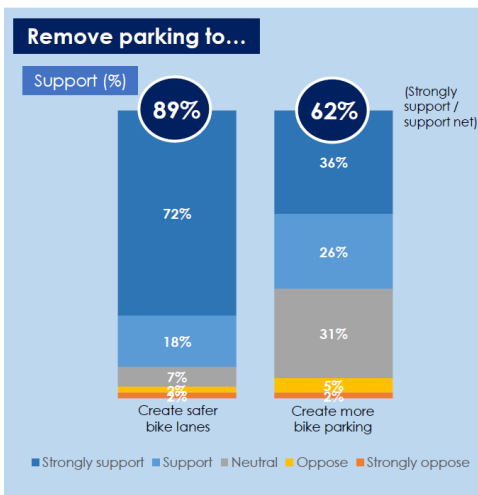
- 58%** 25 to 44 years old
- 59%** Ride for over 30 mins
- 58%** Ride to commute
- 62%** Male
- 73%** Live in Stonnington

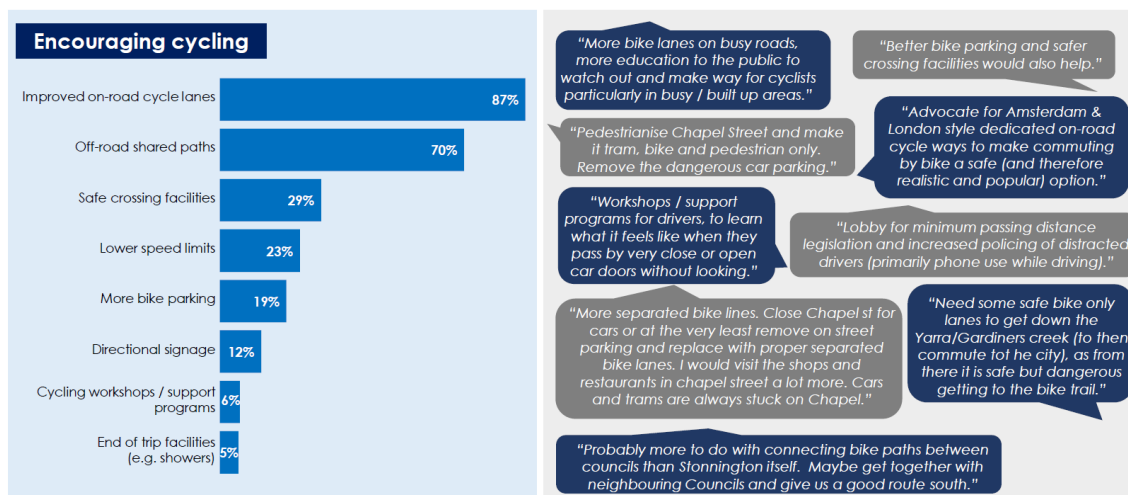
Feeling of safety

There is room for improvement in how safe people feel cycling in Stonnington, with...

50%  Feel **slightly** or **not at all** safe cycling in Stonnington.

A number of people specifically mentioned Chapel Street being dangerous.





In summary the community who responded were:

- cyclists. The cycling community of Stonnington were the majority voice heard during the consultation. The majority took the time to provide constructive input and direction
- very strongly (89%) in favour of removing car parking to create safer bicycle lanes and supportive of removing car parking to provide more bicycle parking (62%)
- keen to see improvements to Chapel Street, as bike riders found it dangerous and therefore avoid cycling there
- wanting improved on-road lanes (87%) and off-road paths (70%) as the two biggest initiatives which would encourage cycling. About a quarter of respondents also said that safe crossing facilities and lower speed limits would also encourage them to cycle (or cycle more).

Some quotes which reflected 'what comes to mind when thinking about cycling in Stonnington' were positive:

- "A convenient way to get around and avoid traffic" / "Easier to get around by bike"
- "Some beautiful leafy paths" / "Some pleasant paths through green spaces"
- "Great opportunities afforded by proximity of Gardiners Creek and Main Yarra off-road bike paths"
- "The Gardiner Creek Trail is amazing. It's so relaxing to ride through on my way to and from work"
- "Cycling along the Yarra River away from traffic is good, but can be difficult for people walking during peak hours"
- "Capital City Trail is great, although some sections are very narrow and unsafe at peak times"

But there were also many sentiments of concern:

- "How lucky I am that most of my journey is on the shared bike path along the river and that I nearly never need to go near Chapel Street"
- "Chapel Street is an incredibly dangerous and scary nightmare where I have almost died many times. It is so unsafe that it stops me from cycling more"
- "Bike lanes/cars are too close to cars" / "Cars don't watch out for you"

- “Disappointed by the lack of safe on-street bicycle lanes and protected intersections”
- “Bikes too fast on Gardiners Creek path”
- “It is extremely dangerous to cycle in Stonnington on High St, Malvern or Toorak Road due to poor or no cycle lanes”
- “Lack of separate cycling lanes (physically separate – not just lines on the road)”
- “On busy roads, I do not feel remotely safe – the risk of ‘dooring’ or being hit feels ever present”
- “I have to ride out in the middle of the lane to avoid the holes”
- “Poor separation of cars and bikes – over 20 year of cycling I have been doored twice and almost doored numerous times as the cycle lanes are narrow and right next to parked cars”
- “Risks of being ‘doored’ in Chapel Street, or being hit by cars pulling out of side streets or parking places”
- “Safety – there seems to be a lot of construction works. Trucks blocking blind spots, rubble and debris on roads, truck doors”
- “Scared about being killed, injured or doored”
- “Street parking leading to dooring accidents on Chapel St Windsor. This happens way too often and is completely avoidable”
- “Stonnington is behind what other councils are doing for cyclists”
- “The most direct ways aren’t the safest”
- “Bike lane marking on Waverley Road to Warrigal Road is a joke. It is too dangerous to cycle with two lanes of traffic”
- “Car drop offs pulling over in the bike lane causing the need to move out into traffic/cross slippery tram tracks.”

Some ideas which would encourage people to cycle more included:

- “More separated bike lanes. Close Chapel Street for cars or at the very least remove on street parking and replace with proper separated bike lanes. I would visit the shops and restaurants in Chapel Street a lot more. Cars and trams are always stuck on Chapel”
- “More bike lanes on busy roads, more education to the public to watch out and make way for cyclists, particularly in busy/built up areas”
- “Need some safe bike only lanes to get down the Yarra/Gardiners Creek) to then commute to the city) as from there it is safe, but dangerous getting to the bike trail”
- “Pedestrianise Chapel Street and make it tram, bike and pedestrian only. Remove the dangerous car parking”

The quotes which provided contrasting or opposing views (including of cyclists) included:

- “Reckless attitude, no respect for pedestrians or motorists, need for bike riders to pay registration fee to allow for identification, clearly defined area without risk to motorists and not having bikes on the right hand side of cars where ‘dooring’ is such high risk - bikes should be completely on the extreme left in a designated lane”
- “They’re ignorant of the road rules, they think they can ride on footpaths, they need to be banned from riding through public parks, rather see cyclists fined for breaking the law and treated as others vehicle users”
- “More bike parking, but car parking spots need not be taken to do so”

The strategy

Considering the key challenges facing Stonnington both now and into the future, the aim of this five-year strategy is to ***increase the number of people cycling in Stonnington, with a focus on improving safety.***

Other benefits, including to the economy, community health and wellbeing and travel reliability, are reaped when more people feel empowered to travel by bike.

The safety challenges for cycling in Stonnington are real, particularly around Chapel Street, and will require focussed intervention to progressively build an environment which is safer and more comfortable for cycling.

This strategy specifically targets three major issues:

1. Safer cycling along the Chapel Street corridor
2. Improving safety and access to paths which everyone can feel comfortable using
3. Supporting state investment in strategic cycling corridors in the municipality

More detail on how these actions were derived can be found in the Technical Appendix.

A change in approach

Lessons from implementation of previous strategies is that a list of actions which is too aspirational, or commits to do too many things, undermines the quality and delivery of the project as a whole. That is, 'doing everything' is not a strategy.

Instead, this strategy is designed to be realistic and flexible as to what can be achieved in its five-year lifespan. For example, consultation, trial and delivery of footpath widening and streetscape improvements for the recent Greville, King & Porter Street Improvement Plan occurred over a period of four years, with five rounds of community engagement.

Part of the effectiveness of the strategy is recognising things that Council will do, but also won't do, over the next five years to ensure resources are focussed on delivering the actions that are committed.

That said, part of this strategy will be about having difficult conversations and making some hard decisions about our priorities going forward.

Initiative 1: safer cycling on Chapel Street

People will likely always want to cycle along and to Chapel Street.

Previous strategies have sought to provide alternative cycling routes to Chapel Street. Despite these efforts, it remains a popular route for cyclists as one of the most direct north-south connections and as a destination in its own right.

Local access by bike is particularly advantageous, as there is a lower susceptibility to delays, greater reliability in travel times and parking is usually free, located close to the front door of the destination and unlimited in time, meaning people can relax and shop or dine at their leisure. People can also travel easily between a number of shops or destinations along Chapel Street by bicycle, even if they are several blocks away, without needing to queue in traffic and circulate for another car park. Various devices make carrying groceries or purchases easier, such as:

- A backpack, saddle bag (under the seat), handlebar basket, rear rack, case or crate for smaller goods
- Pannier bags (hanging from the side of the bike) for carrying more goods, including 'hard shells' which can be lockable and weatherproof
- A large tray on the front or trailer from the back of the bike for carrying larger goods
- An e-cargo bike.

Creating an environment where more people feel comfortable to ride also means people who are currently deterred by congestion or a lack of car parking can choose to cycle to Chapel Street, or some people who do not own a car and live too far to walk can choose to cycle instead. This means that people who need to drive contend with fewer vehicles.

