

3.2 Maling Road - Streetscape Upgrade Options

Executive Summary

Purpose

This report presents Councillors with the information necessary to decide on a preferred option for a future Maling Road upgrade, including:

- Results of the community engagement undertaken on Maling Road Streetscape Options between 24 April – 22 May 2023.
- Traffic considerations.
- Placemaking assessment.
- Initial cost comparison.

Background

In July 2020, Councillors resolved to adopt the Maling Road Place Plan, which had been informed by more than 1,200 people sharing their ideas during community engagement. The adopted Place Plan is the guiding document for placemaking activities in Maling Road and presented projects and initiatives intended to revitalise the precinct. Upgrades to the Maling Road streetscape are a central component of the Place Plan.

The Place Plan presented a concept design for the streetscape upgrades and proposed converting the street to one-way traffic and included different options for on-street parking provision for future exploration.

The plan clarified that the final design of the streetscape was reliant on the outcomes of the Commuter Parking Project and would be subject to further community consultation. Community engagement on the Commuter Parking Project identified community concerns about increased traffic along Wattle Valley Road and funding for the project was ultimately withdrawn by the Federal Government.

In April-May 2023, community engagement was undertaken to gain an understanding of the community's preferences regarding the following two (2) streetscape concepts:

- Option 1 proposes to upgrade pedestrian amenity between Canterbury Road and Bryson Street and change the traffic circulation to a one-way street. This option increases the public space available by 300m² and involves the removal of 7 on-street parking spaces.
- Option 2 proposes to upgrade pedestrian amenity between Canterbury Road and Bryson Street with no changes to street traffic circulation. This option increases the public space available by 215m² and involves the removal of 11 on-street parking spaces.

This report provides a summary of the engagement outcomes and is intended to assist the decision-making process. Additional relevant aspects have also been considered in this report, including traffic, parking, placemaking, and a cost comparison

It is important to note that street upgrade options presented are concept designs only, subject to variations during the design development process.

Key Issues

Both streetscape upgrade options prepared for community consultation sought to achieve the following aims for the Maling Road precinct:

- Enhance overall streetscape amenity with upgrades to surfaces, kerbs, planting, street furniture and lighting
- Attract more visitors and shoppers to the precinct to increase its economic performance
- Improve pedestrian safety and ease of movement, and
- Maintain accessibility of the precinct in terms of parking supply and traffic movements

The streetscape upgrade had wide community support throughout consultation.

The main issue raised by some users of the shopping centre and residents are the traffic impacts associated with option 1, which proposes a change to the traffic conditions from the current two-way traffic to one-way traffic along Maling Road between Canterbury Road and Bryson Street.

To better understand the traffic impacts of the one-way street option (option 1), a traffic assessment report was prepared by external consultants. A summary of the report's findings was shared as part of the community engagement package.

This project currently has sufficient budget allocated to progress the design development package of a preferred option. Potential future construction will require separate funding which is not currently allowed for in the Council budget. A Quantity Surveyor has been engaged to provide a initial cost comparison for both options.

In summary, both streetscape options will greatly benefit the Maling Road shopping centre by improving the quantity and quality of public space available in the street, which will attract more visitors to the centre and therefore improving the economic performance of local traders.

On balance, it is considered that option 1 will best achieve the vision and principles set out in the Maling Road Place Plan.

Below is a table showing a summary assessment of both options:

	Option 1 (one-way)	Option 2 (two-way)
Traffic Displacement	Moderate	None
Parking Retention	7 spaces removed	11 spaces removed
Public Space Increase	300m ² increase in public space	215m ² increase in public space
Amenity & Pedestrian Safety	Very Good	Good
Community feedback	45% preferred	55% preferred
Preliminary Construction Cost Estimates	\$4m approx.	\$4m approx.
Best Achieves Place Vision	✓ ✓	✓

Next Steps

The proposed next steps for the Maling Road streetscape upgrade project are as follows:

1. Councillors to identify preferred streetscape option
2. Officers to update the Engage Boroondara project page with a summary of engagement outcomes and the next steps for the project.
3. Design development to commence on the preferred option (August 2023 –March 2024)
4. Street upgrade construction priority and funding to be discussed during future Council budget discussions

Officers' recommendation

That Council resolve to progress the design development of option 1 (one-way traffic between Canterbury Road and Bryson Street) for the upgrade of Maling Road.

Responsible director: **Scott Walker, Director Urban Living**

1. Purpose

This report presents Councillors with the information necessary to decide on a preferred option for a future Maling Road upgrade, including:

- Results of the community engagement undertaken on Maling Road Streetscape Options between 24 April – 22 May 2023
- Traffic considerations
- Placemaking assessment, and
- Initial cost comparison

2. Policy implications and relevance to community plan and council plan

The Maling Road Streetscape Upgrade project will play an important role in delivering on the adopted Maling Road Place Plan and key strategic objectives of the Boroondara Community Plan 2021- 31 (BCP).

Specifically, this project relates to the following themes of the BCP:

- Theme 1: Community, Services and Facilities
- Theme 5: Moving Around
- Theme 6: Local Economy

3. Background

Over 2019/20, more than 1,200 people shared their big ideas to revitalise Maling Road during community engagement. This feedback informed the preparation of the Maling Road Place Plan which was formally adopted by Council in August 2020.

