



**CITY OF
PARRAMATTA**

Better Neighbourhood Program, Bungaree Road Shops (aka The Six Shops)

Engagement Summary Report – Phase One
March 2020

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CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Engagement Methodology and Objectives	8
3.	Summary of Engagement Feedback	9
4.	Concept Plan Brief	13
5.	Next Steps	15
6.	Appendix 1 – ‘Our Say’ data file	15

1. Introduction

City of Parramatta Council (Council) has been investigating potential upgrades to the streetscape and public domain at Bungaree Road Shops as part of the Better Neighbourhood Program (BNP). The BNP is a long-running and successful Council program that focuses on the capital upgrades of local centres outside of the Parramatta Central Business District. The BNP commenced in 1999 and delivers improvements to centres with the goal of enhancing safety, vitality and economic prosperity.

Areas throughout the Local Government Area are prioritised for upgrade based on a number of factors, including the condition of a centre, its vibrancy and its connectivity. The community voice also plays an important role and nearly 400 local residents provided feedback to prioritise projects.

As a result of the review process, Bungaree Road Shops has been allocated up to \$150,000 for upgrades to the streetscape and public domain to be expended prior to the conclusion of the 2020/21 financial year.

1.1. Site Analysis

Bungaree Road Shops is located on the corner of Bungaree Road and Bethel Street, Toongabbie. The site is located approximately 800m east of Toongabbie Station and 250m south of the intersection of Fitzwilliam Road and Bungaree Road. The locational context of the site is shown in the figure below.