New people moving to Stonnington are likely to want to cycle

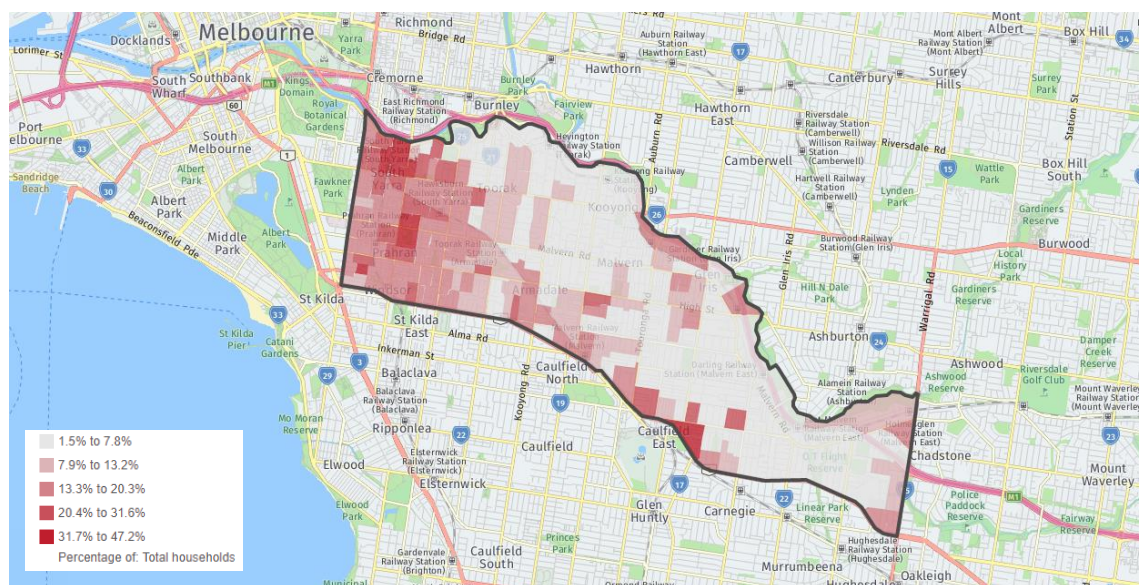
GTA Consultants' analysis of ABS datasets shows that, when compared to other areas, people living near Chapel Street has a higher population density, lower car ownership and feature a young, high-income urbanite market with a high propensity to cycle.²³ The area also provides good opportunities to shop locally and cycle to access wider employment and education in the CBD, Richmond and the St Kilda Road corridor. As population grows, demand for road space and car parking will become increasingly competitive and as a result, people may be more likely to choose alternate ways to travel.

Data shows that the highest proportions of households without a car in Stonnington live in South Yarra, Prahran and Windsor (within cycling distance of Chapel Street). In some of these areas, almost half of households (46%) do not own a car. By failing to enable cyclists to visit safely and comfortably, the design of our road network limits the ability for a catchment of people living nearby to access the businesses and services they need.²⁴

²³ [Profile.ID – Stonnington](#) & GTA Cycle Segmentation Model

²⁴ [Profile.ID – Stonnington](#)

Figure 1: Proportion of Households who do not own a car²⁴



For a number of reasons, cycling along the Chapel Street corridor is not safe or comfortable for many people. Although people don't own a car they still don't cycle.

Chapel Street is relatively narrow yet it carries a mix of different users along its length. Pedestrians, bike riders, scooters, motorcyclists, cars and trams use the corridor both as a thoroughfare and as a destination in its own right. Car parking, taxi zones and loading command the kerbside space and dining, trading, signage, street furniture, bike parking and people movement compete for limited footpath space.

Priority along the corridor is not clearly articulated and as a result, the corridor is conflicted, congested and has poor safety outcomes. For many, this means that travel can be slow and unreliable, with delays for cars and trams across various times of day and on Friday and Saturday nights. This car traffic slows tram services, making it difficult or unreliable for people to access the area by public transport. Put simply, people will find it increasingly difficult to visit Chapel Street by car as population grows and road congestion worsens. Bike riders also feel the squeeze of high traffic volumes, often required to cycle between parked cars and a traffic lane.

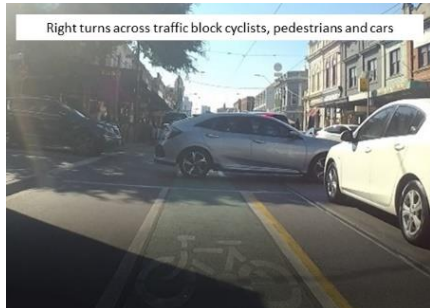
From discussions with the community, it is clear that the Chapel Street corridor continues to face safety risks and access challenges for people riding bikes, reaffirmed by crash statistics and recent deaths.

On-street car parking poses risks to bike riders as people open car doors to enter or exit parked cars, particularly as existing bike lanes are immediately adjacent within the 'dooring zone'. Approximately half of all cyclist crashes on Chapel Street that resulted in a serious injury were due to dooring²⁵. The short-term nature of parking on Chapel Street means that vehicles frequently reverse in, or pull out, of spaces along its length. Some vehicles also



²⁵ City of Stonnington Chapel Street Cycling Review (Corben Consulting, 2019)

partially or fully impede bicycle lanes while parked or to drop off or pick up passengers (including due to size of bays, vehicles and footpath obstacles), forcing people riding bikes to merge into a traffic lane. These central lanes have tram tracks which can trap bicycle wheels and passing vehicles pose a threat to people riding bikes.



Along the corridor, slow-moving or stationary traffic can decrease visibility of people cycling and pose risks to bike riders as people emerge from stationary vehicles in the traffic lane or take the opportunity cross the road while vehicles are stopped, particularly near intersections. Some mid-block crash data can also likely be attributed to vehicles pulling out into bicycle lanes while vehicles are stopped, but bike riders are still moving.

There is a need to make decisions about the use of road space to improve cycling safety. People have died and been seriously injured riding bikes along Chapel Street and this will likely continue unless we work together to address the issue.

Quotes from community:

“Chapel Street is the biggest issue that needs resolving. It is incredibly scary riding up Chapel Street. Car ‘dooring’ is a constant concern. Please help us be safer.”

“A woman died in the Chapel St bike lane last year and I think about it nearly every day.”

“I think Chapel St is THE MOST dangerous part of Melbourne to ride a bike. PLEASE do something.”

What is proposed?

The first action is to progressively deliver a series of measures which start to build a safe space for cyclists and improve access along Chapel Street. The measures would be delivered in partnership with local businesses (e.g. pavement build-outs) to reduce dooring risk, improve local business and trading space, create bike lanes, provide more bicycle parking and reinforce ‘the village feel’.

It is recognised that shifting the way people travel is a big change and a gradual process and so changes to the corridor could be carefully phased to allow time for monitoring, adjustments and input from those that live, work and do business along the corridor.

In the first instance, this includes testing interventions and how they impact on the community, before re-evaluating and delivering the next stage, with adjustments along the way. Running trials is consistent with the state government’s Victorian Cycling Strategy:

“User-centred pilot trials (such as using inexpensive, temporary materials for buffers) are a good way to test and validate proposed design solutions, introduce the public to new road conditions and gather evidence about the preferences of people who cycle for transport.”²⁶

Building on previous successes (Chapel Street outside Jam Factory, Greville Street, Chapel Street near Duke Street), these changes will continue to trial a shift in the use of space on Chapel Street to create a better environment for spending time in the area, including those

²⁶ [Victorian Cycling Strategy](#) v

walking and accessing the area by bicycle. These public spaces will also make the area more attractive, provide more opportunities for outdoor dining and enjoyment of the streetscape and create wider lanes on Chapel Street for bicycles to ride safely and comfortably.

Chapel Street is particularly well-suited as previous studies have indicated there is 'surplus capacity' in nearby off-street car parking facilities, including during peak periods.²⁷ However, parking management would need to be managed holistically to ensure desired outcomes are achieved in nearby residential areas. These projects could complement, or extend, similar projects in other areas of Chapel Street, King Street and Greville Street and are consistent with the strategic direction of the Chapel ReVision.

The trial could be delivered in stages, consistent with the Chapel ReVision, with consultation and adjustments as the project unfolds. Some of the proposed projects are outlined below, with potential sequencing in the Implementation Plan.

Quotes from community:

"I spend my rides constantly watching out for the next car door that might open in front of me"

"People standing in bike lanes, cars pulling out or turning through bike lanes and unmaintained bike lane surfaces are REALLY REALLY dangerous."

"Creating bike lanes that are not along parked cars where you can get hurt by a driver opening his/her door (e.g. Chapel Street)"

"People opening their car doors into the bike lane without looking first is a big issue. It's ambitious, but separate bike lanes next to the footpath rather [than] the road would be AMAZING".

Local safety projects along Chapel Street

This will include investigating and trialling safety improvements (innovative or otherwise) at select locations to address specific cycling safety issues. These measures seek to balance the use of the road space while also working with local people to improve the area. This could include:

- Trial bicycle lane protection along segments of Chapel Street where build outs (or parklets) are provided. These builds out should be done in partnership with local retailers to further activate space. They should be innovative and trial different approaches. The impacts of the rollout need to be monitored in terms of improve from the perspective of users (insights) and nearby traders (change in spend). Following this, measures that are successful could be rolled out to other areas.
- In-ground flashing lights along bike lanes (or light-up signs at intersections) which use sensors to detect when a cyclist is approaching and warn vehicles of cyclist presence. These would be particularly useful where bike riders are approaching from behind (i.e. in the 'blind spot' in the same direction of travel) or not visible behind a stationary queue of traffic (i.e. approaching from the oncoming direction). Similar systems (i.e. inground lights) could also be used to alert people in parked cars from cyclist presence.

²⁷

- Advocate for safety improvements. Subject to the outcome of a VicRoads trial, install Bicycle Blind Spot Mirrors at traffic signals. Advocate to VicRoads for cyclist priority (jump) signals at signalised intersections.
- Use technology to make cycling safer. Investigate use of technology to alert drivers of cyclist presence when opening car doors (such as lights). Investigate improved delineation (green surfacing) which prioritises people on bikes and alerts drivers to the presence of bike riders.
- Extend 'advisory' style treatments along the whole corridor to create a consistent experience for drivers and cyclists along this corridor (taking the learning of London's first cycling superhighways that used 'blue paint' to great effect).

Quotes from community:

"Bicycle paths on major roads that are separated from the traffic. I am a person who rides a bicycle as a form of getting around, not a 'cyclist'. I would ride a lot more if I felt the infrastructure supported my riding"

"A campaign to improve driver awareness of cyclists"

"Better bike lanes with [a] physical barrier [between] traffic and bikes"

"Proper bike lanes with bright colours on the asphalt..."

Investigating full-time bicycle lanes on the northern leg of Chapel Street

Bicycle lanes are currently in place on the northern leg of Chapel Street (between Alexandra Avenue and Toorak Road), however their use is limited to weekday peak hours. As such, for most of the weekday, during evenings and across weekends, when many people seek to visit Chapel Street, the bike lanes are occupied by a limited number of car parks and people riding bicycles are forced to merge with traffic. This initiative would investigate the use of bicycle lanes and car parks in this area (including extending bicycle lanes through the Toorak Road and Alexandra Avenue intersections) and identify whether these spaces could be relocated to nearby off-street car parking areas in order to facilitate safer full-time cycling access, including to the Main Yarra Trail.