The Place Vision states that: *Maling Road will offer a unique village feel, with its heritage character and diversity of shops complemented by playful, vibrant and safe spaces attracting people of all ages and backgrounds, morning and night.*

Principle 4 further seeks to: *Improve walkability and amenity of the street with generous footpaths and public spaces, safe crossings, places to sit and greenery that shades the street.*

The Plan proposed initiatives to revitalise the precinct, some of which have already been delivered, including heritage façade maintenance grants and community murals, while the laneway upgrades have received construction approval and works are scheduled to commence in 2023/24, subject to final confirmation.

The adopted Maling Road Place Plan presented a concept design for the streetscape upgrades which proposed converting the street to one-way traffic and included two options for on-street parking provision for future exploration. It was clarified in the plan that:

- the final design of the streetscape was reliant on the outcomes of the Commuter Parking Project, and

- the final design of the streetscape will be determined following further consultation with traders, stakeholders, and the community.

Subsequent community engagement on the Commuter Parking Project resulted in community resistance to increased traffic along Wattle Valley Road and funding for the project was ultimately withdrawn by the Federal Government.

Following the withdrawal of the Commuter Parking Project funding, the Placemaking Team refined the two streetscape upgrade options featured in the Place Plan.

Noting community feedback on the commuter parking project, and the interdependency between on-street parking, traffic lanes and the remaining space available for public realm upgrades, it was considered appropriate to undertake further engagement on two streetscape options that delivered public realm benefits via two different approaches to traffic and parking provision.

Revised options were taken to community engagement in April/May 2023. The purpose of this consultation stage was two-fold:

- To re-engage with the community and traders about the vision for the precinct and the benefit of the streetscape upgrades, and
- To seek community and trader feedback on the two options for upgrading the streetscape to inform future design development of a preferred option.

Both streetscape upgrade options seek to achieve the following goals:

- Enhance overall streetscape amenity with upgrades to road surfaces, kerbs, planting, street furniture and lighting
- Attract more visitors and shoppers to the precinct to increase its economic performance
- Improve pedestrian safety and ease of movement
- Maintain accessibility of the precinct in terms of parking supply and traffic movements

4. Outline of key issues/options

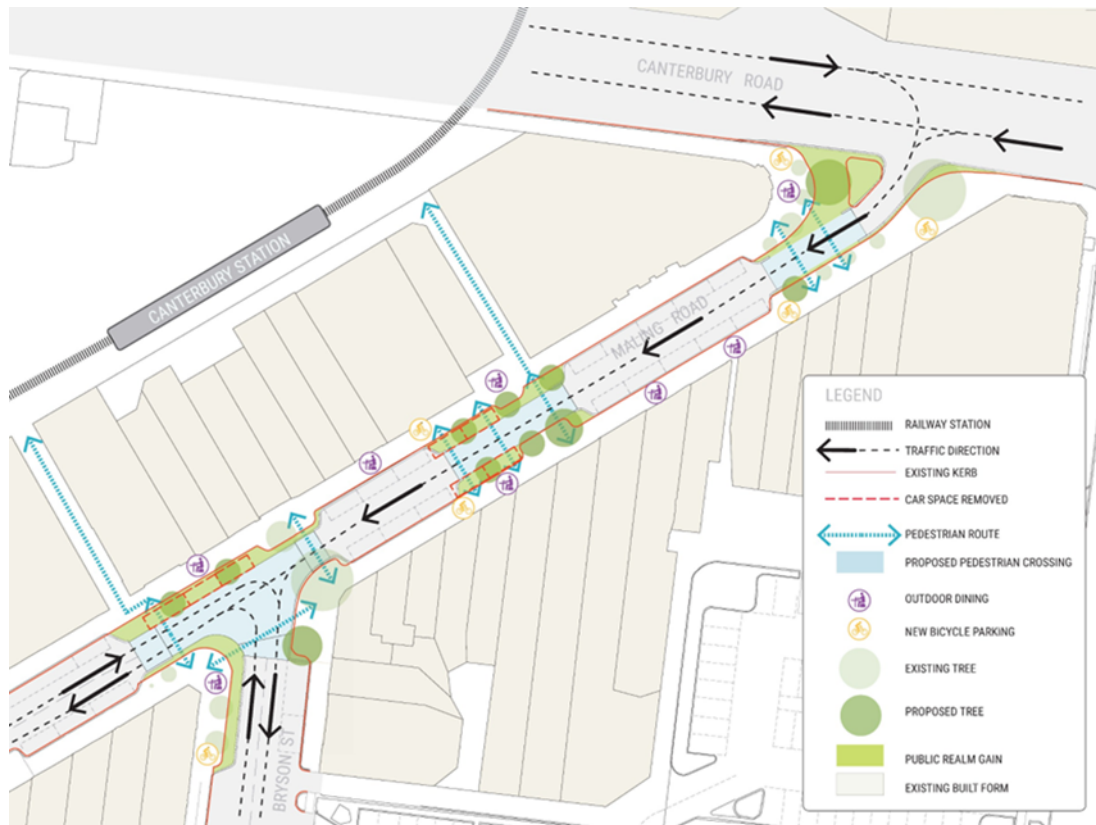
4.1 Street Upgrade Options

Option 1: One-way traffic

This option proposes to change the street traffic circulation from the current two way to one-way traffic between Canterbury Road and Bryson Street as shown in the diagram below.

