

# People for Ecologically Sustainable Transport

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Mr Michael Kennedy  
Mornington Peninsula Shire Council  
Private Bag 1000  
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Chief Executive Officer

Dear Mr Kennedy,

Submission by Alan A. Parker OAM regarding unsafe road conditions along Point Nepean Road between Portsea, Sorrento, Rosebud and Dromana and the residential streets adjacent to Point Nepean Road. That is, homes and shops within easy walking (500 m), cycling and easy “electric footpath scooter” range (1500 m), where 50% of the elderly population on the Peninsula live. A 40 km speed limit should apply in all the easily accessible residential streets by any of these modes.

As a householder of Sorrento for 30 years, I am well aware of the traffic safety problems along Point Nepean Road and adjacent areas. As a former President of Bicycle Victoria and cyclist (who has never owned a car) I am very aware of safety hazards to cyclists and pedestrians and the inadequate bus services, particularly for the elderly. I have travelled to and ridden over the City of Unley 40 Km/hr speed zones in greater Adelaide. I think you and your planners should see this model of speed reduction best practice. 1

## **Overcoming past mistakes that have generated the congestion and unsafe streets.**

1. In Summer and Easter holidays car traffic to the southern Mornington Peninsula has grown from the early 1960s to now. In 1970s local residents adjacent to Point Nepean Road protested against badly planned roads that generate more traffic, land subdivision and multi story-housing. They said then in no uncertain terms that this would create a dangerous level of congestion by the year 2000 and so it did. Today VicRoads is going to generate even more traffic and those over 65 who want to retire in peace and tranquility. I think that this part of the world is a wonderful place to take long walks and cycle rides and we want to keep it that way.

2. Lower speed limits are of greater benefit to vulnerable users for the simple reason that they are not strapped into place inside a protective steel cocoon that cushions the body from death or serious injury. A tiny minority of road “hogs” cause a disproportionate number of high impact collisions resulting in bicycle and pedestrian fatalities. Summer and Easter on Point Nepean Road between Sorrento’s main street and Rosebud (where the

Mornington Peninsula Freeway disgorges its traffic through local arterials) now carries saturation levels of traffic which at times forms jams several kilometres long through Rye and Rosebud. This slows the 788 bus that it runs late all day and becomes a major deterrent to bus use, thus forcing holiday makers to use their cars instead.

3. Point Nepean Road is a single 2-lane undivided carriageway for most of its length. This section of highway is 15.7 kms long, 9 kms of which is between Sorrento (Koonya Hotel) and Rye (Dundas Street), and 6.7 kms between Rye (Dundas Street) and Rosebud (Boneo Road). There is about 2 km of 4-lane partially divided road through Rye and Rosebud shopping Centres, and short (100 metres or less) sections of right-hand-turn median or zebra-marked traffic islands at several points. This means that pedestrians find it very difficult and dangerous to cross this road to get to the bay beaches. I have direct experience of this problem and many friends who visit or have houses in the area say they don't let their children cross Point Nepean Road unattended. Indeed, many parents will drive their children to the beach in order to cross this summer time traffic "sewer", thus generating more traffic and beach side parking congestion.

4. The road-median pedestrian refuge idea works in so far that there is a much greater statistical chance of there being sufficient sized traffic gaps to allow a pedestrian to cross one lane at a time, especially if there is a 50 Km/Hr speed limit. At major arterial intersections with Point Nepean Road, there is need to install more cycle-controlled traffic light signals to regulate time breaks in the Point Nepean Road traffic flow.

5. Melbourne Road is the only acceptable alternate arterial route between Sorrento and Rosebud. VicRoads knows that and should do what is necessary as soon as possible and provide a protected shared footway in the road reserve. With a 60 Km/Hr speed limit between roundabouts and 40 km limit on the approach to them and around them. Indeed roundabout design should conform with Dutch best practice.