Challenge:

A key challenge will be managing the needs of loading and taxi pick-up drop off in this section.

Quotes from community:

"Better bike paths. The cycling paths along clear-ways are highly dangerous and have no care given to them. Roots, broken concrete and cars too close."

"Bike lanes that are not used as parking spaces most of the day..."

Improved low-stress links to surrounding areas

Over the past years' various alternate routes to Chapel Street have been explored, however for a range of reasons (local constraints, indirectness of alternate routes, retaining strong access to Chapel Street as a destination), the focus is increasingly on promoting access to and along Chapel Street.

Notwithstanding, with several major projects occurring in the area, including development of a South Yarra Station Masterplan, there is an opportunity to continue to progress planning for an alternate, low-stress route to some parts of Chapel Street so that cyclists of all abilities can feel comfortable to cycle in the local area.

This includes the potential for a link to Cremorne via a rail bridge, providing an alternative to Chapel Street and Church Street. Council will continue to work with relevant authorities to enable improved connections to surrounding areas.

Quote from community:

“A comfortable alternative to Chapel Street”

Prioritising cycling in Construction Traffic Management Plans (CTMPs)

Chapel Street is undergoing significant change, with major new developments currently under construction or in planning along its length, particularly around Forrest Hill. Planning approval has been granted for the redevelopment of Jam Factory and construction work will continue for Melbourne Metro and South Yarra Station Upgrades. These changes will cause some disruption, including to Chapel Street and surrounds. Council will make sure people on bicycles (as well as pedestrians) are appropriately prioritised through these periods of construction, including protection from tram tracks, safe use of traffic lanes during cycling lane closure, including reducing traffic capacity where it increases bike safety and maximising provision of direct and convenient routes where possible.

Quotes from community:

“Not treating bike lanes as ‘second class’ assets; e.g. workmen blocking them with warning signs”

“Less construction/ongoing roadworks/closing of roads or paths...”

Improving data monitoring

Monitoring active travel provides the ability to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of actions, strategies and plans to promote active travel (e.g., before and after studies)
- Track trends over time to see how behaviour changes and adapts
- Understand user behaviour
- Improve active travel safety
- Identify locations where active travel facilities could use improvements
- Assess future active travel demands.

This will include use of various technologies to understand how people use Chapel Street, not only in terms of numbers, but behaviours. Monitoring will also seek to understand the impact of various programs (such as the parklet program) such that they can be communicated to local traders and residents. More broadly, this will also include understanding the relationship between mode of travel and retail spend in a local context.

Supporting change through communication

As changes are rolled out, communication to the community will be key to successful implementation. Communication should clearly articulate changes and their intentions, tailored to different user groups and their interests (i.e. traders, residents) and what the changes mean to them (i.e. where they can park).

These actions start to build a local narrative and demonstrate that improving access for cycling can improve urban realm and vibrancy. More aspirational future projects can leverage the findings of these pilots, such as broader reallocation of road space to allow more people to access Chapel Street more efficiently and continue to build the area as a great place to live, work and visit.

Leverage change along the corridor

As major developments in the area unfold, on-street car parking lanes are often closed to support construction, or pedestrian movements during footpath closures. These changes and closures create new travel behaviours which Council will seek to leverage by investigating whether on-street parking can be permanently removed along new development frontages. The City of London has been particularly successful in this space over the past 25 years contributing to the UK's highest economic output and more people walking and cycling than ever before²⁸.

What about other areas?

There are many other corridors in Stonnington which would benefit from similar treatments – the community suggested High Street, Malvern Road and Toorak Road (amongst other locations) in the Cycling Strategy Survey.

Chapel Street is a good starting point because it is a clear problem area, has several pilot projects and significant ongoing development occurring which can be leveraged and will benefit from a softer transition as there are plentiful off-street parking alternatives (including the expanded Cato Square car park) along its length. Chapel Street is also a Council-managed road south of Toorak Road, which means implementation is less dependent on external approvals.

If suitable, pilots and lessons from Chapel Street can then be applied to other areas.

Quotes from community:

“Copenhagen lanes down Malvern [Road] or High St or Toorak [Road] all the way to St Kilda Road. Copenhagen lane on Chapel St”

²⁸ Traffic in the City 2018, City of London <http://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/documents/s91800/Appendix+1+-+Traffic+in+the+City+2018.pdf>

Initiative 2: building on the success of ‘paths for everyone’

Community feedback indicates that the off-road paths in Stonnington are where people feel most comfortable and safe cycling,²⁹ usually because there is no interaction with vehicles (except at crossings), there are continuous facilities and the river and parkland provides an enjoyable environment with plenty of opportunities for breaks to enjoy the scenery and recharge. The width of pathway, low-stress environment and overall quality of surface and amenities means that Stonnington’s shared paths have matured as ‘paths for everyone’.

As a result, the off-road shared trail along Stonnington’s northern boundary (including Scotchmans Creek Trail, Gardiners Creek Trail and Main Yarra/Capital City Trail) is the most highly utilised paths in the municipality³⁰ and serves an additional purpose as a key commuter route, providing a relatively direct corridor from Chadstone (and beyond) to key employment centres in South Yarra, Richmond, St Kilda Road, Southbank, Docklands and



Melbourne’s Central City. In the future, these trails will also provide links to new employment clusters in Fishermans Bend and beyond to other urban renewal areas, such as Macaulay.

However, as the name suggests, ‘shared’ paths are used by a range of different people, including people riding bikes, strolling, jogging, using a scooter or walking with pets. These people move at different speeds and can create conflict to each other when interacting in a narrow environment - for example, when a bike rider approaches a pedestrian too quickly, or when a dog on a leash crosses the path of a person cycling.

Continuing to build on the success of Stonnington’s ‘paths for everyone’ will enable more users to feel comfortable commuting, keeping fit or enjoying the scenery in a safer environment.

What is proposed?

The second initiative proposes to improve safety and access to the riverside/off-road path network by:

Progressively separating walkers and cyclists

This means beginning to provide separate paths for pedestrians and cyclists (where space permits), enabling walkers, strollers and people with pets to travel at a more leisurely pace without conflict with bike riders, and vice versa. This will also allow commuter riders to access destinations more easily, including people who may now be able to ride longer distances through availability of e-bikes.

²⁹ [BikeSpot](#), Stonnington Cycling Strategy Survey

³⁰ [Strava Global Heatmap](#)

Challenges:

The practical constraints of achieving this also need to be recognised – in some locations, geography or available space constrains the feasibility of providing separated facilities. Council will progressively work to deliver separated off-road facilities, noting the need to balance with a consistent user experience and prioritising highest-volume routes.

Quotes from community:

“When I cycle I feel threatened by speeding cyclist[s] who overtake and cut pedestrians off”

“Off road shared paths create anger between pedestrians and cyclists”

“Dedicated bike paths – shared does not work for bike commuting...”

“The shared paths are good, but phone zombies and headphone wearers are a continual issue”

“Bike freeways – i.e. bike-only ‘roads’ like in Holland – other countries do it!”

Providing improved connections to separated bicycle paths

This means providing improved access to the riverside/off-road paths by identifying gaps between other cycling paths and the river path (on a local scale) and providing new connections. This is particularly important in the east of Stonnington, where access to the shared path can reduce car dependence and provide access to the CBD by bicycle, and, in the other direction, people can access education and employment opportunities in Chadstone, Holmesglen and Monash. This program could complement or leverage VicRoads’ current CBD to Scoresby Cycling Corridor project.³¹

This also means planning for connections to the new St Kilda Road separated bicycle path.

Existing cycling infrastructure that has high demand and/or serious safety issues should also be allocated the appropriate funding for ongoing maintenance and improvement.

Quotes from community:

“Need some safe bike only lanes to get down [to] the Yarra/Gardiners Creek (to then commute to the city), as from there it is safe, but [it is] dangerous getting to the bike trail”

“A bike lane connecting the Gardiner’s Creek Trail to Chadstone Shopping Mall”

“Better connections from shared paths to commercial and activity precincts”

“Better connections to main bike paths, i.e. Yarra Trail”

³¹ [VicRoads Cycling Corridor Projects](#)

Initiative 3: support State investment in strategic infrastructure

Major road schemes (including adding bicycle lanes and suitable protections) requires investment and commitment from both state and local government and various agencies and authorities.

What is proposed?

Through delivery of improvements to Chapel Street and improvements to off-road paths, Council will continue to support investment in cycling infrastructure in the municipality, including delivery of strategic cycling corridors as they are proposed.

This means collaborating with authorities through the design and approval process and advocating for measures which prioritise people riding bicycles at intersections and provide direct and safe routes.

Quote from community:

“Making it safer to cycle in Stonnington. Dedicated bicycle lanes on Commercial Road, High Street and Toorak Road.”

What else will Council do?

Council will continue to support and uphold the aspirations for greater uptake of cycling as other opportunities and projects arise and through usual day-to-day processes, such as review of planning applications. However, the three target areas above form Council’s focus areas to improve cycling over the next five years.

Council will also continue to improve safety through other mechanisms (i.e. customer requests), continue to understand how the area is changing and identify areas of high demand, address user conflicts and provide greater choice in ways of travel. Council will also deliver (directly and indirectly) other facilities which make cycling easier or more convenient, such as more and better quality bicycle parking.

Alongside this strategy, Council will also continue to deliver measures outlined in other plans and strategies, such as the Road Safety Strategy, Open Space Strategy, Structure Plans and Chapel ReVision.

Information and recommendations made in this report

This is currently a draft report for the purposes of consultation with the community.

It is intended solely for the use of Stonnington Council for the purpose for which it has been prepared and no representation is made or is to be implied as being made to any third party.

The findings contained in this report are subject to the materiality thresholds, qualifications, assumptions and limitations set out or referred to in the report.

GTA Consultants has based this report on information received or obtained, on the basis that such information is accurate and, where it is represented as such, complete.

The information contained in this report is current as of the date of issue. GTA Consultants assumes no responsibility to update the report for anything that occurs, or of which GTA Consultants become aware, after the date of issue of the report.

Supplementary material that informed the Strategy (including Technical Appendix)

Context

Overview

Stonnington extends radially from Melbourne CBD along city's south-east transport corridor. Compared to other inner-urban areas, the distance from its eastern to its western ends means there is great variety in the density, structure and in turn, demographic composition of people living and working in the area.