This option was listed as one of the projects initiatives included in the endorsed Place Plan and involves:

- One-way traffic between Canterbury Road and Bryson Street
- Car parking both sides
- Retain most car parking spaces on the street (loss of only 7 spaces)
- Public realm area gain of approx. 300m²
- Raised pedestrian crossings to improve safety and pedestrian priority



Key Opportunities:

- One-way road improves the level of pedestrian priority and safety
- Upgraded interface with Canterbury Road ensures traffic calming and demarcates the heritage precinct
- Maximises public realm gain

Main Challenges:

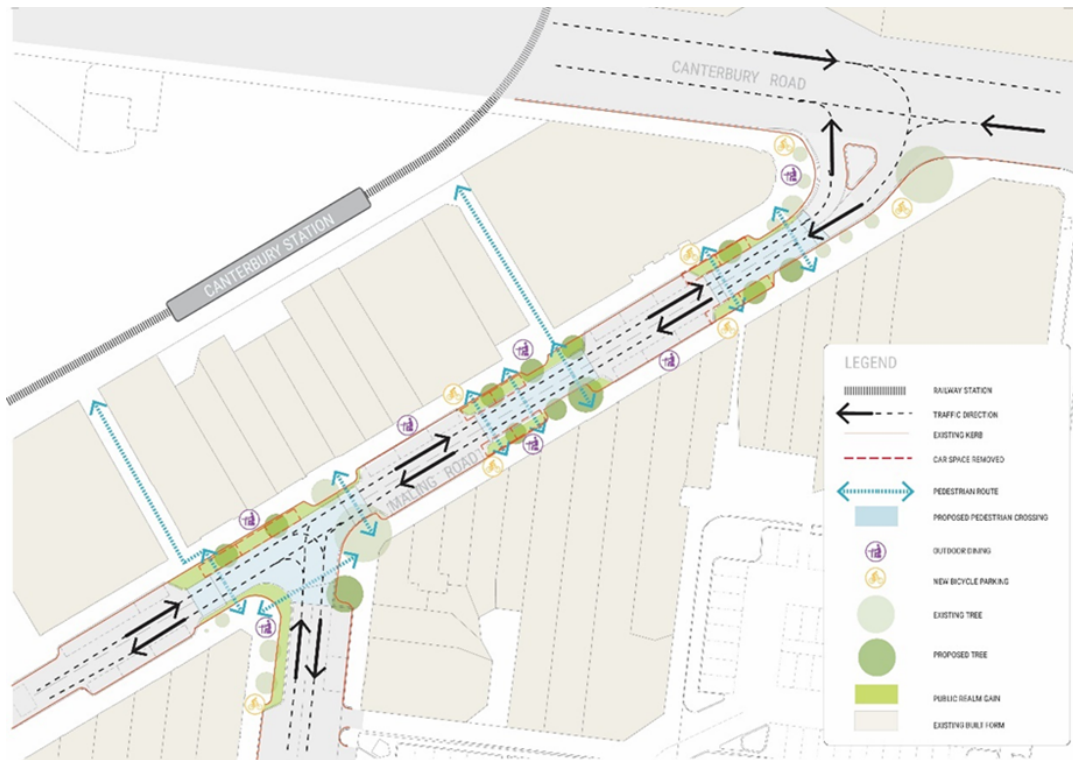
- One-way arrangement will displace traffic onto neighbouring streets, notably Wattle Valley Road.

Option 2: Two-way traffic

This option proposes to upgrade pedestrian amenity between Canterbury Road and Bryson Street with no changes to street traffic circulation as shown in the diagram below.

This option was not included in the endorsed Place Plan. It involves:

- Two-way traffic retained
- Car parking both sides
- More car parks removed to achieve public realm outcome (loss of 11 car spaces)
- Public realm area gain of approximately 215m²
- Raised pedestrian crossings to improve safety and pedestrian priority



Key opportunities:

- Two-way road maintains existing traffic conditions
- Improved safety and pedestrian amenity due to footpath widening and street crossovers

Main Challenges:

- Total new public realm achieved is less than provided by Option 1
- Higher parking loss than Option 1 required to achieve a reasonable public realm gain
- Two-way traffic with streetscape improvements delivers a good level of pedestrian safety and priority but less than Option 1.
- Minimal upgrades to Canterbury Road interface not able to achieve heritage precinct gateway treatment

Comparison of Options (areas are approximate only and subject to change during design development phase)

	Option 1 (one-way)	Option 2 (two-way)
Traffic Displacement	Moderate	None
Parking Retention	7 spaces removed	11 spaces removed
Public Space Increase	300m ² increase in public space	215m ² increase in public space
Amenity & Pedestrian Safety	Very Good	Good
Community feedback	45% preferred	55% preferred
Preliminary Construction Cost Estimates	\$4m approx.	\$4m approx.
Best Achieves Place Vision	✓ ✓	✓

Both options have the potential to be refined to increase or decrease public realm space with associated changes contributing to a corresponding loss or gain of car parking spaces.