6. On Point Nepean Road there are bicycle paths along part the beach front which combined with on-road bicycle lanes, have the potential to be a safe bicycle route if the discontinuities were removed by Vic roads. Some sections of bike lanes are so narrow they must have been designed for midgets and some so narrow that even midgets would not use them. VicRoads could tell the local Council the length of narrow bike lanes that do not conform with its own design manual. More safe road crossings are required for cyclists, pedestrians and footpath scooters. A speed limit of 50 Km/Hr is required as the Dutch Bikeway design manual for on-road bike lanes. Through the shopping centres there should be 40 Km/Hr. The need to investigate improved street lighting at points of poor night visibility along at pedestrian refuges on Point Nepean Road.

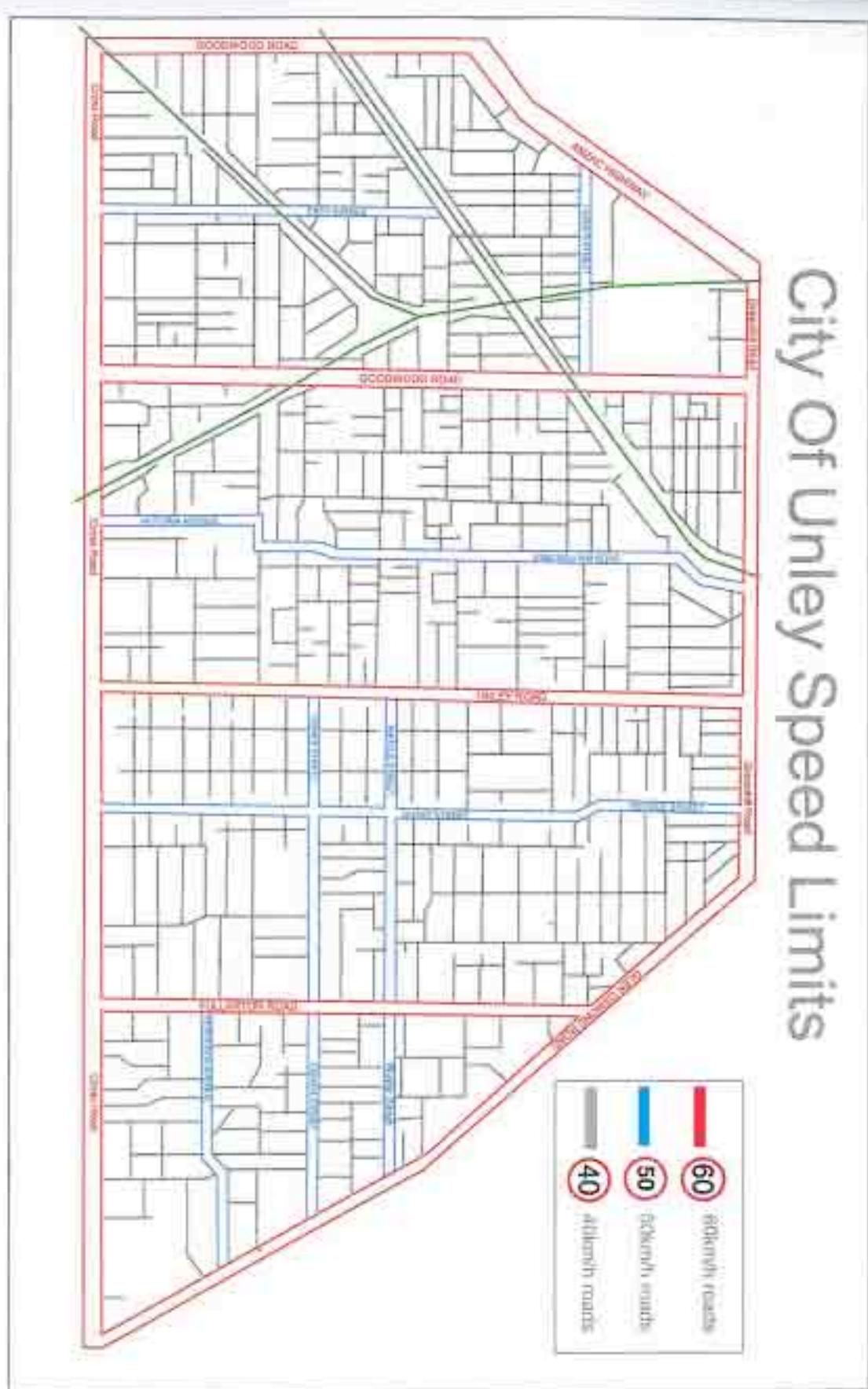
7. The current experiment with a 40 Km/Hr residential speed limit in Rosebud is welcome. However, the need is to provide lower speed limits as provided by the bicycle friendly countries of Europe: Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands and Switzerland and to look at Australian best practice. is in Adelaide with residential street types -mostly similar to those adjacent to Point Nepean road.