Population density is much greater to the west of the municipality, where there is more proximate access to jobs, education and social opportunities in the CBD and inner urban areas.

Specifically, density is generally highest near Chapel Street, where high-rise apartment towers are increasingly being delivered within close walking distance to good quality public transport (rail, tram) and local shops and services.

By comparison, areas at its eastern end, including Glen Iris and Malvern East, are reminiscent of more classic suburban Melbourne, with lower density development (coupled with higher car dependency).

The other obvious characteristic with the east-west rectangular shape of Stonnington is that it has six other municipalities bordering it, meaning that at least the north-south network arrangements are influenced by the arrangements in adjacent municipalities.

Demographic Composition

GTA prepared a model based on industry best practice which summarises key demographic characteristics to understand the people living in different areas of Melbourne and their propensity to cycle.

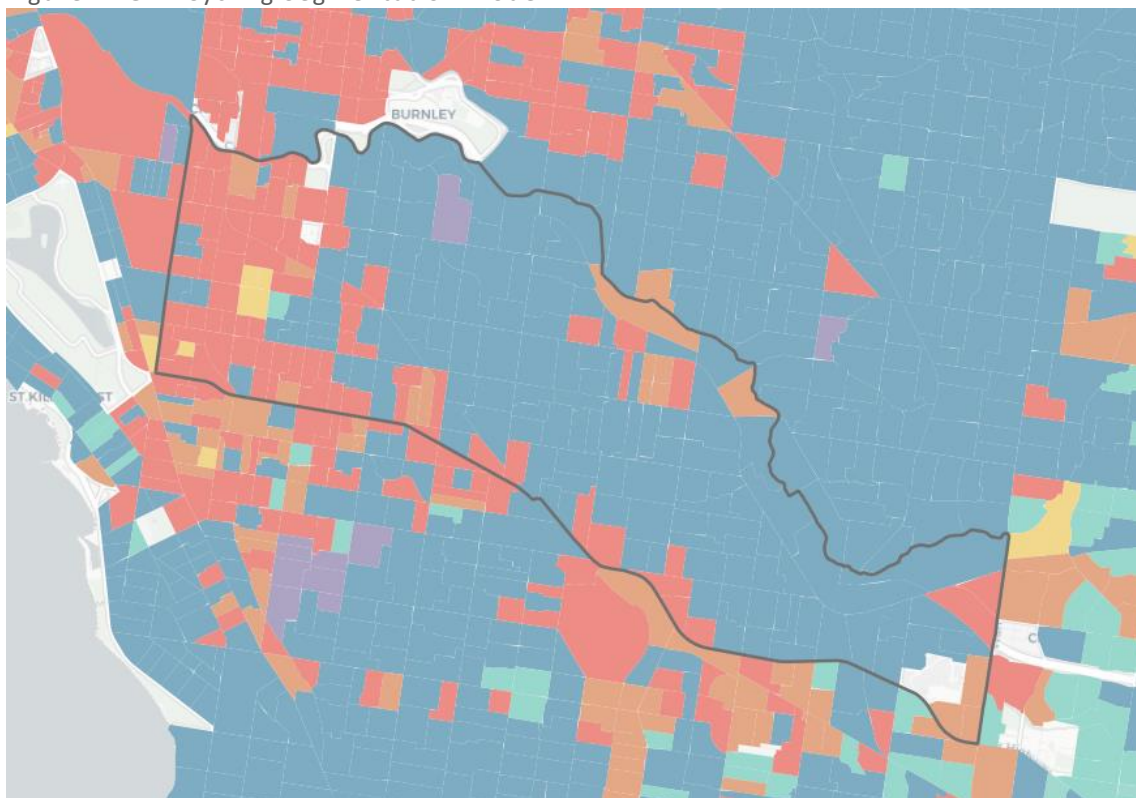
Urban Living: In Stonnington, areas around Chapel Street comprise many young people seeking with high-income and likely seeking an urban lifestyle, close to jobs, facilities and public transport. Pockets of young urbanites can also be found around activity centres (particularly along the Cranbourne/Pakenham rail corridor) and around Monash University's Caulfield campus.

Young Suburban Lifestyle: Young people seeking a more affordable suburban lifestyle are typically clustered around areas where there are more options for more moderately-sized housing, such as units or townhouses in Tooronga and Armadale.

Comfortable Suburban: The majority of Stonnington (particularly in the central and eastern areas) are predominantly high-income middle-aged households.

Hard Pressed: Areas where there are high proportions of social housing typically have below-average income.

Figure 2: GTA Cycling Segmentation Model



Analysis shows that people who are characterised as ‘Urban Living’ (high-income, young age) have the highest propensity to cycle and are likely to be 1.4 times more people cycle on a given journey than the average person. People living a ‘Young Suburban Lifestyle’ (middle-income, young age) ‘Comfortable Suburban’ (high-income, middle- and older-aged) areas are also more likely to cycle than average. People who are ‘Hard Pressed’ are slightly less likely than average to cycle on a given journey.

General Traits

Areas in the west of Stouffville (including Pahrnan, South Yarra and Windsor) have a greater share of households without a car, higher numbers of people who travel to work by bicycle and fewer people who travel to work by car compared to the east.

Purpose

According to VISTA data, most respondents ride bikes to commute to work and for recreation – consistent with the findings of the Cycling Strategy survey. People also cycle short distances to make a purchase or socialise, which reflects use of cycling for local trips.

Distance

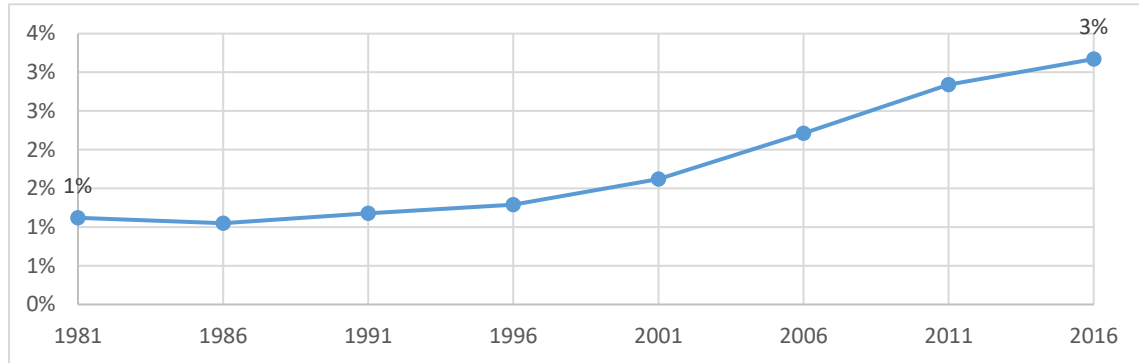
Cycling uptake as a whole remains very low, regardless of distance, indicating that it is not generally seen as a viable way of travel for many.

Of the trips that are taken by bike, most are relatively short distances (less than five kilometres). The exception is work trips, which are most often 5-10 kilometres in length (approximately the distance from many parts of Stouffville to the CBD). Beyond this, the proportion of trips undertaken by car increases.

Changes over time

Cycling to work has been increasing marginally, but still represents a small proportion of all commuter trips. The rate of growth is slowing in recent years and cycling now represents 3% of all trips to work from Stonnington.

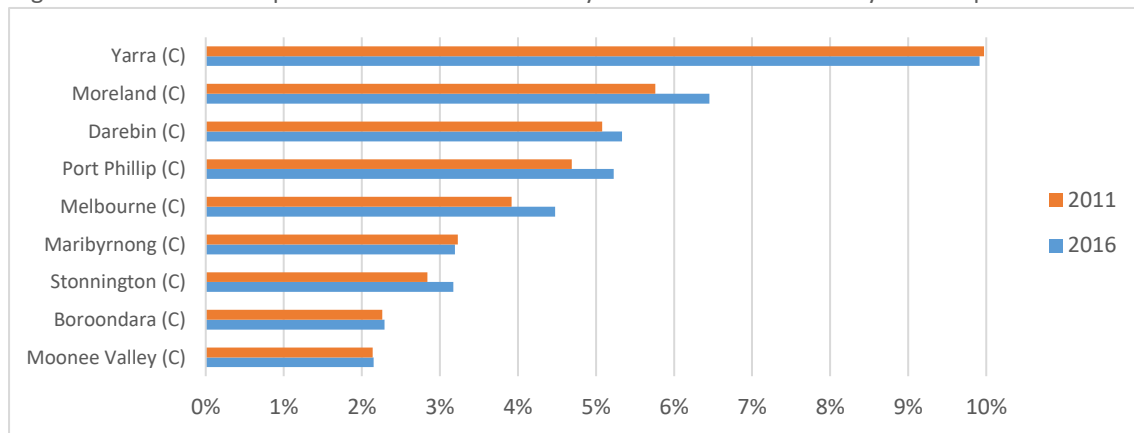
Figure 3: Share of trips to work from Stonnington undertaken by bike over time³²



Comparisons to other areas

Stonnington has relatively low cycling uptake compared to other inner-city municipalities in terms of cycling uptake, despite similar geography, proximity to the CBD and demographic composition.

Figure 4: Share of trips to work undertaken by bike across inner-city municipalities³²



The road network is reaching or exceeding capacity in many key locations

The road network in Stonnington is at capacity in many locations - including Toorak Road, High Street and Williams Road. Other areas, including Chapel Street, are also nearing capacity in some locations.³³

When the number of vehicles approaches or reaches the capacity of the road, the likelihood of delays increases and trips become less reliable – for example, a trip that might take 30 minutes on one day could take more than an hour the next. Research shows Stonnington has amongst the worst road travel reliability in Melbourne. Delays can also impact on-road public transport performance.

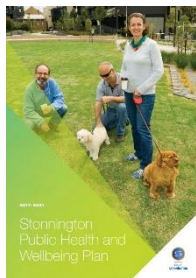
³² [Bike Account](#), Bicycle Network, ABS Census 2016

³³ Infrastructure Victoria, Five Year Focus. Refer Technical Appendix for more detail.

Figure 5: Areas where volume of traffic nears or exceeds capacity of the roads



Alignment with Council Direction



Stonnington Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017 – 2021

Council has committed to invest in cycling facilities and programs to encourage participation and improve health and wellbeing outcomes. Initiatives include development of safe, accessible, legible, functional and appropriate cycling options and initiatives and establish a culture of sharing space.



