

ITEM NO: 27

SUBJECT: IMPROVEMENTS TO ACCESSIBILITY IN PIONEER PLACE, KATOOMBA
FOR PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

FILE NO: F00215 - 09/214135

Management Plan Link

Principal Activity: Moving Around

Service: Traffic Management

Project: This report does not relate to a Management Plan project

Recommendations:

1. *That the Council note the report;*
 2. *That the Council receive a further report on the matter be presented at the Council meeting of 8 June 2010 that includes details of medium and longer term measures; and*
 3. *That the Council give consideration to undertaking a consultation and master planning exercise for the Pioneer Place precinct in the next available management plan.*
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Report by Group Manager, Community & Corporate:**Reason for report**

At its meeting of 10 November 2009, the Council resolved:

"1. *That the Council receives a report that individually addresses each of the following situations and outlines a variety of methods (this includes immediate, low-cost measures, shorter and medium term structural changes, and long term planning for this area) that can be used to improve:*

- *The pedestrian safety of Pioneer Place, Katoomba;*
- *Access and use for cyclists of Pioneer Place, Katoomba;*
- *The accessibility of Pioneer Place, Katoomba for people with a range of disabilities and mobility restrictions;*

2. *That the report includes how:*

- *Any future development of Pioneer Place adheres to principles of accessibility, and improves access as per the above reports, for pedestrians, cyclists and people with a disability;*
- *That development meets the needs of the upper mountains community; and*
- *The proposed community consultation/engagement program for future development in Pioneer Place will be organised."*

(Minute No. 491, 10 November 2009)

Existing conditions and some possible options for further investigation

This report describes the existing conditions and identifies some possible options for improvement. The full scope of the matter will require detailed further investigation of issues, options, costs, funding and timelines which will be undertaken and reported back to the Council at its meeting of 8 June 2010.

Traffic, pedestrian and access conditions in Pioneer Place

Pioneer Place (38 to 40 Parke Street, Katoomba) is shown on the Council Assets Map as being mostly located on land designated as Council Operational Land.

The north-south section of Pioneer Place, Katoomba is a split level road running from Waratah Street to Pryor Place. The upper section is one-way northbound and the lower section is one-way southbound as shown on the attached aerial photo.



The east-west section extending from Parke Street to the north south section of Pioneer Place is sign posted Pryor Place but is included for consideration.

The one-way northbound (upper) section has 90-degree parking on the east and west side of the roadway, for about 116 vehicles plus 3 disabled parking spaces. The one-way southbound (lower) section has 60 degree parking on the western side for about 72 vehicles and eight 90 degree parking spaces beside the liquor store, plus 2 disability parking spaces and a space for motorcycles.

Traffic speeds are generally low due to the nature of the car park and frequent parking manoeuvres along the roadway. However vehicles travelling at higher speeds have been observed particularly on the southbound or lower section.

There are no current traffic counts, pedestrian counts or vehicle speed data along Pioneer Place.

The northbound (upper) section provides access to the Coles and Franklins Supermarkets while the southbound (lower) section provides access to several small shops and a liquor store. The east-west section signposted Pryor Place, is a two-way road lane marked as two lanes (one lane in each direction) with 90-degree parking on the north side and parallel parking on the south side of the roadway.

Pedestrian conditions

Pedestrian movements between the northbound (upper) section and the southbound (lower) section are via a pedestrian ramp opposite the Coles Supermarket or via the footpath from Waratah Street or Pryor Place. There are also pedestrian movements from the footpath on the southbound (lower) section across Pioneer Place to and from the underground car park access.

The pedestrian ramp does not meet the current Australian Standards guideline for use by all categories of persons with a disability. At its steepest the current ramp is steeper than 1 to 10 (1.1metres height difference over a length of around 11metres). The ramp grade recommended by the Australian Standards (AS 1428.3-1992: Design for access and mobility - Requirements for children and adolescents with physical disabilities) varies depending on the length of the ramp. The recommendation is a grade of 1 to 22 over a maximum ramp length of 9m for all disability groups.

The northbound (upper) section has a 2.5m wide footpath behind the car parking spaces next to the Coles Supermarket building. There is a marked foot crossing from the top of the pedestrian ramp to the entrance to the supermarket. A raised speed hump is located just prior to this pedestrian crossing.