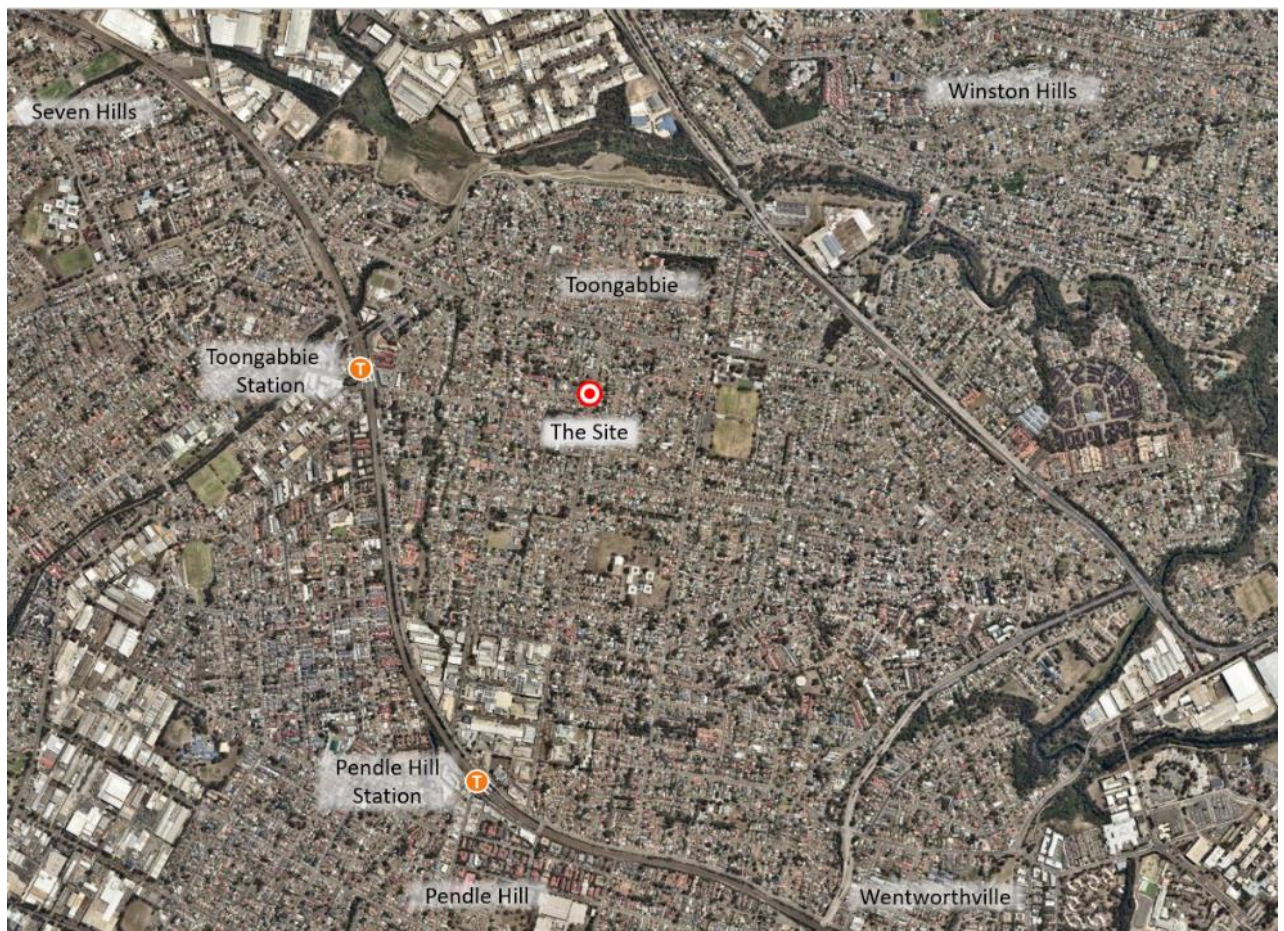


Figure 1 - Locational Context

Bungaree Road is a long, straight road with a speed limit of 50km/h. It is primarily residential in nature, with most streets within the area occupied by low density detached houses or small duplexes / apartment complexes.



Figure 2 - Site Map

Six retailers operate out of the Shopping Centre, including:

- *Super Cellars* – Bottle Shop
- *Cut N Blow Dry* – Beauty Salon
- *Australia Post* – Post Office
- *Leo's Takeaway & Delicatessen* – Takeaway Food
- *Bungaree Butchery Quality Meats* – Butcher
- *Welcome Mart* - Supermarket

There are currently no shop vacancies. The businesses have been trading at Bungaree Road Shops for a range of time varying from three months (beauty salon, as of February 2020) to more than 35 years (butcher). The shops themselves were built in 1964.

The shops themselves are under one ownership, legally referred to as Lot B DP417617, with the registered address of 1A Bethel Street, Toongabbie. Council's land is generally restricted to the car parking spaces and the grass verge south of the Super Cellars Bottle Shop.

The pavement at the centre was upgraded within the past few years. A business agreement was reached between Council and the private landowner to ensure consistent paving treatment occurred throughout the centre. Within the public domain, the following amenities are provided:

- 2 x public seats;
- 2 x public bins;
- 1 x public phone box (operated by Telstra);
- 1 x bike rack; and
- 1 x post box (operated by Australia Post).

Photos of the site are shown below.

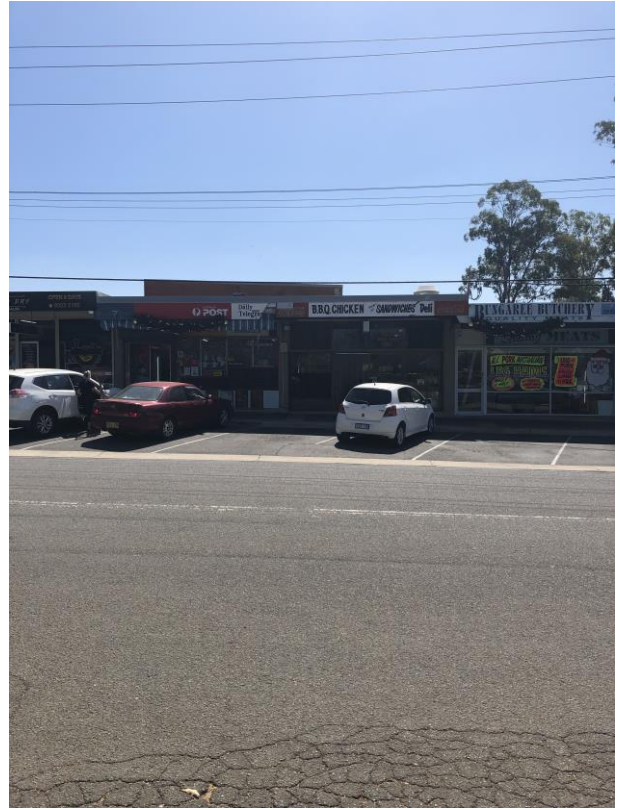


Figure 3 - Various photos of the site

1.2. Parking Availability

There are nine off-street car parking spaces directly in front of the businesses. Untimed on-street car parking spaces are commonly found on Bungaree Road and in the surrounding streets.