4.2 Traffic Impacts

Traffic modelling and distribution undertaken to assess the impact of the implementation of the one-way section of Maling Road result in the following changes to traffic volumes:

- An increase in northbound traffic of +912 vehicles per day (vpd) on Wattle Valley Road from 1663 vpd to 2575 vpd between the car park and Canterbury Road. South of the car park the increase in northbound traffic is expected to be 682 vpd for a total of 2245 vpd.
- Two-way daily traffic volumes in Wattle Valley Road are expected to increase from 3736 vpd to 4648 vpd between the car park and Canterbury Road. South of the car park, two-way daily volumes are expected to increase from 3506 vpd to 4188 vpd.
- A decrease in northbound traffic (-348 vpd) on Bryson Street.
- An increase in south bound traffic (+51 vpd) on Bryson Street.
- A decrease in north and southbound traffic (northbound: -18 vpd; southbound: -57 vpd) on Scott Street.
- An increase in westbound traffic (+593 vpd) and reduction in eastbound traffic (-552 vpd) along Maling Road south of Bryson Street.
- A decrease in traffic levels within the one-way section of Maling Road between Canterbury Road and Bryson Street, from 3396 vpd to 2271 vpd, a reduction of 33%.

With consideration of the above changes in daily traffic volumes on the surrounding network, it is important to note that:

- the increase in daily traffic volumes on local access streets (Bryson Street and Scott Street) and collector roads (Maling Road and Wattle Valley Road) would lead to daily totals that are well within the acceptable limits (3,000 and 7,000 vehicles per day respectively) as outlined in the City of Boroondara's Traffic Management Policy and associated Procedures.
- there would be an impact on residential amenity for Wattle Valley Road residents by virtue of the increase in traffic and this would need to be considered.

4.3 Status of Wattle Valley Road

The assessment of traffic issues is undertaken using Council's adopted Traffic Management Policy and Procedures 2018.

The purpose of the policy is to provide a framework to manage traffic within the municipality in a safe and equitable manner. It provides the relevant criteria for assessing traffic concerns and delivering initiatives that:

- improve road safety, and
- manage traffic speed and volumes.

In line with Council's Traffic Management Policy, Council's road network includes a range of road types and local roads are defined as:

- Local access streets: *Those streets not being arterial roads or collector roads and with the main function of providing access to abutting property. Local access streets are typically up to 7.5m wide and permit on-street parking on both sides of the road. These streets are longer than minor local access streets and can provide access to local shops, local parks, schools and community facilities. Footpaths are provided and bicycle movements are facilitated.*
- Collector roads: *These roads distribute traffic between the arterial/major roads and the local street network. They provide local connection between arterial/major roads and provide access to abutting property. Collector roads are generally wider and longer than local access streets. They can provide access to several local access streets, local shops, local parks, schools and community facilities. Footpaths are provided and bicycle movements can be accommodated on these roads.*

There are also categories for laneways, very narrow local access streets as well as Council major roads. Arterial roads managed by the Department of Transport and Planning, formerly VicRoads are excluded.

For local access streets carrying levels greater than 3,000 vehicles per day (vpd) and collector roads more than 7,000 vpd, further investigation is undertaken to determine the suitability of any intervention measures.

For the immediate project area, road types are as follows:

- both Maling Road and Wattle Valley Road are classified as collector roads, and
- Bryson Street, Cross Street, Logan Street, Milton Street are classified as local access streets.

Along with Wattle Valley Road and Maling Road, there are an additional 125 collector roads in the City of Boroondara. These collector roads vary in width, but typically range between 7m to 8m. Wattle Valley Road by comparison is in the order of 7.8m to 8m in width.

In terms of the suitability of Wattle Valley Road due to its definition as a collector road, it is noted that:

- the northern section of Wattle Valley Road provides access between Canterbury Road and Riversdale Road (two arterial roads),
- the road provides direct access to seven other local roads, the Wattle Valley Road car park which services the Maling Road shopping strip and Sienna College at its south end, and
- it is in the order of 1.1km in length excluding the section between Riversdale Road and Toorak Road which extends for an additional length of 1.6km.

Wattle Valley Road closely aligns with the criteria for collector roads and has always been defined as a collector road dating back to the old City of Camberwell days due to these factors, that is, it is not your conventional local access street.

Council's policy and procedures reflect an emphasis on managing traffic from a safety and speed perspective, rather than volume and it is noted that this

section of Wattle Valley Road has been treated with a series of speed humps and a roundabout to regulate speeds.

If the one-way option is to proceed, it is acknowledged there would be an increase in traffic on Wattle Valley Road, as follows:

- Two-way daily traffic volumes in Wattle Valley Road are expected to increase from the current 3736 vpd to 4648 vpd between the car park and Canterbury Road, an increase of 912 vehicles over a day (24%).
- South of the car park, two-way daily volumes are expected to increase from the current 3506 vpd to 4188 vpd, a smaller increase of 682 vehicles (20%).

Conversely, within the one-way section of Maling Road between Canterbury Road and Bryson Street, traffic levels would reduce by 1125 vpd from 3396 vpd to 2271 vpd, a reduction of 33%.

