

PROPOSED CALALA TO CBD PATHWAY FAQs

Council is currently investigating and planning for a new 3.7km long shared path for pedestrians and cyclists connecting Calala to the Tamworth CBD via Campbell Road and King George V Avenue for the benefit of the whole community.

Why are we proposing a path from Calala to the CBD?

The objective of the project is to provide a safe and direct link between Calala and the CBD to allow people to commute into the CBD and encourage exercise. The need for a path was identified in TRC's Active Transport Strategy (2021) and Transport for NSW's Connected Cycling Network (2022).

Active transport users will be able to complete a 14.7km loop into the CBD, alongside the Peel River to Jewry Street, and back to Calala without needing to cross any major road. This loop passes destinations such as the Tamworth Regional Playground and Tamworth Skate Park.

It is expected that the average cyclist will be able to ride from Calala to the Tamworth CBD in about 13 minutes, compared to around 12 minutes via car.

There is an existing path on Calala Lane and Goonoo Goonoo Road – why is this path necessary?

The existing shared path along Calala Lane will still remain the primary path for Calala residents to access the Sports & Entertainment Precinct, as well as South Tamworth, Hillvue and West Tamworth. However, the existing path is not a direct route from Calala to the CBD – and the intersections of Goonoo Goonoo Road with Calala Lane and Scott Road in their current arrangements are difficult and not overly safe for pedestrians to negotiate. The new path will create a direct, scenic route from Calala to the CBD which avoids any major intersections, resulting in a much safer family-friendly connection.

Will the path impact on my property?

No property acquisition will be required however there may be some shrubs, small trees and off road parking bays that are affected by the path on Campbell Road. As these are identified, the project team will have discussions with the property owners. Where trees or shrubs need to be removed, replacement plants will be offered to the residents. We do make an effort to reduce the number of plants that need to be removed, however sometimes it cannot be avoided.

As Tamworth grows, it is important that Council continues to link communities, and improve the connection between outer suburbs and the CBD. Council has also received previous feedback from the community about some reluctance to use the existing path networks due to the length (the existing path is approximately 1km longer than the proposed path) and it requires pedestrians and cyclists to cross major roads.

If Council is successful in obtaining future funding needed to construct the path, it's expected there will be a gradual increase in foot and cycle traffic down Campbell Road and King George V Avenue.

Is this path part of a larger plan to provide another road into Calala via Campbell Road?

No, Council does not have any plans to create a new road link into Calala via Campbell Road.

Recent traffic modelling undertaken in 2022 indicates that an alternate access from Calala to the Tamworth CBD is not required. This modelling takes into account current and future developments within Calala for the current land zoning. A new road via Campbell Road would also not solve any current issues with flooding, as this route would also flood when Calala Lane is cut by floodwaters. The estimated cost of constructing an alternate road would be tens of Millions of dollars, which ratepayers would be required to fund.

Whilst a new road into Calala is not identified as being required from recent modelling, there are a number of improvements recommended to the existing transport network in Calala including:

- Campbell Road Roundabout (completed)
- Outlook Roundabout Stage 1 (under construction) and Stage 2 (future)
- Goonoo Goonoo Road / Calala Lane intersection upgrade
- Goonoo Goonoo Road / Scott Road intersection upgrade
- Localised improvements along Calala Lane particularly between the Outlook Roundabout and Campbell Road Roundabout
- Completion of Calala Lane Shared Path (Falcon Drive to Goonoo Goonoo Road)

It is expected that once completed, the above improvements will benefit all vehicle journeys from Calala to and from Tamworth.

Will the path flood?

The path will occasionally become flooded when Calala becomes isolated by floodwater as a result of Calala Creek, Goonoo Goonoo Creek and the Peel River. For the path, this is expected to occur in a 1 in 2.5 year flood event, and the material used for the path construction will be selected to withstand occasional flooding.

Will the project harm the trees on King George V Avenue?

A heritage consultant and a qualified arborist have both been engaged to undertake assessments and prepare reports in relation to the proposed path and the interaction with the existing English Oak trees along King George V Avenue.

There are a couple of different alignment options along King George V Avenue which are being discussed with Heritage NSW. It is expected that regardless of which alignment option is chosen, that the trees will remain unharmed and be preserved.

As part of the project, some pruning and removal of dead wood would be undertaken (as suggested in the arborist's report) which will hopefully improve the vigour of the trees. The heritage consultant also suggests (and Heritage NSW agree) that the path

will enhance the heritage value of King George V Avenue by allowing active transport users to access the avenue easier, more safely and more regularly, thus allowing more people to view and appreciate the avenue.

What other routes for the path have been considered?

- *A path via Scott Road:* this option would require property acquisition and results in path users crossing Scott Road in an 80km/hr zone. The proposed route along King George V Avenue avoids this risk.
- *Moving a pedestrian path into the existing King George V Avenue road pavement:* this would mean King George V Avenue would need to become a one way road. The proximity of the heritage listed oak trees to the edge of pavement makes passing bays difficult to achieve without affecting the tree health. Additionally, having pedestrians and vehicles in a shared space without separation also presents safety risks.

Why is consultation occurring now?

Council has nearly completed initial investigations which demonstrate that constructing the path is feasible. Informing the directly impacted members of the community is an important step in this stage. After this has occurred the proposal will be shared with the wider community. The process to develop the detailed design and alignment of the project along King George V Avenue will then begin.

How much will this cost and when would construction begin?

To prevent the cost falling on ratepayers, Council will be looking to secure external funding for the project through a competitive NSW Government grant funding program. It is hoped that construction may commence within a couple of years, however this will be dependent upon the securing of funding

What else should you know?

- A pedestrian bridge will be built over Calala Creek.
- Water refill stations and rest areas will be provided as appropriate.
- Solar lighting for the path will be considered, subject to available funding.