



BLACKBUTT VILLAGE, ORCHARDTOWN ROAD, NEW LAMBTON
DRAFT CONCEPT PLAN COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

V4 29.07.2020



INTRODUCTION

101 people associated with Orchardtown Road provided online feedback on the Draft Concept Plan. There was overwhelming support for the document with 64 to 77% in support of the Draft Concept Plan overall.

The survey shows that the community are split 50/50 on an overall reduction in car parking spaces. However, there is significant support from two thirds of respondents (47% agree/strongly agree, 19% neutral) for improved public realm and paths for walkers and cyclists.

111 people associated with Orchardtown Road provided formal submissions. These submission show support for the Draft Concept Plan overall, however concerns about traffic and the impact of the reduction of car parking were raised.

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

Since May 2019, Place Score has been working with Newcastle City Council to develop a Place Plan for Orchardtown Road.

As a part of the process, Place Score:

- Undertook a PX Assessment of Orchardtown Road
- Reviewed four proposed concept options based on Orchardtown Road Place Principles
- Proposed improvements and questions for community members for the further engagement, the findings of which are included in this report

Community feedback was sought via the Draft Concept Plan Feedback survey (online from 2 March to 24 April 2020) and via formal submission to Council.

The community was asked to provide feedback on the following key elements of the Draft Concept Plan:

- Public open spaces
- Parking
- Safer pedestrian, driver and cyclist movement
- Greater visibility, improved traffic flow and public transport connection to the shops
- The look and feel (street furniture, public realm activities, vegetation)

The Draft Concept Plan Feedback survey was widely promoted including:

- Online via Council's website home page and through the Newcastle Voice eNewsletter
- Social media (paid and
- Print media (newspapers)
- Flyers and posters in the library and local businesses
- Letterbox drop to surrounding residents

This document provides an overview of community support and concerns regarding the key components of the Draft Concept Plan and will be used to inform subsequent Place Plan.

DRAFT CONCEPT PLAN FEEDBACK

ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

Gender		Age		Association	
Women 56%	Men 44%	15-24 - 2%	25-44 - 35%	Employee or business owner - 11%	Local resident - 66%
		45-64 - 45%	65+ - 19%	Visitor/shopper - 19%	Other - 4%

PUBLIC OPEN AND GREEN SPACES

The draft concept plan proposes to:

- Provide accessible and well maintained public open spaces that facilitate social interaction.
- Connect the centre with its' surroundings (footpaths, bike path).
- Make the area less appealing as an all-day commuter parking option.
- Enhance existing businesses by providing additional space for outdoor trading.
- Improve the physical comfort and convenience of public places by providing well-placed seating for eating and resting, bubblers, bike stands and waste/recycling bins.

The draft plan also proposes to increase street greenery and tree cover to cool down the public spaces, providing shade and creating a visually pleasant space that people enjoy spending time in.

Over three quarters of respondents are in support of the proposed greening, and two thirds are in support of the improvements to the public space.

Community Feedback:

The following outlines the community support, concerns and ideas for improved Green Spaces:

Support (Strongly Agree/ Agree)	Community support/ideas
77%	Fully support the proposed draft for full implementation
	I think it needs to be done looks good overall
	Absolutely need plaza area and raised pedestrian area at Myra St
Concerns (Disagree/ Strongly Disagree)	There is limited space in this overall area to have much impact and we have [Blackbutt] Reserve on the doorstep if you want green spaces
	Additional green space is fantastic, however at the expense of parking. The parking situation is already congested, and will push cars further in to the neighbourhood
13%	

The following outlines the community support, concerns and ideas for Public Open Spaces:

Support (Strongly Agree/ Agree)	Community support/ideas (Examples only)
64%	Excellent design for public realm
	Any measures which improve the amenity of local centres are very welcome. This draft plan provides a calm, community centred, ecologically improved asset for the neighbourhood. There will be benefits for residents, visitors and local businesses. Very well done, NCC!
	It's a good improvement
22%	Blocking off Dunkley is ridiculous, it is going to make an already problematic problem with parking for residents in the narrow [street] of Blamey Ave.
	I am concerned that the improved public open spaces may come at the expense of convenient parking spaces
	The draft proposal dramatically reduces the amount of available car parking spaces which will reduce the level of customers that will frequent the local shops and eateries and turn the Blackbutt Village into a ghost town

PARKING

The draft concept plan proposes a reconfiguration of parking spaces to provide for:

- Increased shade trees and green space and increased amenity of community open space for resting and outdoor dining
- Improved accessibility to the shops
- A shared pedestrian and cycle path
- Increased access to local businesses through timed (not paid) parking.
- Increased safety for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists.

