

12th October 2022

Dear Minister,

# Main South Road, Aldinga: Grade Separation of Pedestrians and Cyclists

We write as a collective of community groups on a matter of some urgency.

Since about 2015, Friends of Willunga Basin (FOWB) and others in the local community have been lobbying for a pedestrian & cyclist underpass beneath Main South Road at Aldinga, adjacent Little Road. No underpass is included in the current design, even as civil works are proceeding on site. Hence the urgency of this matter.

At issue is the safe passage of non-vehicular traffic – pedestrians and cyclists – across what is rapidly becoming a major transport corridor. We contend both that safe passage requires grade separation and that there is a bigger picture to be considered.

An underpass was included in an early design for the project, at the point when a roundabout was proposed at the Main South Road/Port Road intersection. However, it was dropped from the design when the current solution for this intersection was adopted and hasn’t been seen since. Instead, pedestrians and cyclists will be directed into what we see as a hostile and unsafe environment, across six lanes of the new Main South Road and then along the narrow footpath outside what is reputedly the busiest OTR service station in the state in a narrow and congested section of Port Road at Aldinga.

This cannot be considered a ‘best practice’ solution, fit for the long term, in a location which is already overwhelmed with traffic and where a further 1,000 or so houses are pending on adjacent Renewal SA land.

To step back for a moment, your Department is in the process of building two duplicated road corridors south of Old Noarlunga – Main South Road to Sellicks and Victor Harbor Road to a point near Willunga. These roads, slicing north-south through the Willunga Basin, will feature physical barriers down their centrelines, thereby precluding east-west crossing by pedestrians and cyclists at anything other than a few designated points.

Our first observation is that it is essential that east-west crossings be provided. To fail to do so will be to deny a reasonable level of connectivity across the Willunga Basin both to those who live here and to those who come to visit. In an area where tourism, both day-tripping and longer stays, is a fundamental part of the local economy, connectivity and capacity to explore slowly, from the hills to the coast, needs to be enabled, not curtailed.

The question of how this connectivity is achieved in light of the severance occasioned by the roadworks therefore needs to properly be thought through and resolved. It cannot be left to chance.

We note that a crossing point will be provided at Tatachilla Road but observe that Tatachilla Road itself is not well suited to cycling and walking on account of topography, speed limits and adjacent mining activity.

FOWB and other signatories to this letter contend that a logical and reasonable long-term solution for safe crossings is to provide grade separation at points coinciding with the three principal creek systems of the Basin, being Pedler, Maslin and Willunga Creeks. In a similar vein, we note that a safe crossing point should also be considered adjacent Sellicks as part of the Stage 2 works on Main South Road.

Regarding the ‘creek crossings’:

* grade separation is already provided at the Pedler Creek crossing via the Coast to Vines Trail and will be maintained through the current works;
* grade separation adjacent Maslin Creek has been achieved, albeit obliquely, via adapting the planned agricultural underpass on Main South Road at Branson Road as a shared use path, and is under consideration as part of planning for Stage 2 of the Victor Harbor Road duplication; and
* the crossing on the Willunga Creek system alignment is also under consideration as part of planning for Stage 2 of the Victor Harbor Road duplication but is unresolved at Aldinga, where the situation is as described above and where construction works are proceeding even as this is being written.

We believe that the Government must take a long-term view on the provision of safe east-west crossings for ‘nonvehicular traffic’ within the Willunga Basin and must provide future-proof solutions to a real issue. It is surely not a lot to ask that people who are not travelling in cars and trucks be considered in a project costing hundreds of millions of dollars and with a design life spanning two or three generations. And if an underpass is not built now, then it is probably safe to say that it never will be.

To conclude, we believe that the design of the Main South Road duplication at Aldinga is fundamentally deficient in this important regard and that this shortcoming should be addressed as a matter of utmost urgency.

We urge you to take a moment to consider the bigger picture at play here, and to ensure that the Aldinga piece of this regional jigsaw is set in place via provision of grade separation for cyclists and pedestrians by way of a Main South Road underpass near Little Road and the Willunga Creek. Our local MP Leon Bignell is well aware of this issue if you wish to consult with him.

Thank you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,

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# Geoff Hayter Chair

Also signing on behalf of and with cc to:

Chris Davies, Chair, Willunga Basin Trail Inc

Stephen Spence, Secretary, Aldinga Arts Eco Village

Stephanie Johnston, Chair, Friends of Pt Willunga

Susan Schuller, Resident, Aldinga Arts Eco Village

Gavin Malone, Proprietor, Lot 50 Kanyanpilla

Chas Martin, Aldinga Resident

cc Leon Bignell MP

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