8. I am disappointed that your planning officers have not considered the more cost effective means of implementing the Rosebud the 40 Km/Hr trial speed limit.

- See Unley speed limit map on page 3 .

- See Unley speed limit map below .Note that 25 km/h school zones are not shown

## City Of Unley Speed Limits



## **9 THE UNLEY 40 Km/Hr SPEED LIMIT TRIAL IN ADELAIDE.**

The longest running Australian 40 Km/h speed limit trial was conducted in the suburb of Unley. It began in December 1991 and was completed in June 1996 and the final 200 page report released in August 1996. At the conclusion of the Unley Trial, mean speeds across the trial area were a little under 40 km/h. Most significant of all, the trend for the largest speed reductions was in the streets that initially had the highest speeds. Seven surveys of speeds and community opinions undertaken have revealed evidence of the development of a 'lower speed culture' in which people are choosing to drive at lower speeds without enforcement. Resident opinion has remained strongly in favour of the 40 Km/Hr speed limit and the local community perceives a high safety and amenity benefit (Parker 1995). One of tasks of Peninsula planners should be to develop a 'lower speed culture' as they did in Unley.

It is possible to physically reduce motor vehicle speeds with physical devices which cost \$3,000 per hump, \$8,000 a plateau and \$30,000 a roundabout. The problem is that the cost of physical devices is high; a complete street treatment can cost \$80,000 unless smart planning is integrated with signage and running a proper educational campaign. Most important is using physical traffic management devices at the entrance to residential precincts as they do in Unley. The objective in Unley was to find the most cost effective combination of signage, pavement, markings and low cost physical traffic management devices.

Whilst all devices used resulted in some form of speed reduction, some elements were more successful than others. One of the most successful treatments is one way entrances to the 40Km/Hr Zones which comprises three elements: the Australian standard sign that is in the proposed road rules, a low cost street narrowing hump and large 40 pavement marking. Another treatment is a mid block section of a residential street within the local areas with two elements: a larger than normal 40 sign and a very large '40' on the road surface. The synergistic benefits of this mix of devices and signs reduces the costs and speeds and should be applied in all Rosebud local streets and start in the Rye, Dromana, Blairgowrie and Sorrento, Mornington.

- A recent analysis of the scheme completed by the University of South Australia's Transport Systems Centre found that Unley has gained an overall road network that has become relatively safer than the Adelaide metro area as a whole.
- Total crash numbers have fallen by around 17%, in absolute terms, on roads whose limit has been reduced, while serious
- Injuries on Unley roads have fallen by about 15%. Reducing the speed of motor vehicles is one of the most effective ways of improving the safety and amenity of cycling.
- Reducing speed:-reduces the risk of motor vehicle crashes;- reduces the severity of the remaining crashes (80% of pedestrians or cyclists hit by a car travelling at 50km/h are killed, compared with only 10% at 30km/h.)
- increases the field of vision of drivers, making cyclists at the sides of the road more likely to be seen;
- makes it easier to get a sufficient gap to cross roads, thereby also making backstreet routes more viable; and- increases the amount of cycling and walking since slower traffic is less threatening to people cycling and walking.

## **Conclusion**

These nine proposals could be implemented quickly (within 1 to 2 years) and are not dependent on government funding or expressway construction in the southern peninsula. In any case, the benefits that such treatments of the local feeder roads and local street system would bring would continue to be felt even if the present expressway were to be the Hughes Road roundabout.

Regards.

Alan Parker OAM