Half of respondents are concerned about the reduction in parking spaces, however, the community is generally in support of increasing public space, improving safety and increasing time parking access to local businesses.

Community Feedback:

The following outlines the community support for parking:

Question	Support (Supportive/very supportive)	Concerns (Unsupportive/ very unsupportive)
To what extent do you support reducing the number of parking spaces by approximately 25 to provide public domain benefits as outlined above? This will leave approximately 91 car spaces.	37%	50%
To what extent do you support reduction of parallel parking by 1 – 2 spaces in front of the shops to allow for more useable public open space?	47%	34%
To what extent do you support increasing driver, pedestrian and cyclist safety by relocating parking spaces from the busy main through road, to reduce vehicle conflict.	62%	31%
To what extent do you support increasing access to local businesses through timed (not paid) parking in order to reduce all-day commuter parking?	69%	13%

Other feedback:

- Our only concern is with the overflow of staff parking (of businesses in Orchardtown Road), into surrounding streets (Dunkley, Blamey and Freyburg), that will impede residential parking.
- Overflow parking further up at park area should be considered as the area will increase in popularity with the upgrade works

SAFER PEDESTRIAN, DRIVER AND CYCLIST MOVEMENT

A priority aim of the draft concept plan is **to improve pedestrian, driver and cyclist safety within and through the Village**. Overall, community are aligned and in support of improved pedestrian, driver and cyclist safety.

Respondents are in support for improving pedestrian, driver and cyclist safety with over two thirds of respondents in agreement of the proposed changes.

Community Feedback:

The following outlines the community support for pedestrian, driver and cyclist safety:

Question:	For	Against
Do you agree with the proposed 40 km/hr High Pedestrian Activity Area?	85%	15%
Do you agree with the proposed mid-block pedestrian crossing linking the shops to the western side road?	88%	12%
Do you agree with the proposed signalled pedestrian crossing to be incorporated into the western side of the existing traffic lights at the intersection of Carnley Avenue and Orchardtown Road?	88%	12%
Do you agree with the proposed pedestrian priority path crossing in Myra Street?	80%	20%
Do you agree with the proposed median strip refuge and extended kerb at the intersection of Freyberg Street and Orchardtown Road?	72%	18%
Do you agree with the proposed shared path connection on the western side of Orchardtown Road?	77%	23%
Would you support a pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Blamey Avenue and Orchardtown Rd?	66%	34%

Other feedback:

- The Dunkley Ave intersection has been a concern for years and we welcome the closure for safety purposes.
- The shared path seems to take up a lot of space, and I can't imagine it will be highly used by cyclists

GREATER VISIBILITY, IMPROVED TRAFFIC FLOW AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT CONNECTION TO THE SHOPS

The draft concept plan also proposes improvements that allow for **greater visibility, improved traffic flow and public transport connection to the shops**. Overall, the community are aligned and in support of improvements that allow for greater visibility, improved traffic flow and public transport connections to the shops.

Respondents are generally back the proposed changes, with between 60 and 81% of respondents in support of the improvements.

Community Feedback:

The following outlines the community support for greater visibility, improved traffic flow and public transport connection to the shops:

Question:	For	Against
Do you agree with the proposed closure of the intersection of Dunkley Avenue and the main through-road of Orchardtown Road to increase driver, cyclist and pedestrian safety?	66%	34%
Do you agree with making the pull-in lane outside the shops one-way southbound, to improve traffic flow and driver/pedestrian safety?	81%	29%
Do you agree with the proposed relocation of the southbound bus stop, in order to be closer to the shops? (From north of Freyberg Street to south of Freyberg Street?)	63%	37%
Do you agree with the proposed relocation of the taxi rank to Carnley Avenue in order to improve access and free up parking space in front of the shops?	78%	22%
Do you agree that the overall draft concept plan strikes a balance between place and vehicle infrastructure improvements?	60%	40%

Other feedback:

