



Melbourne's own Times Square?

Aisha Dow, The Age, pages 2 and 3, AUGUST 17 2016

A congested spaghetti intersection in Melbourne could be transformed into a pedestrian piazza inspired by New York's Times Square.

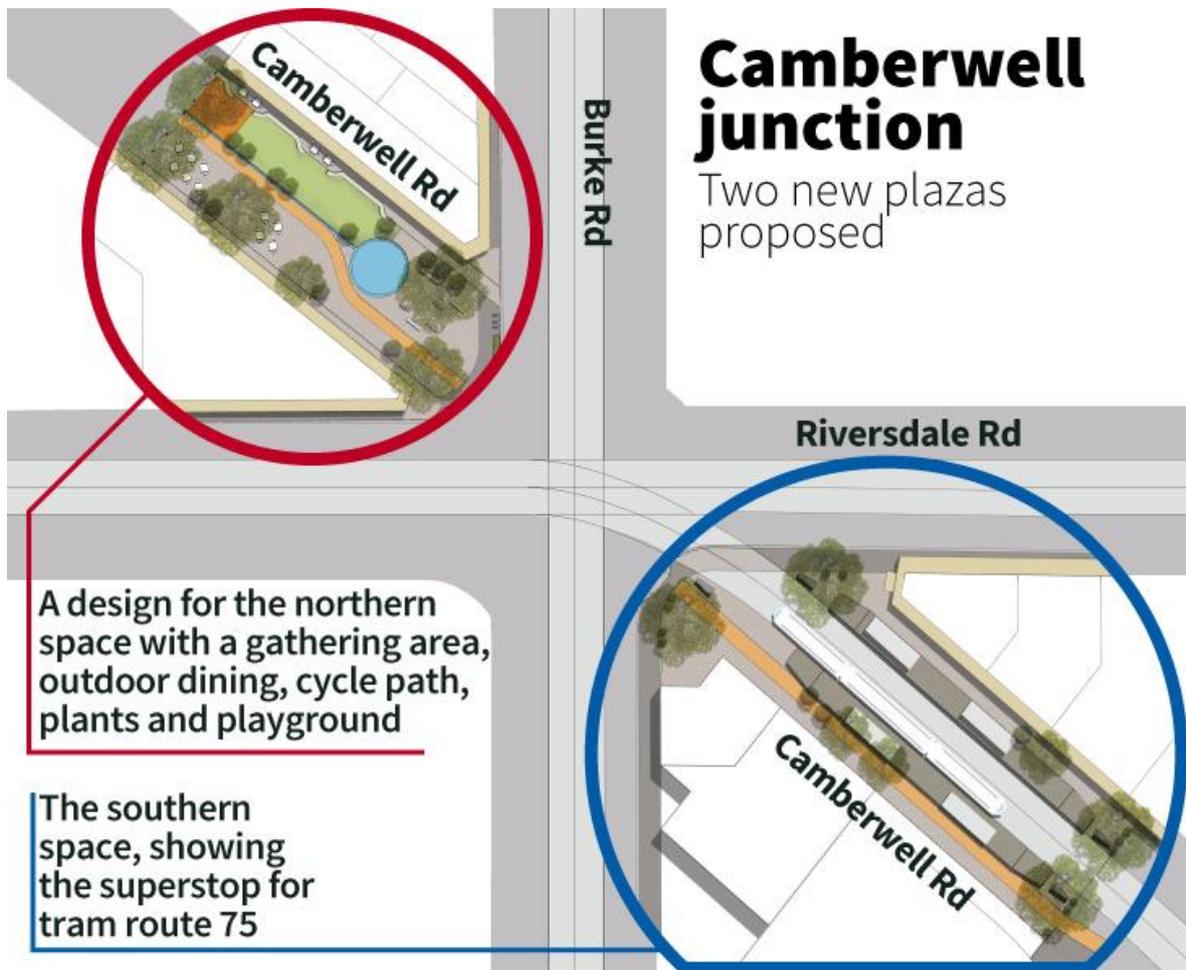
In a major redevelopment proposed by urban design firm Alexander Urbanism, Camberwell Junction would be partially closed and turned into a town square and tram super stop.

The "convoluted" six-way intersection in Camberwell's upmarket shopping strip would be reduced to a four-way intersection of Burke and Riversdale roads, by shutting small sections of Camberwell Road to the north and south of the junction.

The northern 50-metre section would be turned into a town square, with trees and alfresco dining. It is envisaged the space would be used for community events and, over time, become a restaurant hub or "eat street".



Artist's impression of the proposed pedestrian plaza in Camberwell Road, north of the Camberwell Junction. Photo: Alexander Urbanism



The southern 60-metre stretch of Camberwell Road would be used for a tram super stop for tram route 75, which shuttles between Docklands and Vermont South.

Nathan Alexander, the designer behind the \$3.1 million proposal, has also worked on Federation Square and a redesign of Melbourne's Bourke Street Mall.

He said the Camberwell shopping precinct lacked a "clear heart".

"Camberwell doesn't have a town square, it doesn't have an easy place you can hold an event and it doesn't have an obvious place you can go meet a friend," Mr Alexander said.

The new plan for Camberwell Junction will be presented to Boroondara Council and has been compared to the 2010 redevelopment of Times Square in New York, which saw a five blocks of roadway closed down to create a 13,000 square metre plaza.

"If they can do it in New York where they have a lot more traffic, and a lot more density, then it shouldn't be too hard for Camberwell to do it," Mr Alexander said.



Before and after: New York's Times Square. Photo supplied.

Boroondara councillor Jack Wegman said it was the first time such a drastic reform had been suggested for the intersection.

"I think it's a great idea. I think it is crying shame to have a lack of open space for people to enjoy," he said.

About 45,000 vehicles travel through Camberwell Junction each day, according to VicRoads.

An initial transport assessment conducted by the Martyn Group found the redesign had the potential to reduce congestion in the area, due to longer green signals for Burke and Riversdale roads.

But they also found it could create congestion on other neighbouring streets – including Redfern and Trafalgar roads – because of traffic diverting around the Camberwell Road piazza and super stop.

Transport planner Cameron Martyn said six-way intersections were, by their nature, convoluted and outdated.

"It's not something you would design now. It's more of a historical situation," Mr Martyn said.

"There's so many signal phases. That's not an efficient way to manage an intersection, especially since you also have pedestrians, cyclists and trams."

A spokeswoman from VicRoads said the authority had "no plans in place to alter how [Camberwell Junction] operates".

For more information on the proposal visit www.alexanderurbanism.com/camberwell-junction.html.