Both sections of Wattle Valley Road would lead to daily totals that are well within the acceptable limit of 7,000 vehicles per day, as outlined in Council's Traffic Management Policy and associated Procedures.

It is also acknowledged there would be an impact on residential amenity for Wattle Valley Road residents by virtue of the increase in traffic and this would need to be considered. However, the impact is well within what would be expected of any road with the road hierarchy status of Wattle Valley Road.

With respect to the performance of the intersection of Canterbury Road and Wattle Valley Road, a number of measures are proposed to manage this additional level of traffic, including:

- Extension of the right turn ban into Canterbury Road from Wattle Valley Road from '8am to 9am, Monday to Friday' to '7:30am to 9am, Monday to Friday'.
- Introduction of a right turn ban into Canterbury Road from Wattle Valley Road between '3pm to 6pm, Monday to Friday'.
- Extension of Keep Clear marking in Canterbury Road to cover the full width of Wattle Valley Road.
- Localised widening of Wattle Valley Road for approximately 1m for a short distance of 12m to allow for sufficient width to cater for a left turning motorist and a right turning motorist during off-peak periods.

Notably the extension of the right turn ban in the morning peak period and new right turn ban in the afternoon peak period will have the greatest benefit in managing the additional level of traffic in Wattle Valley Road as well as managing existing traffic issues.

Further details are included in Section 4.6.

With respect to the intersection of Canterbury Road and Maling Road, the morning peak period experiences the greatest level of congestion. The citybound queues in Canterbury Road extend east from Balwyn Road beyond Maling Road. The introduction of Keep Clear marking at the intersection will assist in improving right turn access into Maling Road and reduce the level of queuing and delays for those motorists wishing to access Maling Road.

4.4 Planning Scheme Clause 56.06 'Access and Mobility Management'

During the consultation phase, reference was made to Clause 56.06 of the Boroondara Planning Scheme, where streets carrying traffic levels between 3000 vpd to 70000 vpd should be at least 11.6m wide, whereas Wattle Valley Road is 7.8m wide.

Clause 56.06 'Access and Mobility Management' is applicable to greenfield sites for the development of new subdivisions and provides details on how a new street network should be designed. The associated practice note states that the standard should be met, however the relevant Council also has discretion in its application.

Clause 56.06 refers to a 'Connector Street - Level 2', which includes two 3.5m lanes, 6m minimum verge widths (nature strips and footpaths), fully indented parking at 2.3m into the verges and additional spaces for cyclists on the road varying from 0.7m to 1.7m for each direction. The typical volume for this street is in the range of 3000 vpd to 7000 vpd.

Clause 56.06 whilst ideal for the planning of new subdivisions, is not suitable for established inner urban areas where the street network was established 100 plus years ago.

Rather than Clause 56.06, Council has developed its own Traffic Management Policy and associated Procedures to manage traffic, and this is consistent with practice across other Councils.

Council's policy and procedures reflect an emphasis on managing traffic from a safety and speed perspective, rather than volume and it is noted this section of Wattle Valley Road has been treated with a series of speed humps and a roundabout to regulate speeds.

4.5 Use of the Wattle Valley Road / Bryson Street Car Park

Should one-way traffic be implemented on Maling Road between Canterbury Road and Bryson Street, the consultants for the Traffic Report have estimated that 40 vehicles will use the Wattle Valley Road Bryson Street car park to cut through to Wattle Valley Road in the morning peak hour (1 vehicle every 1.5 minutes) and 26 in the afternoon peak hour (1 vehicle every 2.3 minutes).

Whilst there would be some cut through traffic through the car park initially, this is expected to significantly reduce with time as the community adjusts to the new one-way layout and opts to use alternative access routes to access Canterbury Road.

For example, northbound traffic using Maling Road to access Canterbury Road in a citybound direction is unlikely to detour through the car park to access Wattle Valley Road, in an opposite direction to their intended travel to then double back in a citybound direction. Rather, the use of alternative roads such as Prospect Hill Road and a network of streets further west, Wattle Valley Road or the use of Warburton Road and the railway underpass to access Canterbury Road would offer a better and more direct alternative.

For northbound traffic using Maling Road to access Canterbury Road and then Rochester Road or Balwyn Road, alternative access routes via Prospect Hill Road and Wattle Valley Road and the use of Cross Street and Wattle Valley Road to access Canterbury Road would be available.

4.6 Canterbury Road / Wattle Valley Road Potential Improvements

There are pre-existing issues associated with the intersection of Wattle Valley Road and Canterbury Road. These are primarily during the afternoon peak period where a small number of right turning motorists trying to access Canterbury Road contribute to congestion, queuing and delays for motorists wishing to turn left into Canterbury Road (the main movement).

The consultants have recommended the following measures to improve traffic flow:

- Introduce a right turn ban from Wattle Valley Road into Canterbury Road for the afternoon peak period.
- Extend the Keep Clear line marking in Canterbury Road to include the full width of Wattle Valley Road.
- Implement Keep Clear line marking in Canterbury Road at Maling Road.
- Introduce a 40 km/h speed limit in Canterbury Road between Balwyn Road and Willandra Avenue.

Changes to, and additional Keep Clear marking will require approval from the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP).