Draft – Towards Zero Stonnington Road Safety Strategy 2018 – 2022

The Strategy seeks to “ensure that the greatest emphasis is placed on protecting those who are most vulnerable when using Stonnington’s roads. Key strategic directions to identify and support cycle links between principal bicycle routes and support low-risk cycling environments.



Victorian Cycling Strategy, Cycling into the Future 2018 – 2028

The Strategy seeks to increase the number, frequency and diversity of Victorians for transport by investing in safer, lower-stress, better-connected network, prioritising strategic cycling corridors and making cycling more inclusive.



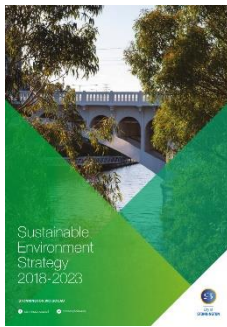
Stonnington Council Plan 2017 – 2021

The Council Plan commits to prioritising quality local streetscapes to create more pedestrian, bicycle and public transport-friendly environments which promotes sustainable transport.



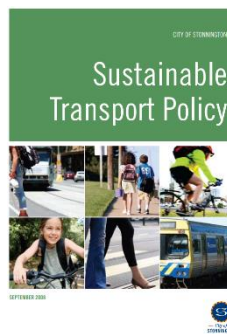
Stonnington Activity Centres Strategy June 2016

The Strategy states that neighbourhood centres are to be accessible by walking, cycling and public transport. The Strategy includes actions which improve cycling access and comfort, including potential for new cycle lanes and bicycle parking in activity centres.



Stonnington Sustainable Environment Strategy 2019 – 2023

The Strategy states that Council working towards improving transport, access and movement within the city by promoting and supporting safe, accessible and convenient local destinations, public transport options, and walking and cycling.



Stonnington Sustainable Transport Policy

Council has committed to prioritising walking, cycling and public transport in preference to vehicles, including in terms of allocating Council time, space and resources. Council has also committed to moderating the impact of cars, improving safety and champion sustainable modes of travel.

Chapel ReVision

Amendment C172 was gazetted in August 2017, which formalises the Chapel ReVision Structure Plan 2013-2031 and associated background documents (including Transport Strategy) into the Stonnington Planning Scheme. This means the Chapel ReVision documents become a formal reference for planning in the Chapel Street Activity Centre.

The Chapel ReVision Transport Strategy notes:

- Existing cycling lanes are inadequate in their current form for the number of cyclists using the route, as well as the conflicts with other modes that occur along Chapel Street
- Large volumes of traffic, on-street parking (and risk of dooring), busy intersections and high levels of pedestrian activity combine to create a hazardous environment for cyclists
- The Capital City Trail is a very popular cycling route but is difficult to access from Chapel Street without navigating the issues outlined above.

The Strategy proposes the following relevant projects:

- Consider converting kerbside parking bays into a bicycle parking islands in busy shopping precincts with limited footpath space.
- Creating shared spaces in key pedestrian areas within the precinct, including on Chapel Street in front of the Jam Factory.
- North-south alternate commuter bicycle route using local streets and along rail corridor.
- Restricting through traffic in some locations.



The implementation plan for the Chapel ReVision proposes the following relevant actions:

- Removal of car parking spaces at 7 key locations to provide bicycle facilities
- Footpath widening to allow on-street activity in high demand areas, with replacement of car parking with kerb outstands
- Identification and promotion of alternate commuter routes to Chapel Street (short-term)
- Bicycle priority measures at intersections – signal priority, line and road marking, cycle boxes
- Limiting through traffic and creating shared spaces in parts of Chapel Street

The Transport Strategy for the Chapel ReVision indicates that there is 'surplus capacity' within dedicated off-street car parking facilities and that while there are localised areas of high demand for on-street parking, car parking is not at capacity in the wider commercial precinct.³⁴

Lessons from previous Stonnington Cycling Strategy

Since the previous Stonnington cycling strategy, several improvements have been made to improve the safety and comfort of cycling across the municipality, mainly from a planning perspective. Some recent progress includes:

- Progressed planning for a potential north-south cycling alternative to Chapel Street.
- Resourcing has been increased for walking and cycling planning through introduction of a 'sustainable transport planner' role.
- New bicycle parking racks continue to be delivered across the municipality.
- Cycling facilities continue to be reviewed as part of asset maintenance.
- Standard design guidelines have been prepared for new cycling infrastructure.
- Council continues to advocate for new cycling facilities to be delivered with new infrastructure.
- Council has developed a five-year capital works program which includes cycling infrastructure.

However, delivery of physical infrastructure has proved challenging and implementation of the previous strategy raised many opportunities to enhance the effectiveness and deliverability of this new strategy. Some of the key lessons include that:

- The actions should be feasible, predominantly within Council's control and have high-impact.
- Advocacy actions should be limited, targeted and articulate a clear, compelling case for change, ideally leveraging a state government program or project.
- The actions should be supported by a clear, staged pathway of works that can be directly implemented by Council.
- The actions should be underpinned by a clear strategy and work together to deliver focussed outcomes, rather than broad improvements.
- Where possible, the actions should leverage existing programs (particularly behaviour change/promotion programs/grants) or technologies (i.e. apps) in favour of developing from scratch.
- The actions should also recognise where initiatives are better delivered by other levels of government or the private sector, with support from Council where the outcomes align with the objectives for the area.

In summary, this strategy outlines measures which are predominantly within Council's control and are feasible and realistic, considering cost, space and environmental constraints. The actions are also cognisant of the five-year lifespan of the strategy and what can realistically be achieved in this period.

Development of Actions

The implementation plan was informed by:

- Collating a range of material from a variety of sources, including analysis of demographic data and various local characteristics.
- Establishing a policy context and reviewing ongoing and future projects to understand the strategic direction, challenges and potential opportunities to leverage.
- Undertaking site-specific investigations of existing cycling conditions to observe local nuances and challenges.

- Holding a workshop to identify potential initiatives which reflect best practice.
- Based on discussions at the workshop, reviewing these short-listed initiatives for their impact and feasibility.
- Identifying a targeted package of works which will create change in a specific problem area – ‘putting the strategy in cycling strategy’.

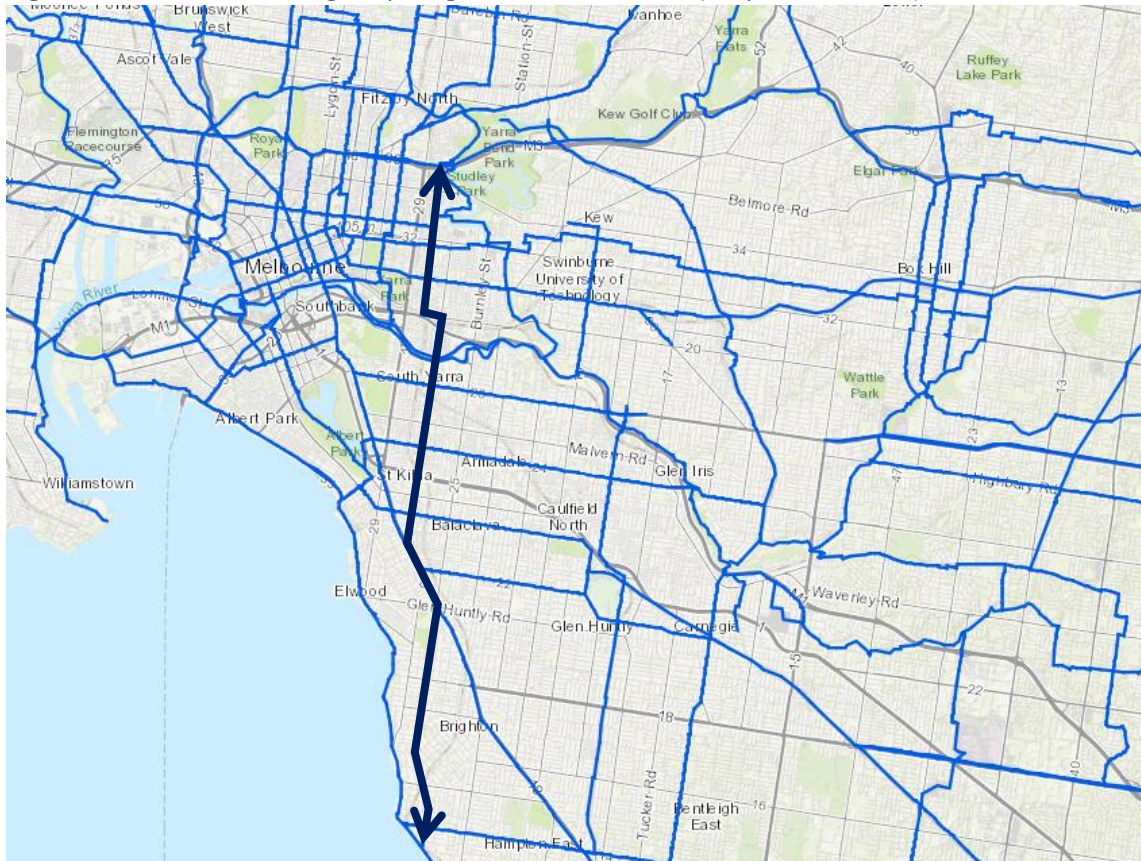
The actions were established to support the intentions of the Chapel ReVision and with a focus on providing a safer and more comfortable cycling environment to enable more people to ride bikes in Stonnington.

Initiative 1: safer cycling on Chapel Street

Chapel Street is a key north-south strategic link

The corridor connects the Capital City Trail in the north with St Kilda, Elwood and other bayside localities in the south, via key employment and residential centres in Richmond, South Yarra, Prahran and Windsor. The corridor also links to other major cycling routes, including the Main Yarra Trail, which links Scoresby to the CBD and, in the future, urban renewal areas beyond (Fishermans Bend, Macaulay, Docklands).