The operation of the parking lot was observed during the on-site consultation session, from 2.00pm-4.00pm on Thursday 6 February 2020. A high turnover of parking was observed, with approximately 20 cars entering and exiting the car park per hour. Three of the nine car spaces did not turnover during this time. Whilst the car park was at capacity, it was observed that the overflow of car parking spaces occurred in an orderly way onto the surrounding available on-street car parking spaces.

It is noted that of the nine car parking spaces, there is only one wheel stop preventing cars from colliding with the public seating in front of the hairdresser salon.

Council's Traffic and Transport Team received a request from a local resident for a timed parking restriction at the centre. Council has undertaken consultation for three options listed below:

- **Option 1:** Install a '1P 8am-6pm Mon-Sat' parking restriction
- **Option 2:** Install a '1/2P 8am-6pm Mon-Sat' parking restriction
- **Option 3:** No change required

During the consultation process, four responses were received – two of which wanted a 1P installation and two of which requested no change. Considering that there was no consensus, no changes will likely be implemented at this stage.

1.3. Installation of Pedestrian Refuge and Footpath Treatments

Simultaneous to the consultation and project works which Council's Place Services Team are pursuing in this report, Council's Traffic and Transport Team are pursuing a grant application for the installation of a pedestrian refuge and continuous footpath treatments along Bungaree Road. It is further proposed that the installations will require changes to the parking configurations along Bungaree Road through the introduction of additional 'No Stopping' zones.

Council's Traffic and Transport Team have submitted a funding application to the State government for the project, which is shown in the figure below. No alternate funding source is known to be currently available should the application be unsuccessful. Until the outcomes of this funding application process are known, Council's Place Services Team will not invest any of the allocated BNP funding to the installation of the pedestrian refuge and footpath treatments. The Place Services Team is supportive of the proposed changes, given the concerns raised regarding road safety as outlined in the consultation findings in the sections below.

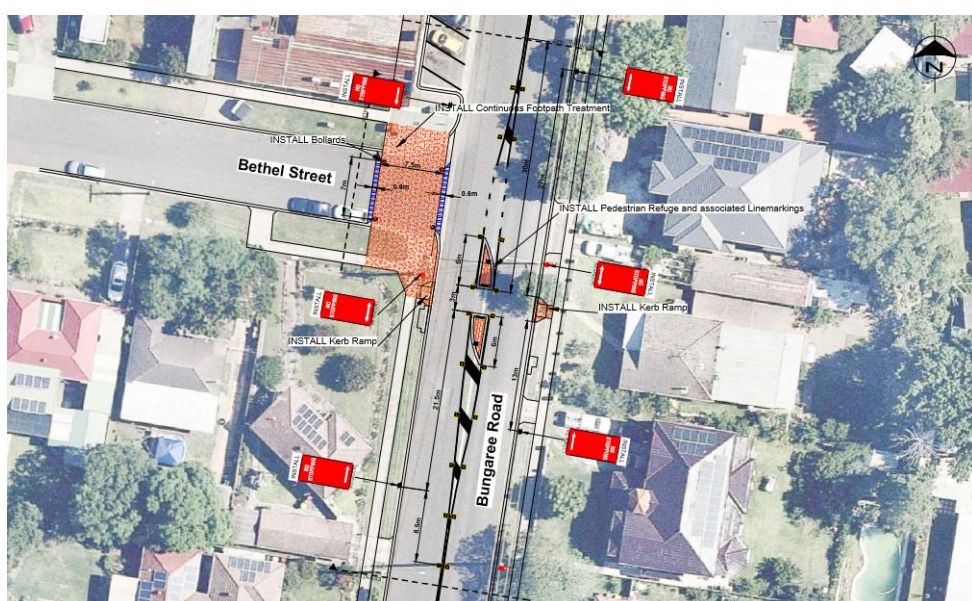


Figure 4 - Proposed Installation of Pedestrian Refuge and Footpath Treatment

1.4. Opportunities and Constraints Analysis

From the perspective of Council, there are limited opportunities for significant areas of investment in the centre, primarily as the majority of the centre is under private ownership. Council is unable to invest public funding in a way that will increase the value of a private asset without a clear demonstrated public benefit, or partnership agreement with the landowner.