Similarly, approval for a lower speed limit would also require DTP approval and ultimately funding and delivery by DTP.

Officers consider that a potential right turn ban in the afternoon should apply between 3pm to 6pm during the week as this would also include the afternoon school peak.

The introduction of a right turn ban in the morning peak between 8am to 9am Monday to Friday in 2017 significantly improved traffic flow and reduced congestion during this period. As the morning peak commences earlier at 7:30am, extending the turn ban to 7:30am to 9am would also have benefits in improving traffic flow.

In addition, officers consider there is merit in localised widening of Wattle Valley Road for approximately 1m for a short distance of 12m measured from the intersection with Canterbury Road, to allow for sufficient width to cater for a left turning motorist and a right turning motorist.

Localised widening would improve current delays caused by right turning motorists who do not prop as far right as possible to the centre line, requiring left turning motorists to wait until the right turning motorist has entered Canterbury Road. Widening would impact on the loss of two parking bays on the west side of Wattle Valley Road immediately south of Canterbury Road.

This measure would provide a benefit during off peak periods when the morning and afternoon right turn ban would not apply.

4.7 Maling Road Potential Improvements

From the analysis undertaken, the consultants have recommended the following actions if the one-way option is to proceed:

- Advanced warning signs from the southern approaches to Maling Road to redirect road users seeking to access Canterbury Road.
- Repeater signs to be located such that motorists can follow a route to access Canterbury Road.
- Potential speed reduction in the one-way segment of Maling Road reduced to 20km/h or reduced to 10km/h and governed by a Shared Zone Area.
- Existing left turn slip lane to access Canterbury Road to be removed.

If the two-way option was to be supported, a lower speed limit to 20 km/h for the shopping precinct could also be considered.

With either option, as part of the streetscape works, the four sets of bluestone rumble strips in Maling Road between Canterbury Road and immediately south of Scott Steet should be removed.

4.8 Turning Circles

In order to understand access conditions for service and heavy vehicles using the existing intersection of Bryson Street and Maling Road and how access may be affected with a one-way option, consultants were engaged to undertake a vehicle turning circle analysis.

Due to the alignment of Bryson Street with Maling Road, the left turn from Bryson Street into Maling Road was found to be the most restrictive turn.

The findings are as follows:

1. Existing conditions:
 - Larger 12.5m vehicles (standard bus size) are not able to safely achieve the left or right turn from Bryson Street into Maling Road.
 - 8.8m service vehicles (standard waste collection truck size) can currently achieve the left turn from Bryson Street into Maling Road.
 - 8.8m service vehicles can accommodate all turning movements at the intersection.
2. Option 1's proposed conditions (no right turn into Maling Road from Bryson Street):
 - Larger 12.5m vehicles (standard bus size) would still not be able to achieve the left turn from Bryson Street into Maling Road.
 - 8.8m service vehicles (standard waste collection truck size) would continue to be able to achieve the left turn from Bryson Street into Maling Road. 8.8m service vehicles will be able to accommodate all turning movements at the intersection.

4.9 Parking Loss Assessment

A Parking Study Assessment was undertaken by Cardno Consultants in 2019. The study area consisted of Maling Road, the streets abutting the shopping precinct and the surrounding commercial-zoned land including Canterbury Road.

Cardno commissioned AusTraffic, an independent traffic and parking data collection company, to undertake detailed parking surveys on Thursday 24th October 2019 between the hours of 7:00am and 11:00pm.

The overall car parking study showed a reasonable level of parking demand. Across the study area, car parking occupancy reached a maximum of 73% at 1:30pm. The occupancy stayed above 60% from 9:30am to 3:30pm, as is consistent with peak business operating hours.

Based on the above parking data, it is considered that the existing parking supply in the area will be able to absorb the potential loss of 7 spaces for Option 1 (One-Way proposal) or 11 spaces for Option 2 (Two-Way proposal) in Maling Road using parking availability in Maling Road, the Bryson Street car park and the Bryson Street Wattle Valley Road car park at the peak time of 1:30pm.

At other times, prior to and after 1:30pm, parking availability significantly increases.

It is important to remember both street upgrade concepts have the potential to be refined during the design development process to increase or decrease public realm space with associated changes contributing to a corresponding loss or gain of car parking spaces.

5. Consultation/communication

The recent engagement sought community feedback on two options for future streetscape upgrades and associated changes to parking and traffic movements along Maling Road. A summary of the engagement undertaken between 24 April and 22 May 2023 is as follows:

Participants were asked to list the options in order of preference. Total engagement participation results after a four-week period are as follows:

- 836 responses on Engage Boroondara website
- 316 of those providing additional comment on Option 1
- 396 of those providing additional comment on Option 2
- 23 written submissions

Overall engagement outcomes - of the total first preference of 836 responses:

- 45% preferred option 1 (one-way traffic)
- 55% preferred option 2 (two-way traffic)

Community preferences by category:

Category	Total	Option 1: One Way	Option 2: Two Way
Residents	683	43% (294)	57% (389)
Visitors	132	55% (73)	45% (59)
Traders	21	48% (10)	52% (11)
Total	836	45% (377)	55% (459)