Figure 6: VicRoads Strategic Cycling Corridor Network (emphasis added)

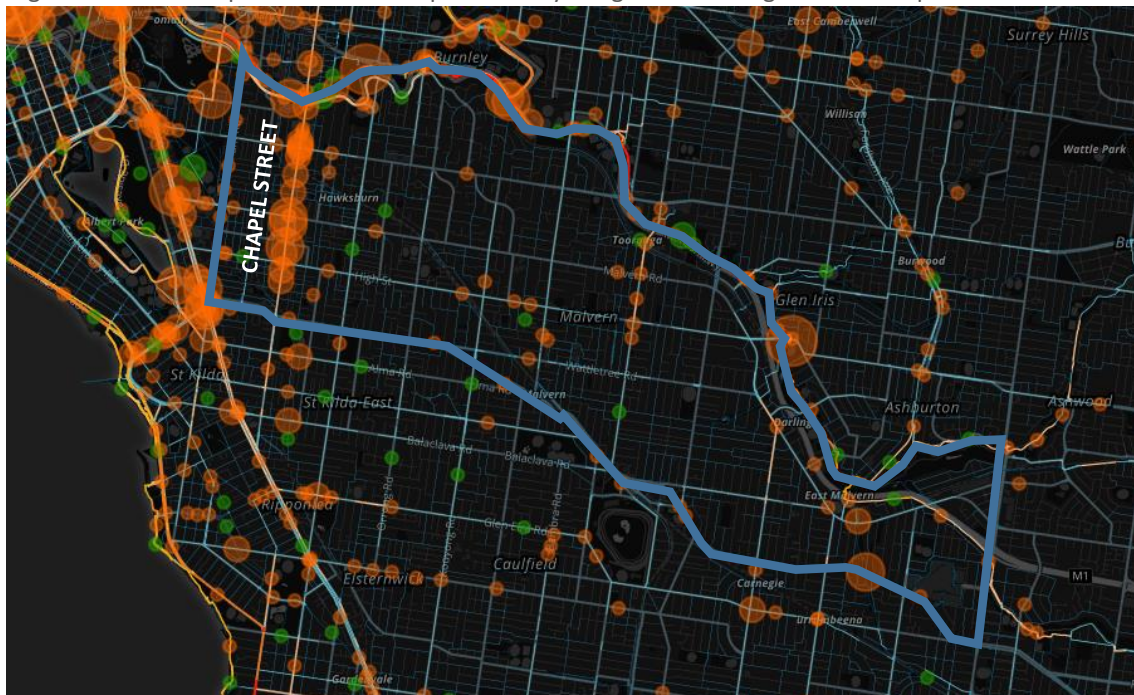


However, the corridor is perceived as an unsafe environment for cycling

The BikeSpot study was undertaken in 2016 by CrowdSpot, in collaboration with The Squeaky Wheel and the TAC. The study identifies 'safe' and 'unsafe' spots for cycling across Melbourne, based on more than 8,000 community contributions.³⁵

Community responses to the BikeSpot study provide a general indication of problem areas in the municipality, as well as the types of environments in which people enjoy (or feel uncomfortable) cycling.

Figure 7: 'Issue' spots and 'like' spots for cycling in Stonnington - BikeSpot



Based on responses, the key reasons people feel unsafe cycling in Stonnington include:

- Risk of dooring, particularly along Chapel Street
- Absence of bicycle facilities in some locations, including 'disappearing' lanes or car parking overlapping bike lanes outside of clearway times
- Poor lane delineation on approach to intersections, with people cycling required to merge with traffic
- Missing or circuitous crossings across major roads
- Car parking manoeuvres creating dangerous conditions for people cycling.
- Conflicts with motorists, including drivers failing to check for people cycling or passing too close for comfort
- Pedestrians stepping into bicycle lanes, particularly in Chapel Street where they emerge between parked cars
- Poor maintenance, uneven surfaces or assets creating hazards

Chapel Street was overrepresented in the number of issue spots raised compared to other areas of Stonnington. This may reflect higher levels of use and/or particular issues with the area.

³⁵ [BikeSpot](#)

Key issues on Chapel Street raised included:

- Risk of dooring on both sides, including parked cars and passengers exiting vehicles in slow moving traffic.
- High-turnover car parking presenting a risk, with entering/exiting and reversing manoeuvres occurring frequently along the length of Chapel Street.
- Poor visibility of people cycling when turning due to stationary traffic.
- Pedestrians emerging into bicycle lanes from between parked cars.
- Poor lane delineation on approach to intersections, with people cycling required to merge with traffic.
- Tram tracks presenting a hazard for bicycle wheels.
- Taxis and cars parked over bike lanes, and vehicles propping in bicycle lanes to pick-up/drop-off passengers.

Other problem spots identified in the area include:

- Absence of crossing at Dandenong Road at the Urban Forest.
- Poor connection from Urban Forest to Scotchmans Creek Trail, conflicting with station car park traffic.
- Room for improvement on crossings to/from Main Yarra Trail near Como Park/Williams Road.
- Safety of Gardiners Creek Path at High Street underpass, with a challenging gradient and poor protection from the river interface.

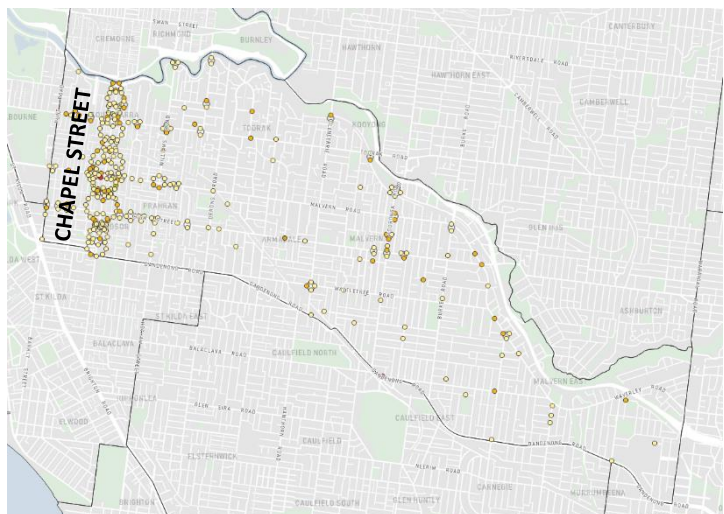
Crash statistics confirm that Chapel Street is overrepresented in safety issues

Review of VicRoads crash data³⁶ shows that there has been more than 1,300 crashes in the municipality in the last five full years (2014-18). Of these, more than one in five (approx. 300 crashes) involved a bicycle.

The most common type of crash involving a bicycle across the municipality was dooring, with 59 incidents in the last five years.

Other common crash causes included:

- Collision on a 'right-through' movement, where the bike/car was travelling straight through and was hit by a vehicle/bike turning right.
- Vehicle or cyclist losing control on the carriageway.
- Cyclist side-swiped by vehicles making a left turn.
- Cross-traffic accidents, where a car/bicycle is hit by a vehicle/bicycle travelling in a perpendicular direction.



³⁶ [VicRoads Crash Statistics](#)

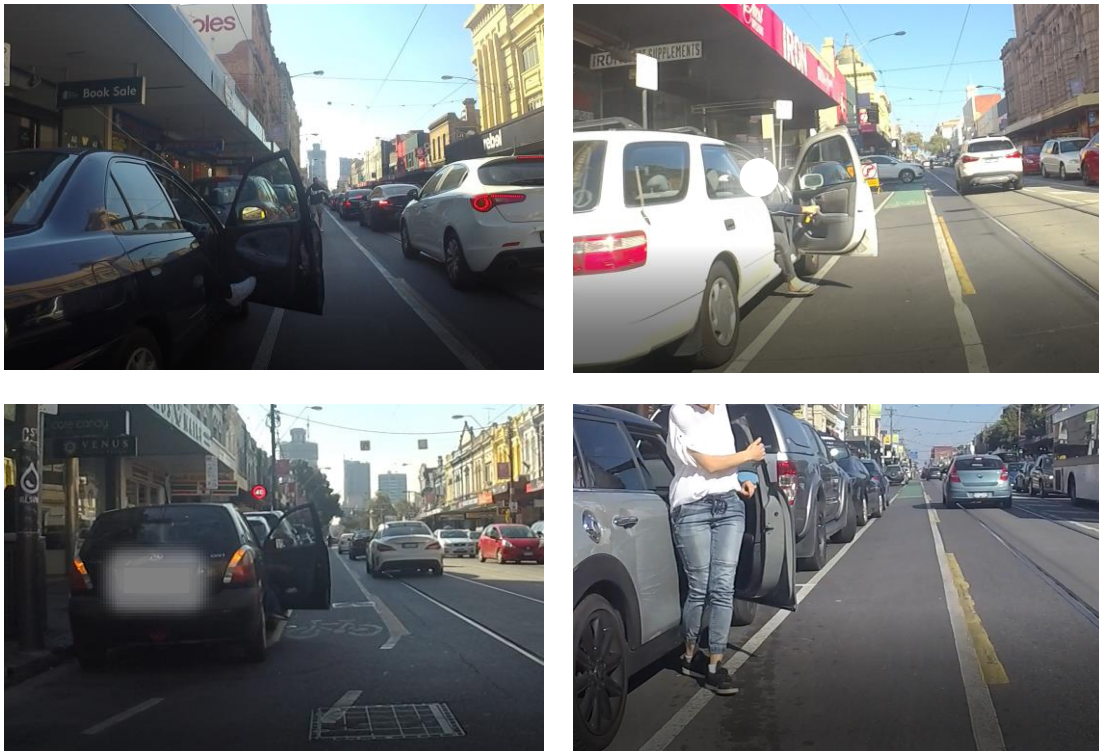
When you visit the area the safety challenges along the corridor are clear
The images below were captured on a single cycling journey along Chapel Street and demonstrate potential areas which cause discomfort and unsafe conditions for people riding bikes in the area.³⁷

Drivers or passengers opening car doors onto people riding bicycles

People opening car doors onto bicycle lanes creates a hazardous scenario where people riding bicycles are either forced to brake heavily, swerve into the adjacent traffic lane or, if the door is opened particularly close to the cyclist, collide with the door.

All of these scenarios pose risks to the safety of the person riding their bike and opening a door onto a person riding a bike can, and has, been fatal in Melbourne. Even when a door is not opened, squeezing a person on a bike close to parked vehicles can be uncomfortable, especially without adequate protection or space, as every vehicle poses a risk of a door being opened into their path.

Figure Set 8: Drivers or passengers opening car doors onto people riding bicycles (edited to remove personally-identifying features)



³⁷ Images captured on one return cycling journey along Chapel Street between Alexandra Avenue and Dandenong Road on Sunday 14 April 2019, early afternoon.

Drivers parking vehicles in a way that encroaches on bicycle lane (fully or partially)

Vehicles stopped or parked across bicycle lanes (even partially) pose not only a risk of dooring, but also force people riding bicycles into the adjacent traffic lane where vehicles and tram tracks pose a safety hazard.