Notwithstanding, Council has an established Retail Shopfront Improvement Program which has been running on Church Street in the Parramatta CBD. The Program offers successful applicants a grant of up to 30% of the total costs of upgrade works, to the maximum dollar value of \$20,000. Council is investigating implementing this Program throughout the wider LGA and could use Bungaree Road as a trial location.

The pavement within the centre has been recently upgraded, so that it is consistent throughout both the publicly and privately owned areas. Most shops have a slight step leading into the premises from the public domain, limiting disabled access particularly for users in wheelchairs.

There are limited underutilised areas within the small centre. Areas of opportunity include small redundant areas of car park created by angled parking spaces and a small verge on the southern edge of the bottle shop which could be used for mature tree planting. The larger area of public domain near to the bottle shop is also generally underutilised. These areas are shown in the image below.



Figure 5 - Areas of Opportunity (green) and Constraint (red)

2. Engagement Methodology and Objectives

The levels of participation for the engagement program (based on the IAP2 Spectrum) were 'Inform' and 'Consult'. The table below outlines the objectives of the program for each engagement level.

Engagement Level	Objectives
Inform	Communicate that City of Parramatta Council is considering investing in an upgrade to Bungaree Road shops, and is seeking input from the community.
Consult	Understand whether the business owners, property owner, local residents and users of Bungaree Road are supportive of an upgrade and determine what upgrades they wish to see.

Council's Place Services team is in the process of undertaking consultation over two phases:

- **Phase One** – February 2020: Determine the types of upgrades desired by the community and key stakeholders; and
- **Phase Two** – May 2020 (indicative): Seek community and stakeholder feedback regarding concept design developed from Phase One outcomes.

This Report summarises the findings of Phase One consultation.

Phase One consultation included the following actions:

- Conversations had with each of the retailers and property owner;
- Onsite consultation session, held between 2.00pm – 4.00pm 6 February 2020;
- Online survey, live from 3 February 2020 – 21 February 2020;
- Promotion of the online survey and consultation session, including:
 - Letter box drop of project flyer to approximately 150 households;
 - Flyers and advertising collateral distributed to businesses;
 - Social media marketing, including posts on the Council's Facebook page and the 'Our City, Your Parramatta' Facebook Page; and
 - Promotion on Council's 'Our Say' engagement platform.

3. Summary of Engagement Feedback

3.1. Who was engaged?

A summary of who was engaged throughout the consultation period is captured in the table below.

Table 1 - Summary of who was engaged

Engagement event	Number of people engaged	Summary of who was engaged
On-Site Business Consultation	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All business owners Property owner
On-Site Community Consultation	15	Consultation held on-site between 2.00pm – 4.00pm, Thursday 6 February 2020. Some attendees responded in person to a flyer which was distributed in their letterbox. Other attendees were incidental shoppers at the centre.
Online Survey	130 (with 86 completing entire survey)	<p>Gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female (73%) Male (23%) <p>Age</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40-49 (35%) 25-39 (27%) 50-59 (18%) 60-69 (11%) <p>Suburb</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toongabbie (58%) Old Toongabbie (19%) Constitution Hill (7%) Pendle Hill (7%) <p>Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11% of respondents stated that they live with a disability

3.2. Key Issues

The following key issues have been summarised following the consultation with key stakeholders and the community.