5.1 Trends over time

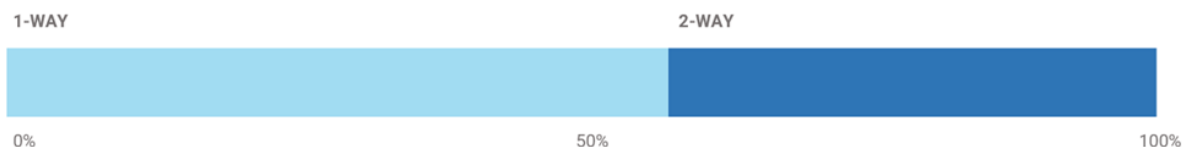
An 'Information Paper' was circulated on 17 May 2023 (start of week 4 of the engagement period) by local community members outlining views on the two options. This paper presented some information about the options in a way that could be misinterpreted by readers. Distribution of this paper coincided with a distinct change in option preference trends in the final week of consultation. During the first 3 weeks of consultation, option 1 had been identified as the preferred option, but after the circulation of the 'Information Paper' there was a marked change towards option 2.

This shift in preference is demonstrated in the graph below. Prior to distribution of the letter, the 586 responses received resulted in the following:

- 58% preferred option 1 (one-way traffic)
- 42% preferred option 2 (two-way traffic)

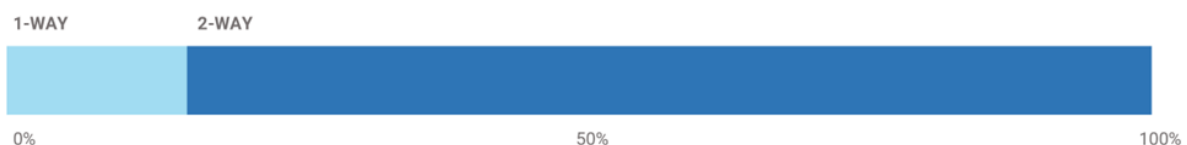
WEEKS 1-3 (24 April to 15 May)

586 of 835 responses



WEEK 4 (16 to 22 May)

249 of 835 responses



5.2 Comments/sentiment breakdown on Engage:

A total 753 comments were received during the community engagement period. A breakdown of these can be read below:

Option 1 One-way

Total Received 342	
Common Theme (some comments contain more than one 'theme')	Number of comments per theme
Desire to alleviate congestion	197
Desire to improve pedestrian safety	144
Desire for improved public realm	103
Desire for increased vegetation	28
Proposal should go further	26
Other	34

Option 2 Two-way

Common Theme (some comments contain more than one 'theme')	Number of comments per theme
Concern for traffic congestion	268
Interest to retain two directional movement	44
Requesting no changes to existing streetscape	21
Concern for safety	18
Concern for trader viability	14
Inconvenience of potential traffic changes	13
Limit parking loss	9
In support of lower traffic speed limit	8
Concern for heritage	2
Comments not included in proposed scope of works	76
Other	11

An additional 23 submissions were made in writing to the Placemaking email address, of which the comments/sentiment is as follows:

Total Received 23	
Expressed Support Option 1	6
Expressed Support Option 2	4
Other	13
Common Theme	Number of comments per theme
Express concern for traffic congestion	12
Express concern for safety	8
Suggest bolder reduction in vehicles	4
Express concern for heritage	2
Express desire for no change	2

It is worth noting that the Maling Road Business Association made a written submission highlighting the following comments, preferences, and priorities:

- General support for street upgrades
- Preference for Option 2 (two-way street)
- Need to improve the shopping strip entrance treatment via better lighting and signage at the intersection with Canterbury Road
- Importance of minimising on-street car parking loss
- Pedestrian safety must be ensured
- Support for traffic calming measures.

General traders' sentiment was also captured in the survey with a total of 21 preferences submitted, with:

- 10 (48%) supporting Option 1 (one-way street) and,
- 11 (52%) supporting Option 2 (two-way street).

5.3 Interpreting Community Feedback

Community feedback is a consideration for Council when selecting the preferred options to pursue. However, given the significant support for both options and changes in response trends during consultation, it is considered that the results of community engagement do not demonstrate a sufficiently clear preference for either option.

It is also important to note that the purpose of the community engagement and gathering stakeholder feedback is not simply about selecting a fixed option, but rather about guiding the refinement of a final streetscape design. Mixed feedback is still valuable in refining design options further to find the right balance between competing priorities. It can also help demonstrating to the community the wide range of interests and perspectives that Council needs to consider.

Given the above, it is recommended that feedback and comments received continue to guide the refinement of the project, and that the preferred option selection also be informed by the following considerations:

- Traffic implications
- Parking considerations
- Public realm & pedestrian safety benefits
- Initial cost comparison

6. Financial and resource implications

This project currently has sufficient budget allocated to progress the design development package of a preferred option.

Potential future construction will require separate funding which is not currently allowed for in the Council budget.

A preliminary construction cost analysis was conducted by a Quantity Surveyor indicating the following initial cost estimates:

- Option 1 (one-way traffic) – \$3,161,000
- Option 2 (two-way traffic) – \$3,097,000

Internal review of the Quantity Surveyor cost estimates indicated that the estimated costs for various project components could be higher resulting in an approximate increase of \$1,086,960 to the above options. Final project cost will be determined following further design development of the preferred option and consideration of cost management opportunities and potential cost escalations.