Figure Set 9: Drivers parking in a way that encroaches on a bicycle lane



Pedestrians walking, waiting or emerging into bicycle lanes

Given the volume of pedestrians in the area, and provision of on-street car parking, pedestrians occasionally choose to use the bicycle lane to walk along parts of Chapel Street, particularly when emerging or entering their vehicle or seeking an opportunity to cross the road. Pedestrians emerging from between vehicles pose a risk to the safety of both the pedestrian and the person riding their bike and can cause a bike rider to brake heavily or swerve into the traffic lane where tram tracks and vehicles pose a safety hazard. Pedestrians emerge from both sides of the road, including between parked cars and stationary traffic on Chapel Street.

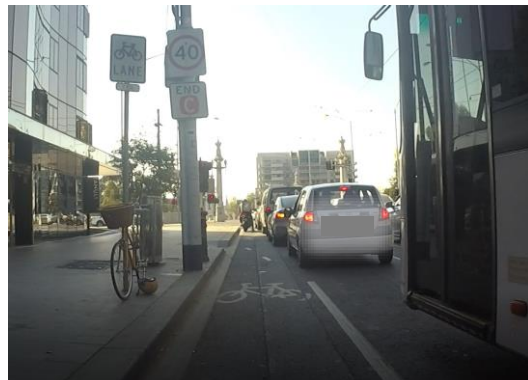
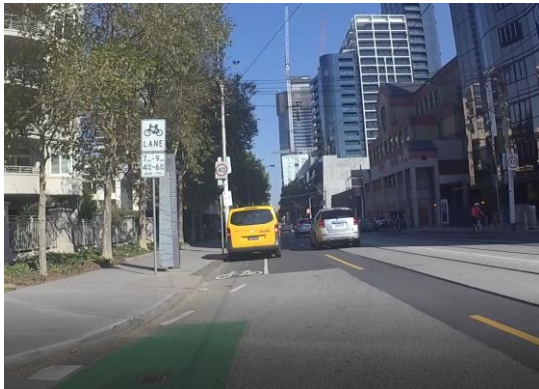
Figure Set 10: Pedestrians walking, waiting or emerging into bicycle lanes



Disappearing bicycle lanes

Currently, bicycle facilities are applied inconsistently along Chapel Street. In some areas, bicycle lanes are provided during peak periods. In other areas, facilities disappear at intersections, or there are no facilities at all, and people riding their bikes are squeezed in the remaining space between traffic/tram lanes and on-street car parking. When facilities disappear (as shown in examples below), people riding bikes can be particularly vulnerable, as drivers may not expect a person on a bike merge, or may not be looking out for bike riders as they move across their path of travel to access turn lanes.

Figure Set 11: Disappearing bicycle lanes



Drivers propping across cycling lanes, or pulling out into cycling lanes

Intersections can be particularly treacherous for people riding bicycles, as vehicles emerge and move in many directions to make turning movements. This includes vehicles emerging from a side road and propping across the bicycle lane for greater visibility or to demonstrate intent to join, or push into, a traffic queue. This may also include turning vehicles moving (or propping) across the person cycling's path of travel to turn into a side street. Both moving vehicles and propped vehicles pose a risk to people riding bikes or can force them to come to a stop.

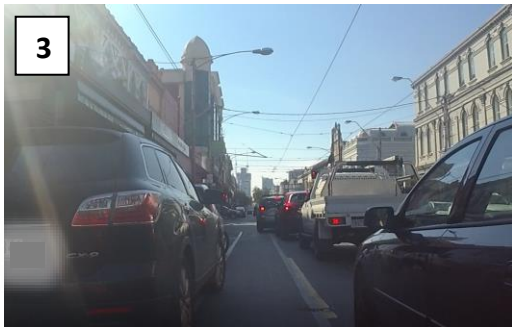
Figure Set 12: Drivers propping across cycling lanes, or pulling out into cycling lanes



Other general hazards:

1. Parking manoeuvres, including cars reversing in or pulling out of spaces.
2. Stationary vehicles can limit visibility of cyclists from vehicles turning into side streets from the oncoming traffic lane.
3. People riding bikes are generally squeezed into the leftover space between traffic/tram lanes and on-street parking, which creates a narrow corridor with little room for error.
4. Poor or uneven road surfaces can create uncomfortable or unsafe riding conditions, particularly where there is little room to circumnavigate.

Figure Set 13: Other general hazards to bike riders



Previous projects to improve public space, provide bike parking and improve pedestrian conditions have also been successfully implemented in the Chapel Street area

Greville, King and Porter Streets Improvement Program

In June 2016, Council implemented a three-month trial to refresh the pedestrian environment in Greville, Porter and King Streets in Prahran by creating a shared environment and/or full street closure, changing traffic flow and replacing some on-street car parking with widened footpaths, outdoor dining and trees. In September 2016, the trial was extended for a further three months (with amendments). During this extension, the majority of community feedback was in favour the changes, with 69% of respondents in favour of reduced car parking for more greenery in Porter street, 59% of respondents in support of reducing car parking to provide wider footpaths, outdoor seating and dining areas in Greville Street and 54% were in support of reducing car parking to provide more greenery in Greville Street. In 2017, Council resolved to make the changes permanent.³⁸



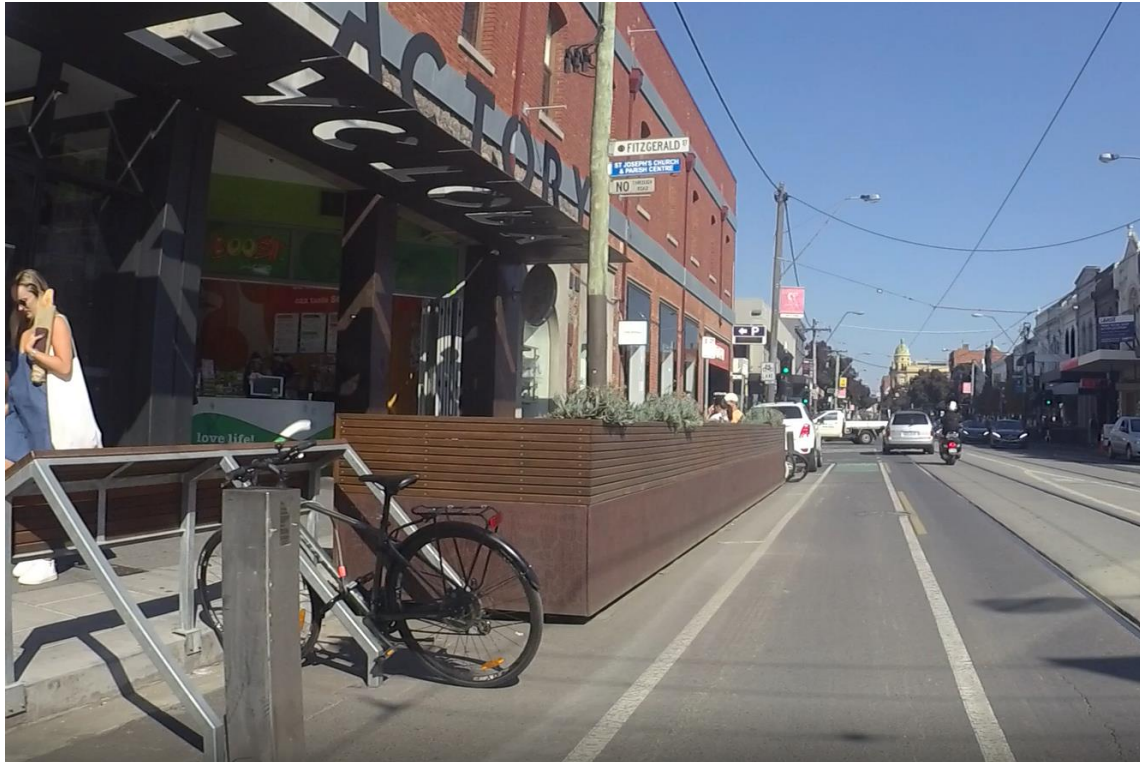
“I love this idea, already enjoy sitting in the extended footpath areas at the cafes and restaurants, it creates a real buzz and vibrancy in the area” – Round Four Community Survey

Jam Factory Parklet

Three on-street car parking spaces have been repurposed on Chapel Street outside the Jam Factory to provided room for additional bicycle parking, greenery and a new outdoor dining area whilst maintaining the width of the footpath in this key pedestrian area. The treatment has also provided wider space for people riding bikes in the Chapel Street bicycle lane and removed the risk of dooring in this location. Plans for the Jam Factory redevelopment will remove all on-street car parking on this frontage to create an enhanced pedestrian environment and in turn, safer conditions for cyclists by further reducing the risk of dooring incidents at this location.³⁹

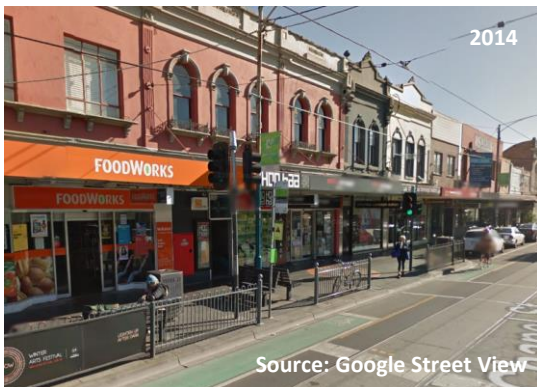
³⁸ Greville, King and Porter Streets Improvement Plan – [Round Four Community Engagement](#)

³⁹ Jam Factory Redevelopment Transport Impact Assessment, GTA Consultants, via Stonnington ePlanning

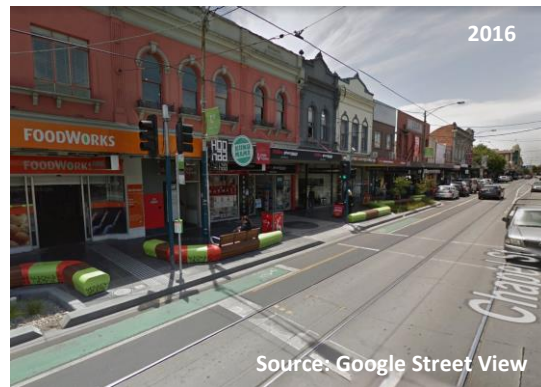


Duke Street Tram Stop Improvements

Council has also removed car parking either side of Chapel Street near Duke Street to provide improved seating near the tram stop, improve pedestrian access and provide landscaping. Like other examples, removal of car parking reduces risk of dooring at this location.⁴⁰



Source: Google Street View



Source: Google Street View

Ongoing development in the area brings opportunity for change, including to the way people travel

Chapel Street is undergoing significant change, providing opportunities which can be leveraged to make changes which improve conditions for pedestrians and bike riders, including:

- Redevelopment of Cato Square, which provides significant new open space, attracts people to spend time in the area and includes a basement car park which delivers 20

⁴⁰ Images: Google Street View

per cent more car parking space off-street than the previous surface car park, providing potential to relocate on-street spaces.⁴¹

- Redevelopment of Jam Factory, which is expected to bring 5,000 jobs and more shoppers to the area and create changes to the streetscape which create improved conditions for pedestrians and bike riders.⁴²
- Broader mid- and high-rise developments along Chapel Street, including new residential towers, commercial space and a hotel, which will attract more workers, visitors and residents to the area.
- South Yarra Station Upgrade and Master Plan, including a new tram stop, providing improved access for people arriving to the north of Chapel Street by rail.
- St Kilda Road separated bicycle corridor, to be delivered in 2025

As these projects are delivered, as well as through ongoing Melbourne Metro construction, there is a unique opportunity to change the ways that people access the area by engraining sustainable travel habits through a period of change.