Table 2 - Summary of key issues raised during consultation

Issue	Detail	Potential Solution to Investigate
Road Safety	An incident recently occurred where an elderly driver inadvertently crashed into the front of the takeaway store. Business owners and the property owner would like to see some preventative measures in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheel stops in all car parking spaces • Bollards • Reinforced planter boxes
Road Safety	Cars are known to speed down Bungaree Road, potentially endangering pedestrians who cross the road to access the centre. It is noted that the residents who live directly across from the shops are not in favour of a speed reduction solution that will generate noise from passing traffic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian crossing installation • Speed bump installation • Pedestrian refuge installation • Road rule enforcement
Accessibility	Most shops have a small step at the entrance, preventing wheelchair access. There is also no designated disabled car parking space at the centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As private land, will require business partnership potentially as part of the Retail Shopfront Improvement Program to resolve • Investigate installation of disabled parking space
General Look and Feel	Customers would like to see the shopfronts and awnings improved, with specific reference made to a 'bullnose' awning to be installed and the potential rendering of brickwork.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private investment with up to 30% matching funding as part of the Retail Shopfront Improvement Program
Waste Collection	Stakeholders have raised that Council has reduced the frequency which they empty the bins on site. Reports were also received in relation to rubbish being left around the side of the shops on Bethel Street. Other stakeholders would like to see the area cleaned more regularly and recycling bins made available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal investigations into the suitability of waste collection for the centre and/or compliance investigations
Security Issues	Historically, some shops have been targeted by robberies. The supermarket reports of bread deliveries being stolen, particularly since a new fence has been installed at the northern end of the centre, obscuring passive surveillance. Other shops have reported vandalism caused by patrons who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol including to the shopfronts and to the phone booth on site.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise issues with private landowner to consider installation of security measures • Discuss opportunities to address social issues with business owners • Encourage business/property owners to discuss

		opportunities to lower fence with adjacent landowner.
Tree planting	Some stakeholders raised a desire to see increased tree planting at the centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities to plant new trees on the grass verge on Bethel Street or elsewhere in the public domain.
Signage	Complaints were received regarding the previous prevalence of A-frame signage advertising within the public space at the southern end of the centre. These signs made it visibility difficult for reversing cars and cluttered the public space. It is understood that Council has notified shops which own the signage to not put these out. Other business owners have requested whether Council could include a sign advertising the shopping centre at the intersection of Bungaree Road and Fitzwilliam Road.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate opportunities for signage at the corner of Bungaree Road / Fitzwilliam Road
Retail variety	Some community members would like to see an increase in the quantity or retail offering made available at Bungaree Road.	<i>Council does not have capacity as a public authority to influence the retail offering of a private landholding.</i>

3.3. Current vs Future Identity

Respondents were asked to describe Bungaree Road Shops in three unprompted words. This question gives a good indication of whether the shops are currently viewed positively or negatively. Of the 238 responses, 106 (45%) were viewed to be positive, 116 (49%) were viewed to be negative and 16 (7%) were viewed to be neutral. The most commonly occurring words (with a frequency of 5 or more) are captured in the table below.

Table 3 - Words to describe Bungaree Road Shops in their current state

Positive	Negative	Neutral
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convenient (23) Local (16) Friendly (7) Handy (7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Old (27) Run down (10) Dated/outdated (8) Unsafe (7) Tired (7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Busy (5)

Respondents were then asked to list three unprompted words to describe Bungaree Road Shops in the future after a potential upgrade. This question sets the brief for the style of upgrades which should take place at the centre. The most commonly occurring words (with a frequency of 5 or more) include:

- Convenient (14)
- Fresh (13)
- Modern (13)
- Clean (11)
- Better/easier/more parking (11)
- Safe (10)
- Inviting (10)

- Local (7)
- Variety (6)
- Friendly (6)
- Accessible (5)
- Better (5)
- Welcoming (5)
- Community (5)

These responses demonstrate a desire to retain the convenient nature of the small local centre. They also demonstrate a strong desire for improvements to the centre to modernise it and change the perception that the site is old and run down. This is substantiated by a separate question, which confirmed that 87% of respondents think that Bungaree Road Shops need an upgrade.

3.4. Support for Improvement Projects

Respondents were asked to rate their support for suggested improvement projects at Bungaree Road Shops on a spectrum from 'definitely yes' to 'absolutely not'. The project ideas which were prompted by Council due to their feasible implementation are ranked below by their degree of support:

- Retail shop frontage improvements;
- Improve signage and branding;
- Plant more trees and/or planter boxes;
- 'Shop local' campaign;
- Increase availability or turnover of parking;
- Create a nice place to sit and spend time;
- Traffic calming (e.g. speed bumps or pedestrian crossings); and
- Public art / mural.

The results are shown in the graph below. Larger bars of dark blue ('definitely yes') and red ('yes') represent higher community support for the project ideas. This demonstrates that 'retail shop frontage improvements' is the most supported project idea, with over 82% of respondents stating 'definitely yes' or 'yes' in their support of this idea. A 'public art / mural' is the least supported project idea (28% 'definitely yes' or 'yes') of the prompted ideas.