The difference in construction costs between the 2 options is relatively small, around 2% of the estimated construction cost. This indicates that construction costs are not a significant factor in determining the preferred option.

These preliminary cost estimates are indicative only, and further work will need to be undertaken on the design of the preferred option before a project budget can be determined. Any future budget bid for construction of the preferred option will also present Council with the following information:

- project delivery priority and timelines, and
- construction cost and associated resources

7. Governance issues

No officers involved in the preparation of this report have a general or material conflict of interest requiring disclosure under chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Boroondara City Council.

The recommendation contained in this report is compatible with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 as it does not raise any human rights issues.

8. Social and environmental issues

Placemaking plays an important role in delivering the Boroondara Community Plan and contributes to a range of social, health, economic and environmental benefits. Investing in quality community places promotes healthier lifestyles, which increases people's resilience to health risks.

Access to convivial neighbourhoods not only encourages more walking, but also encourages interaction between people, thereby increasing a sense of community, which in turn benefits mental and physical health.

Through placemaking, places can also become more environmentally sustainable. This can be achieved through adding greenery, improving walkability, installing new technologies, enhancing public transport access and providing shelter to protect from the elements.

Importantly, placemaking initiatives will also play an important role in assisting local businesses and the Maling Road community throughout the recovery from the impacts of the COVID19 pandemic.

9. Conclusion

The project team considers that either option will deliver substantial benefits to the public amenity of Maling Road, improving visitation, trading opportunities, and overall liveability. However, on balance, option 1 would best achieve the vision and principles set out in the Maling Road Place Plan.

Below is a final assessment featuring key factors to consider in identifying a preferred street upgrade option:

1) Traffic

Regardless of which option is preferred, a number of viable solutions have been identified to improve existing congestion at the Canterbury Road and Wattle Valley Road intersection.

One-way street considerations include:

- Traffic levels on the one-way section of Maling Road are projected to decrease by 1125 vpd (33%).
- Traffic levels on Wattle Valley Road are projected to increase by 912 vpd (24%) north of the car park and 682 vpd (20%) south of the car park.
- Total traffic volumes projected on Wattle Valley Road will be well within the acceptable limits.
- Existing left turn slip lane to access Canterbury Road to be removed.
- Potential speed reduction in one-way segment of Maling Road

Two-way street considerations include:

No traffic changes are proposed in this option with the exception of a lower speed limit to 20 km/r for the shopping precinct which could be considered.

2) Parking

Parking considerations are similar for both options, although option 2 retains a higher number of on-street car parks, which may benefit local traders. Other considerations include:

- A Parking Study Assessment showed a reasonable level of parking demand, with a maximum occupancy of 73% at 1:30pm. The occupancy stayed above 60% from 9:30am to 3:30pm, during peak business hours.
- The Study indicated that the existing parking supply in the area will be able to absorb the proposed on-street parking reduction of 7-11 spaces in Maling Road.

3) Provision of Public Space

Both streetscape upgrade options will increase the provision of public space, which will allow for more landscaping, seating and pedestrian spaces. Option 1 provides the most public space with 300m² of additional space for the centre.

4) Amenity & Pedestrian Safety

Both streetscape options will contribute towards improved amenity, landscaping and pedestrian safety, although option 1 is generally preferred in this regard due to the larger area of public space and the one-way traffic enabling a safer pedestrian environment. The one-way option also creates a more welcoming interface with Canterbury Road, by converting a turning lane into public realm and landscaping.

5) Community Feedback

Community engagement received a very high response, with similar support for both options.

After the first 3 weeks of consultation, community responses favoured option 1 as the preferred streetscape with the 586 responses received resulting in the following:

- 58% preferred option 1 (one-way traffic)
- 42% preferred option 2 (two-way traffic)

A late surge in response preferencing option 2 resulted in it being the most popular option at the conclusion of consultation. From the total 836 responses:

- 45% preferred option 1 (one-way traffic)
- 55% preferred option 2 (two-way traffic)

Given the significant support for both options, and changes in the response trends during consultation, it is officers' view that the results of community engagement do not demonstrate a sufficiently clear preference for either option.

6) Indicative Costing

The quantity surveyor's opinion of cost shows a similar total cost for both options, which means this is not a significant factor in determining the preferred option.

Summary Table of Options Assessment

In summary, both streetscape options will greatly benefit the Maling Road shopping centre by attracting more visitors and uplifting the economic performance of local traders.

On balance, it is considered that option 1 would best achieve the vision and principles set out in the Maling Road Place Plan.

	Option 1 (one-way)	Option 2 (two-way)
Traffic Displacement	Moderate	None
Parking Retention	7 spaces removed	11 spaces removed
Public Space Increase	300m ² increase in public space	215m ² increase in public space
Amenity & Pedestrian Safety	Very Good	Good
Community feedback	45% preferred	55% preferred
Preliminary Construction Cost Estimates	\$4m approx.	\$4m approx.
Best Achieves Place Vision	✓ ✓	✓

Manager: David Cowan, Manager Planning and Placemaking

Report officer: Arturo Ruiz, Head of Placemaking