Encouraging local access can be good for business and the economy

Past studies in Melbourne have found that:

- 86% of expenditure in St Kilda's Acland Street was by local residents.
- 74% of expenditure in Richmond's Swan Street, 59% in Victoria Street and 57% on Bridge Road was by local residents.
- 66% of expenditure in Fitzroy's Brunswick Street and 61% of expenditure on Smith Street was by local residents.⁴³

These areas share similarities with Chapel Street as inner-city shopping strips with high demand for on-street car parking and in most cases, access by tram. Most people who visited these shopping strips arrived on foot and as a result, nine car parking spaces were removed in Acland Street to create wider footpaths and an improved pedestrian environment.⁴³ Although only a small number of people accessed these centres by bicycle today, removing car spaces creates safer environments for cyclists and can provide more room for bicycle parking, which makes it easier for people to access the centre by bicycle.

Initiative 2: Build on the strength of the shared path network

Low-stress environments (like off-road shared paths) make the ride comfortable for a greater range of users

BikeSpot data identifies area which were favoured by the community for cycling included:

- Off-road trails (Main Yarra Trail, Gardiners Creek Trail, Scotchmans Creek Trail) where there is no conflict with vehicles, noting there remains conflict with pedestrians and runners.
- Alexandra Avenue, where there are spacious traffic lanes so that cars can move around people cycling with a comfortable passing distance. There are also off-road alternatives (Main Yarra Trail) for less confident people cycling.

⁴¹ [Cato Square](#), City of Stonnington

⁴² [Chapel Street retailers battle unreasonable landlords as vacancies surge](#), Australian Financial Review

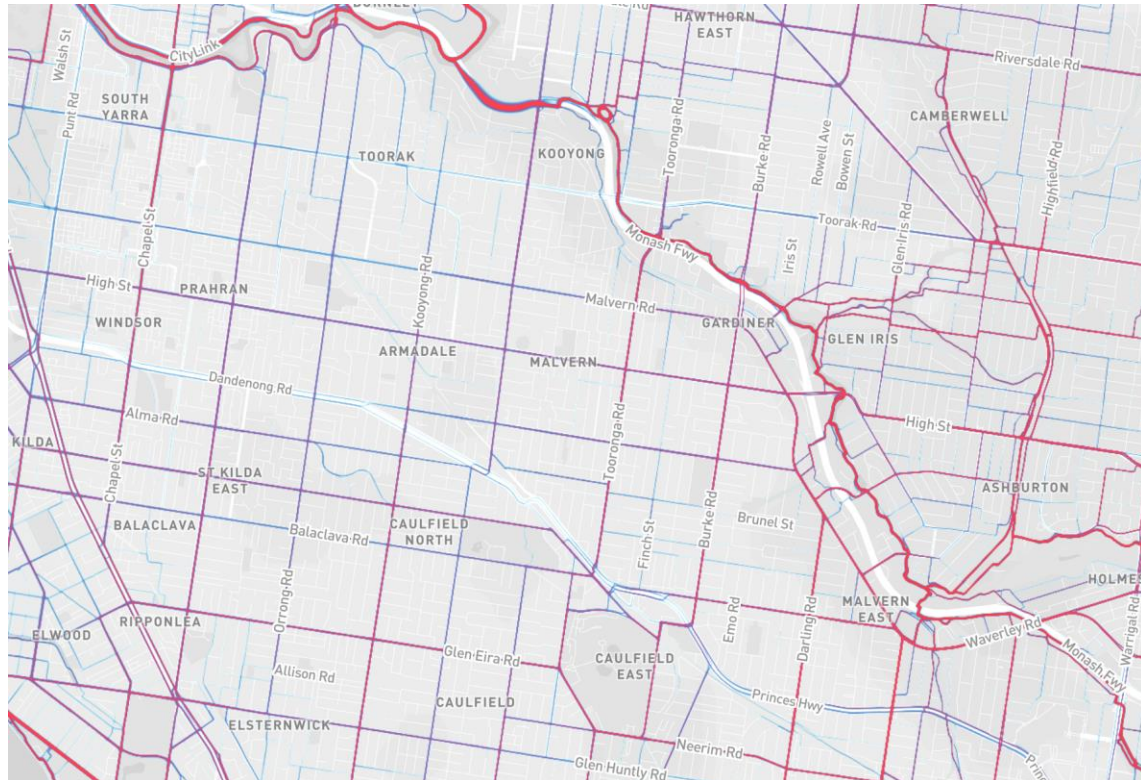
⁴³ Lee, A. (2008), [What is the economic contribution of cyclists compared to car drivers in inner suburban Melbourne's shopping strips?](#)

- Locations where a good-quality bicycle lane is provided, such as Tooronga Road (south end).

As a result, off-road paths were amongst the most used routes in the municipality.

Data from Strava provides a general indication of cycling usage across the municipality and its surrounds.⁴⁴

Figure 14: Cycling Usage – Strava Global Heatmap



Network usage is generally higher along:

- Comfortable off-road trails, such as Scotchmans Creek, Gardiners Creek, Main Yarra Trails
- Key north-south cycling corridors, such as Chapel Street, Burke Road, Darling Road and Tooronga Road.
- Popular shopping areas, such as Chapel Street and High Street.
- Other areas where there are bicycle facilities, such as Malvern Road.

Network usage is generally lower along:

- High-traffic, high-speed arterial roads, such as Punt Road and Dandenong Road
- Roads which are not safe to people cycling (parked cars, comingling with traffic and trams, higher traffic volumes, no cycling facilities), such as Toorak Road and Malvern Road

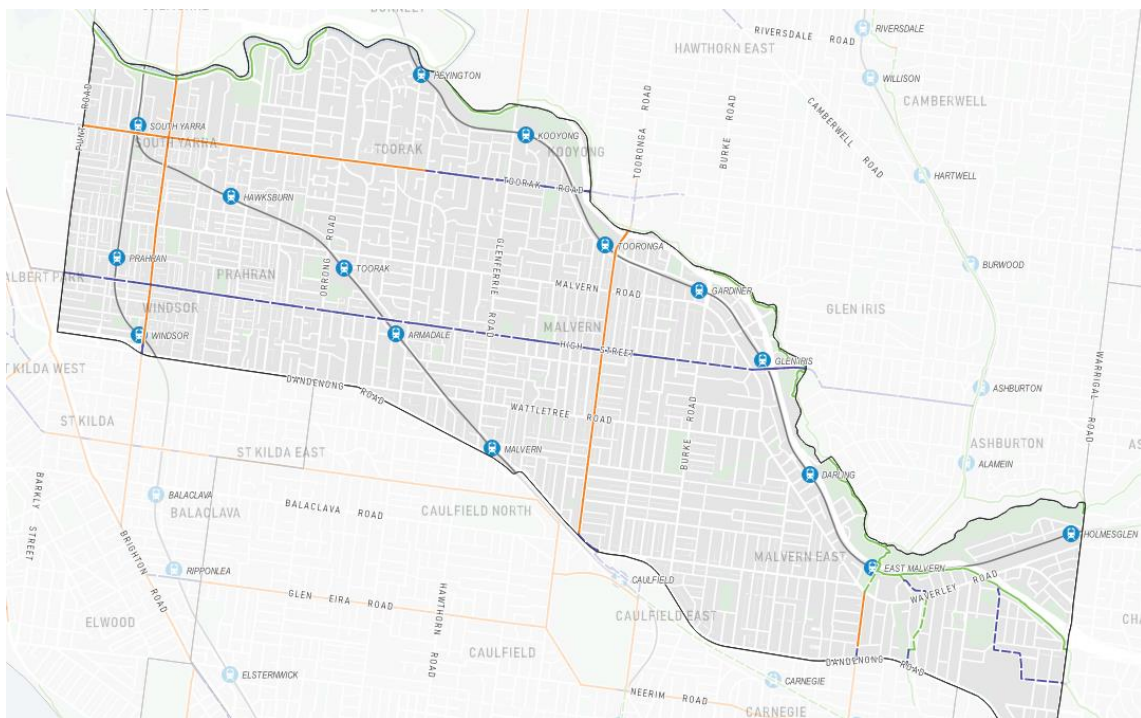
⁴⁴ It is noted that this data only captures those using the Strava app, and as such may overrepresent more regular/experienced people cycling.

Initiative 3: Support state investment in cycling

The state government has identified a range of Strategic Cycling Corridors which aim to provide a safer, lower-stress and more direct cycling journey to key destinations in Melbourne and Victoria – the “arterials of the bicycle network”. These corridors link to activity centres, the central city, key employment areas and other key locations. State government will “prioritise investment in the strategic cycling corridors with the current and potential highest levels of demand” and has committed to working with local councils and industry to update guidelines for strategic cycling corridors to understand what a high-quality network of cycling infrastructure looks like. The state government has also committed to working with local Councils to connect strategic cycling corridors on local streets, arterial roads, along rail corridors and in green spaces, particularly to schools, train stations and activity centres. The corridors will be designed to “maximise the separation of cyclists and motor vehicles”.

The current Strategic Cycling Corridors are outlined below. However, the state government has noted that part of implementation will involve reviewing the priorities of various modes of transport on strategic cycling corridors, which may result in the relocation of some corridors.

Current Strategic Cycling Corridors shown in purple:



Notes on report:

The community comments have been edited for length or spelling but meaning or intent has not been altered.