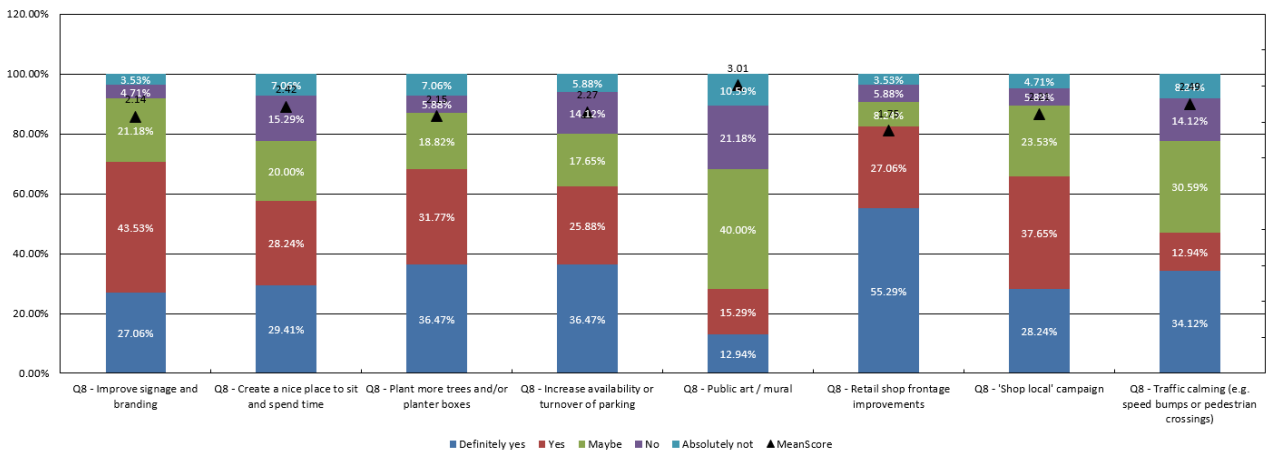


Figure 6 - Degree of public support for project ideas

Respondents were also asked for suggestions for any other project ideas which would make them spend more time and/or money at Bungaree Road Shops. This was an unprompted question. Common responses included:

- Introduction of new shops including a bakery, café, fresh vegetables or cake shop;
- Removal of the steps into each of the shops to improve accessibility; and
- Improvements to safety and addressing social issues in the area.

There was a mix of responses regarding the desire for the centre to change to encourage people to spend more time. Some respondents wish to see increased seating and would spend more time there if there was a café and seating with shade. Other respondents maintain that the Bungaree Road Shops should be retained first and foremost as a convenient centre where shoppers 'duck in and duck out'. This is substantiated by the results that 72% of respondents drive to the centre and 69% of respondents spend 10 minutes or less there per visit. Other respondents did not want to encourage people to spend more time at the centre, due to social issues caused by people lingering near the bottle shop.

4. Concept Plan Brief

Following the public engagement process, the following action plan has been developed and is proposed to be progressed into a concept plan. Progression of each of the action plan ideas is subject to further stakeholder consultation and public comment.

Each of these items are not yet costed. Council will try and deliver as many project ideas as possible within the allocated budget of \$150,000. This will require further consultation with various internal teams within Council to determine what can feasibly be delivered. This action plan therefore represents the current investigations to be undertaken by the project team and provide the opportunity for additional stakeholder feedback on the plans before they are further progressed.

4.1. Place wheel stops in each car parking space

Council considers that any issues regarding pedestrian or shopkeeper safety resulting from hostile vehicles to be a key issue for this centre which needs to be addressed. Wheel stops are the preferred solution at this stage to the risk of hostile vehicles running into shopfronts. This is due to the following reasons:

- They are relatively inexpensive (compared to bollards);
- There is limited space on the footpath for too many additional obstructions which may prevent disabled access; and
- Potential issues with ongoing maintenance for planter boxes and the like.

Council will consult with relevant stakeholders to determine if an alternate strategy is preferred.

