



8 September 2023

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New Town health precinct masterplan

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the first step in master planning for the proposed Health and Wellbeing Precinct at St Johns Park in New Town.

My comments are about active transport links to and through the precinct.

Specifically, how the redevelopment can help open up the area for the community and hospital users to move through the site and through Lenah Valley and New Town more generally.

St Johns is situated in the centre of a significant block of land that houses many attractors in the area.

There are three schools, a regionally significant sports precinct, and much loved community park that could all be better connected via a considered pathway network that people could use to walk, ride and scoot.

The hospital campus will be yet another attractor once it's developed.

We've seen with the Royal Hobart Hospital's city campus that a large proportion of staff want to travel to work by healthy, sustainable transport modes like cycling and walking.

The St Johns site is well placed close to the Intercity Cycleway and proposed Creek Road cycleway to allow staff to ride to work, but it needs connections to cycleways to make it easy and obvious for them to do so.

The St Johns Masterplan is the third plan released over the past five years for the area. The City of Hobart released a masterplan for the sports precinct in 2018 that included better access into the site, and this year released a Lenah Valley mobility plan that includes a separated cycleway on Creek Road and trail linking the three schools.

All three plans have been developed as stand-alone documents without any real connection between the precincts. We'd like to see the government take the lead and bring the planning for all three into consideration so there are seamless active transport links between St Johns, the three schools, the sports precinct and to planned cycleways for Lenah Valley.

Riding to the site

If the City of Hobart builds a separated cycleway on Creek Road it will help provide safer access to the site for more people from the north. Such access should be

formalised through a crossing over Creek Road that joins with paths in the St Johns site.

The trail proposed between the schools in the City of Hobart's Lenah Valley mobility plan could be incorporated into the path planning for St Johns so it's something that can be used by the local community, as well as hospital users, to move east to west.

On the southern side there is an informal route that already exists between St Johns Avenue and Forster Street. but it could be formalised for better navigation and access.

People can currently ride up the short extension of Valentine Street which ends at an overgrown alley with bollards at the entrance. An informal trail runs through the middle of the alley between the boundary of the school and government building until it gets to a gate at the school boundary. Around the gate is an asphalt path that runs to St Johns Avenue. The gate could easily be moved to open the route up for around-the-clock access.

There is also potential to build a shared path off the slope on the school side of Valentine Street to ensure safe access into the site from Forster Street.

Access along St Johns Avenue could be improved for people riding. Large numbers of cars use it for parking which means it can be uncomfortable to ride on at peak times. There is a footpath on one side of the street that could be widened to become a shared path or there is scope to create a gravel path between the old oak trees next to the footpath to formalize an already well used route.

The St Johns Avenue link is important as that is where people coming and going from the Intercity Cycleway are likely to enter and leave the area.

Riding through the site

The masterplan does not address getting around the site other than providing roads and some walking paths. Active transport does not get a mention in the plan, with the focus on walking and parking.

There is scope to provide cycling and scooting access through the site for visitors and staff to get around via wider shared paths designated for riding and scooting, delineated from the walking paths.

Kind Regards



Alison Hetherington
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