

Consultation results:

A safer Hesse Street for pedestrians

Stage 1 Consultation

In January 2020, Council undertook consultation on a proposed pedestrian crossing in Gellibrand Street. One of the results of this consultation was a desire by members of the community for Council to investigate a broader response to pedestrian safety in the area. Council secured funding to conduct such a study, which has since been completed and included four recommendations from an independent transport safety specialist:

1. Convert two crossing points on Hesse Street to pedestrian crossings;
2. Set a permanent speed limit of 40km/h in Hesse Street;
3. Conduct further work examining nearby roundabouts for potential additional safety treatments; and
4. Further examine pedestrian and vehicle interaction at the north end of Gellibrand St.

We asked the community to share their thoughts on these recommendations as part of an additional round of consultation. This report contains the results of this stage of consultation. Council wants to thank participants for sharing their ideas with us.

Results summary

The majority of consultation respondents supported the recommendations of the report, with several commenting favourably on the provision of new pedestrian crossings and a lower speed limit in Hesse Street. Many of these respondents also shared ideas for improvements beyond these recommendations, calling for further changes to traffic speeds or additional works throughout the Borough.

Only two respondents explicitly opposed one or more recommendations of the report. The first respondent outlined concerns that a pedestrian crossing in Hesse Street would create traffic congestion, pointing to Barwon Heads as an example. The other respondent spoke more to Council processes as a point of opposition.

Three respondents commented on other pedestrian or traffic issues outside the scope of the report. These respondents typically suggested Council undertake works in other locations in the Borough but did not comment on the recommendations of the report.



Consultation responses

Consultation was open-ended and submission-based. Participants were given access to the full report, as well as to an interactive webinar Q&A, and then invited to write to Council with their thoughts and suggestions. Consultation was advertised in newspapers, on Council website and social media pages, via on-site signage in Hesse Street, via direct email to participants in previous pedestrian consultation, and via direct letter drop to Hesse Street traders.

Council received submissions from 13 individuals as part of this stage of consultation (after combining 3 submissions from the same individual). Responses varied from a few sentences to detailed submissions, but participants all fell into one of four groups:

- 2 submissions in favour of the recommendations with no significant additional suggestions;
- 6 submissions in favour of the recommendations with substantial additional suggestions;
- 3 submissions that spoke to the issue of pedestrian safety in the Borough but did not address the contents of the report directly; and
- 2 submissions which opposed one or more recommendations in the report.

Notably, all respondents felt pedestrian safety was an issue of concern in the Borough, regardless of their position on the recommendations of the report.

Because consultation was submission-based, Council did not collect demographic information about respondents. As such, no conclusions about how different groups responded to the recommendations is included in this report.

Supportive respondents

Some respondents wrote in simply to voice their support for the recommendations in the report. These respondents did not make additional suggestions about broadening the scope of the response to the report to include additional pedestrian safety measures.

Extracts from some of these submissions include:

“A civilised town like Queenscliff needs safe crossings for local people and visitors. If crossings are not provided, then people will try to cross the street anyway, as is currently the case...”

“Any improvements made that make life easier/safer for pedestrians (and cyclists) is a positive for the community in my opinion and I believe these recommendations will do just that.”

Supportive respondents who made additional suggestions

The largest respondent group consisted of participants who supported the recommendations in the report, but also wanted to share ideas or suggest improvements beyond those recommended in the report.

Extracts from some of these submissions include:

“The main change I would make to the recommendations is to reduce the speed limit to 30 km/h and apply this throughout the residential streets of Queenscliff and Lonsdale as well as on Hesse and Gellibrand.”

“My relatively uninformed solution is for there to be a pedestrian crossing on Hesse Street between Stokes Street and Hobson Street, although, it should be as unobtrusive as possible so that it does not detract from the general streetscape. I also think that the use of

speed humps all along Hesse Street would be useful...”

“An additional pedestrian crossing in Gellibrand St at the top of the hill near Stokes St to slow down the frequently speeding vehicles on the way to catch the ferry. This would provide safety for the many family groups going to/ coming from The Fort or to the Citizens Park picnic tables, BBQs and public toilets.”

“The report appears to be well conceived in its design, research and analysis, and its conclusions seem very sensible and reasonable. My wife and I as older residents welcome it and look forward to its implementation at the earliest opportunity – hopefully before next summer holidays.”

Respondents who did not respond to the recommendations in the report

Some respondents made submissions on pedestrian safety in the Borough but did not respond to the contents of the report in particular.

Extracts from some of these submissions include:

“There is only one set of speed indication signs in Gellibrand Street. Very few vehicles travel at 50 km. There should be more signs along the Street and it should be 40km/hr.”

“What about something facilitating the safe crossing of King St... Perhaps something near the General Store at Stevens St?”

“Where I have spotted more near misses though is kids crossing from the Big4 across to the skate park/beach, that’s a higher speed accident waiting to happen.”

Respondents who opposed one or more recommendations in the report

Two respondents opposed taking action on one or more of the report’s recommendations. One of these respondents made several submissions on the same topic.

Extracts from some of these submissions include:

“I have grave fears that a zebra crossing in Hesse Street would cause grid lock and unnecessary congestion in peak times ie: as has happened in Barwon Heads and may need traffic supervisors to help control vehicle traffic/ pedestrian traffic at these busy times.”

“What is apparent is that Hesse St from this data indicates pedestrian safety is not at issue. This is clearly stated despite some ambiguity of crossing rules that pedestrians should be aware of... Council should be reluctant to undertake any infrastructure proposals, save for an adoption of a safe 30km limit as a key pedestrian safety measure.”

Next steps

Council will consider this report alongside the report from the transport safety specialist at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 28 April 2021.