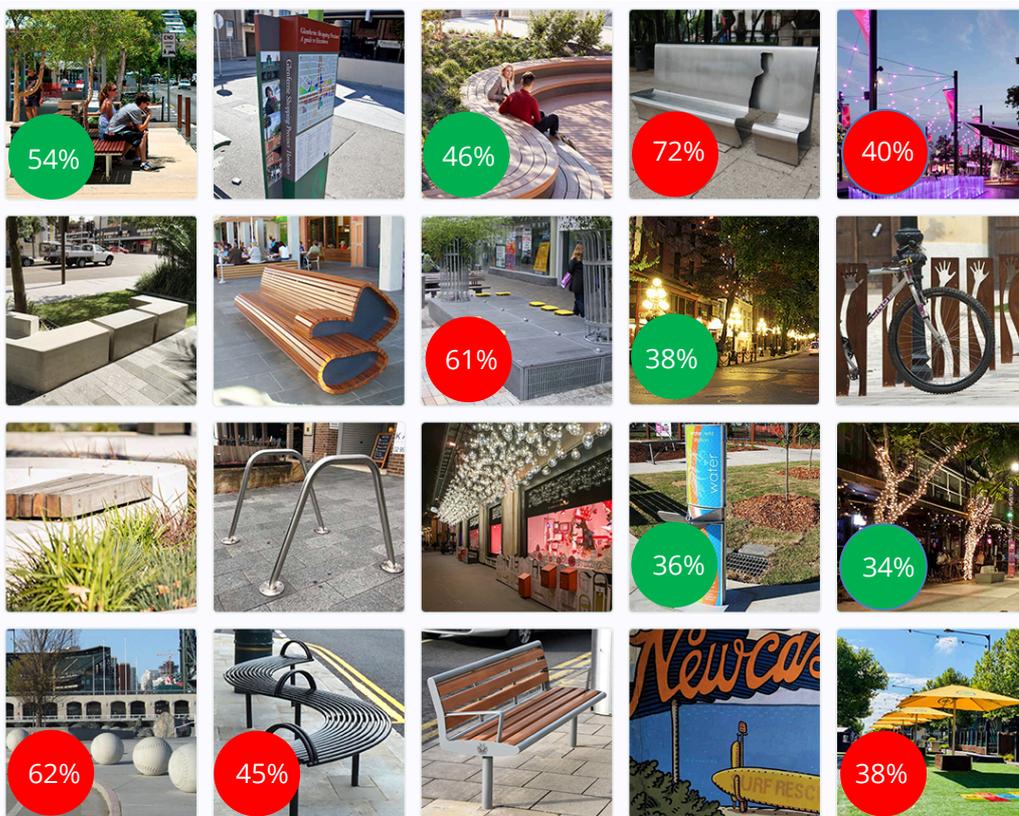
- The shared path seems to take up a lot of space, and I can't imagine it will be highly used by cyclists. Why can't you just put a normal footpath? Would that leave room for more parking spots?
- Please include a pedestrian crossing across orchardtown road. It is currently so busy and unsafe for kids walking and using bikes in this area.
- I do agree with moving the taxi rank. I am opposed to closing the entrance to Orchardtown Road from Dunkley as the benefits would be minimal but the impact to residents would be high.
- Good plan, well thought out.
- Overall, a very attractive plan.
- A lot of good points and improvements

THE LOOK AND FEEL OF ORCHARDTOWN ROAD'S PUBLIC DOMAIN

Survey respondents were asked to ideate on what elements would be in the public domain – street furniture, public realm activities and vegetation - and were given a set of images that they classified into what they would or wouldn't support for the future of Orchardtown Road. Please note: survey respondents were able to select more than one option image.

Street furniture:

Survey respondents **support**/**do not support** the following street furniture elements:



Respondents were more aligned around which street furniture elements they did not want to see in the future Orchardtown Road. Overall, respondents preferred softer, wooden elements over stone and metal.

Public realm activities:

Survey respondents **support**/**do not support** the following public realm activities:



Respondents were more aligned around which public realm activities they did not want to see in the future Orchardtown Road. Overall, respondents preferred informal opportunities to connect through the provision of seating and outdoor dining.

Vegetation:

Survey respondents **support**/**do not support** the following vegetation types:



Respondents were more aligned around which street landscaping elements they did not want to see in the future Orchardtown Road. Overall, respondents preferred more traditional and structured planting over more abstract or quirky elements.