4.2. Encourage or enter into an agreement with the landowner to provide universal access into each shop

Council has an obligation to improve universal access throughout the LGA on any project which it works on under its Disability Inclusion Action Plan. As can be seen in Figure 3, a small step into each of the shops prevents this access for what is reported to be a high number of elderly or wheelchair bound customers. Provision of universal access into each shop may include changes to each internal shop by replacing the step with a small sloping ramp. This would include works entirely within privately owned land. Further investigation will also be required to determine if the door width is adequate to comply with universal access standards.

Under Section 67 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, a council may, by agreement with the owner or occupier of any private land, carry out on the land any kind of work that may be lawfully carried out on the land. However, a council must not carry out work unless it proposes to charge an approved fee for carrying out the work as determined by the council, or, if it proposes to charge an amount less than the approved fee, by resolution of the council at an open meeting before the work is carried out.

Given the above, Council proposes to make representations to the landowner to provide universal access into each shop. On this matter, Council is bounded by legislation to charge for these works. If this is not pursued by the landowner, Council may investigate the opportunity to charge a fee less than the approved fee by resolution of the Council.

The option to provide a disabled car parking space within the centre will also be explored consistent with Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan. As this would be on Council land, no agreement with the landowner would be required for this work.

4.3. Encourage participation in the Retail Shopfront Improvement Program

As shown in Figure 6, retail shopfront improvements are a key project idea which is desired by the community. Council has an established Retail Shopfront Improvement Program which has been running on Church Street in the Parramatta CBD. The Program offers successful applicants a grant of up to 30% of the total costs of upgrade works, to the maximum dollar value of \$20,000.

This percentage of funding from Council is considered per application. This means that if the property owner was to submit one application on behalf of the six shops, a maximum of 30% of the total costs of upgrade works to a maximum dollar value of \$20,000 would apply. If each individual tenancy submitted an application, this threshold would apply per tenancy. The remaining funding can come from the property owner, or alternatively, it can come from the tenant or lessee with signed permission from the property owner. Improvements to signage will be investigated under this item.

Council will be making representations to the property owner and all tenants/lessees to encourage participation in the program considering the strong results from the engagement process.

The funding for the Retail Shopfront Improvement Program is additional to the funding allocated in the BNP.

4.4. Support Council's Traffic and Transport Team to deliver a pedestrian refuge along Bungaree Road

As discussed in Section 1.3, Council's Place Services Team supports the Traffic and Transport Team proposal to deliver pedestrian refuge along Bungaree Road. This addresses the identified issue of road / pedestrian safety arising from cars speeding down Bungaree Road. This is also a preferred solution as adjacent neighbours raised potential amenity / noise issues that may arise from a speed bump installation in front of their property.

As the proposal involves a grant funding application to the State Government, the Place Services Team will endeavour to remain updated with regard to the progress of the application. If unsuccessful, Council will revisit ways to improve road and pedestrian safety along Bungaree Road.

4.5. Mature street planting in the Council verge along Bethel Street

Council endeavours to increase the tree canopy coverage throughout the LGA on any project which it works on. The verge along Bethel Street provide the opportunity for mature street tree planting to provide additional shade for a known hot area in the LGA. Consultation will need to occur with the bottle shop to ensure that any trees do not unnecessarily obscure visibility to signage on the southern façade.

4.6. Mature planting in redundant parking space areas

There is opportunity to make use of the redundant parking areas created by the angled parking as shown in Figure 5. Council will investigate the opportunity to implement a raised garden bed that allows for mature tree planting, which can provide shade and increase amenity to the centre. Any species and other planting will be selected for its ability to be low maintenance. Opportunities may also exist to add signage to the raised planter box, to name the shops 'The Six Shops' which has emerged as the nostalgic and well used local name for the centre which was not previously known to Council.

Opportunities to provide for seating adjacent to the raised garden bed may also be considered, however, it is noted that as this could occur adjacent to the bottle shop, that many respondents raised concern about encouraging loitering outside the bottle shop.

5. Next Steps

The next steps for this project are as follows:

1. Consult with key stakeholders to seek feedback about the contents of this report and the Concept Plan brief.
2. Develop Concept Plan and seek agreement on action plan moving forward.
3. Exhibit Concept Plan to the community for a period of consultation.
4. Detailed design phase, determining accurate costings and ability to deliver the project within budget.
5. Construction / completion prior to June 2021.

6. Appendix 1 – ‘Our Say’ data file

(spreadsheet)