

[REDACTED]
14 September, 2021

Victorian Planning Authority
C/- Arden Precinct
Level 25, 35 Collins St
Melbourne Vic 3000

Arden Precinct Consideration
- shared bicycle and pedestrian paths

Dear Sir or Madam,

This is to advocate for separate walking and bicycle paths in the Arden Plans. Sharing is a key factor determining whether a path is used by pedestrians.

I have deep concerns about the lack of safety of shared bicycle and pedestrian paths, some of which are included in the Plan.

Research shows that shared paths are unsafe for pedestrians. Shared paths also reduce the amount of walking, and they reduce the enjoyment of walking, which combine to then negatively impact population health.

Shared paths such as the Capital Trail beside Moonee Ponds Creek are dangerous to pedestrians because of the speed and aggression of bicyclists that use it, so it and similar shared paths become No-Go areas for anyone not on a bike. Sadly, I and our neighbours never walk the wonderful Capital Trail because it's just so dangerous.

Even places like the Errol St shopping precinct footpaths experience collisions between bikes and pedestrians. I and others have been hit by adult bicyclists as we walked out of shops such as the pharmacy! That's a footpath on which it's supposed to be illegal to ride bikes unless it's a child and accompanying adult. There are lots of other unreported impacts like this. Bikes are higher momentum and mass, so pedestrians suffer in collisions.

When planning new infrastructure, most experts in most countries say that best practice is to separate bicycles and pedestrians. What you design into Arden Precinct will have impacts for decades, so it's an extremely important feature of the proposal.

I thus ask you to adjust the presently proposed design to separate bikes and pedestrians, include walker-only sections, and be of comfortable width for two-way pedestrian traffic by couples walking together. That would ideally not be straight lines, where possible.

I and others would welcome these design criteria being applied to the Arden Plans.

Trading off the good and the bad to make policy decisions which maximise outcomes can be a delicious experience. I hope you have that experience when designing this infrastructure.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr) Richard Gould