The southbound (lower) section has a 2m wide raised footpath along the east side of the roadway. The raised kerb separates pedestrians from the through traffic. There are no marked foot crossings across the roadway. Pedestrians can walk through from Katoomba Street to the footpath along the southbound (lower) section of Pioneer Place at several locations. These include through several private businesses, along Waratah Street, Hapenny Lane walkway, Katoomba Arcade, Penny Lane walkway and along Pryor Place.

Possible options for further investigation to improve pedestrian safety

The northbound (upper) section is considered satisfactory as it is a car park environment with low traffic speeds which are also controlled by the speed hump adjacent to the marked foot crossing.

A possible long-term treatment option for the southbound (lower) section could be to create an environment that would allow the southbound (lower) section of Pioneer Place to be declared a pedestrian and traffic shared zone. Under RTA Technical Direction 'Shared Zone Signs' all Shared Zones in NSW must display a speed limit of 10 km/h. A Shared Zone is a network of roads in an area in which pedestrians and motor vehicles share the road space. Drivers must not exceed a speed of 10 km/h and must give way to pedestrians at all times. The RTA Guide 'Sharing the Main Street 2nd Edition February 2000' outlines measures that can taken to create the appropriate environment for a Shared Zone such as raised thresholds, raised speed cushions or changes in the road alignment to discourage speeding.

If a Shared Zone is not able to be implemented then other measures to improve pedestrian safety could include short sections of railings along the edge of the footpath on Pioneer Place opposite where the walkways between Katoomba Street and Pioneer Place exit onto Pioneer Place. The purpose being to discourage pedestrians from walking straight out onto the roadway if they do not realise they have exited the walkway. The option of a raised pedestrian marked foot crossing opposite the entrance to the pedestrian ramp to the upper section and a raised section of pavement at the underground car park access could also be considered.

Possible options for further investigation to improve access and use for cyclists

There are no special provisions for cyclists along the northbound (upper) section and the southbound (lower) section of Pioneer Place. Cyclists mix with local traffic along both roadways and are not permitted to ride on the footpath unless they are under 12 years of age. The angled parking and the movement of vehicles into and out of these spaces is considered to not be an environment that encourages cycle movement. There are no bike racks that cyclists can use to secure their bicycle.

The possible implementation of the Shared Zone concept would reduce traffic speeds along the southbound (lower) section of Pioneer Place and while not removing the movements of parking vehicles would improve safety and amenity. A possible option could also be to provide bicycle racks along the upper and lower sections of Pioneer Place at strategic locations so that cyclist can secure their bicycles.

Possible options for further investigation to improve accessibility for people with a range of disabilities and mobility restrictions

There are three parking spaces for those with a disability on the northbound (upper) section and two on the southbound (lower) section of Pioneer Place.

The pedestrian ramp between the upper and lower sections of Pioneer Place does not comply with Australian Standards for use by all categories of persons with a disability. It is not practicable to reconstruct the ramp to meet requirements for disability access. However, persons with a disability are able to park in the upper or lower disability parking spaces if they intend to shop in either location.

Future development in Pioneer Place

There is potential for future development proposals within the next few years which will undergo assessment and consultation as appropriate to the development at that time. This would include such matters as accessibility, possible improvements for pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities.

It is recommended that a master planning exercise be undertaken that includes community involvement and consultation for the Pioneer Place and Prior Place precinct. This would establish a future vision for this area and guide any proposal that may emerge for development. This exercise would include detailed consideration of the objectives, design

inclusions and facilities to achieve an appropriate environment for persons with a disability, cyclists and pedestrians.

It is noted however that while master planning of this area is considered important, resources to undertake such an exercise are not currently available due to other demands on the strategic planners such as the State Government's requirements for a city wide LEP and the Springwood Town Centre project.

Sustainability Assessment

Effects	Positive	Negative
Environmental	Reviews possible improvement for traffic, cyclists and pedestrian safety, disabled accessibility and amenity.	Nil
Social	Reviews possible improvement to traffic, cyclist and pedestrian safety, disabled accessibility and amenity.	Nil
Economic	Reviews possible improvements to reduce traffic and pedestrian incidents and provide cost effective accessibility.	Nil
Governance	Complies with the Council's duty of care to review traffic, cyclist and pedestrian safety, disabled accessibility and amenity.	Nil

Financial implications for the Council

Further investigation and reporting improvement options will be covered in staff and operational budgets.

Legal and risk management issues for the Council

There are no legal or risk management issues from further investigating and reporting of improvement options.

External consultation

Nil.

Conclusion

The report is submitted for the Council's information and approval to conduct a further investigation and report.

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