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28th April 2022

Dear Ms Barone,

RE: Castlereagh Street cycleway and footpath extension

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the new cycleway proposed for Castlereagh Street in Sydney.

Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group in NSW for over forty-five years, and has more than 30 affiliated local Bicycle User Groups. Our mission is to '*create a better environment for all bicycle riders*', and we support improvements to facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. We advocate for new cycling routes that incorporate dedicated paths within both green corridors and the road environment, to provide connections to jobs, schools and services for daily transport and recreation trips. Bike riding provides a healthy, congestion-reducing, low-carbon form of travel that is quiet, efficient and attractive for all ages with the correct infrastructure design.

The Castlereagh Street cycleway will form a critical part of Sydney's bike network and Bicycle NSW strongly supports the proposed upgrades.

The section of Castlereagh Street between King Street and Liverpool Street has long been identified as a priority cycling route in the City of Sydney, as shown on the extract from the regional cycle network (Figure 1). A map of existing routes (Figure 2) highlights how this north-south connection has been left as a high-traffic on-road route, suitable only for 'strong and fearless' cyclists, for far too long. In conjunction with the cycleways under construction on Pitt Street and Kent Street, the Castlereagh Street separated bicycle path will transform the active travel links between Circular Quay and Central Station. With the imminent delivery of further cycleways on College Street, Liverpool Street and Oxford Street, a safe route towards the Eastern Suburbs will finally be realised.

It is so exciting to see the development of Sydney's bike network gaining such momentum. As has been shown over and over again, if you build it, they will come. The pop-ups installed in 2020, intended to help alleviate pressure on public transport during the COVID-19 pandemic, added 10km to the network and contributed to an increase of 40% in rider number from pre-pandemic levels. The most popular pop-up was on Pitt Street from Circular Quay to King Street which quickly attracted 6000 bike trips a weekⁱ. The City of Sydney's 2021 Active Transport Survey shows that the number of residents who ride regularly has increased from 7% in 2017 to 18% now. The survey also shows significant improvements in riders' perceptions of safety. 86% felt confident riding on the streets, up from 75% in 2017.ⁱⁱ

We applaud City of Sydney Council for constructing separated bicycle paths within road corridors rather than the shared paths on footpaths found in many LGAs. Shared paths are not suitable for areas with high

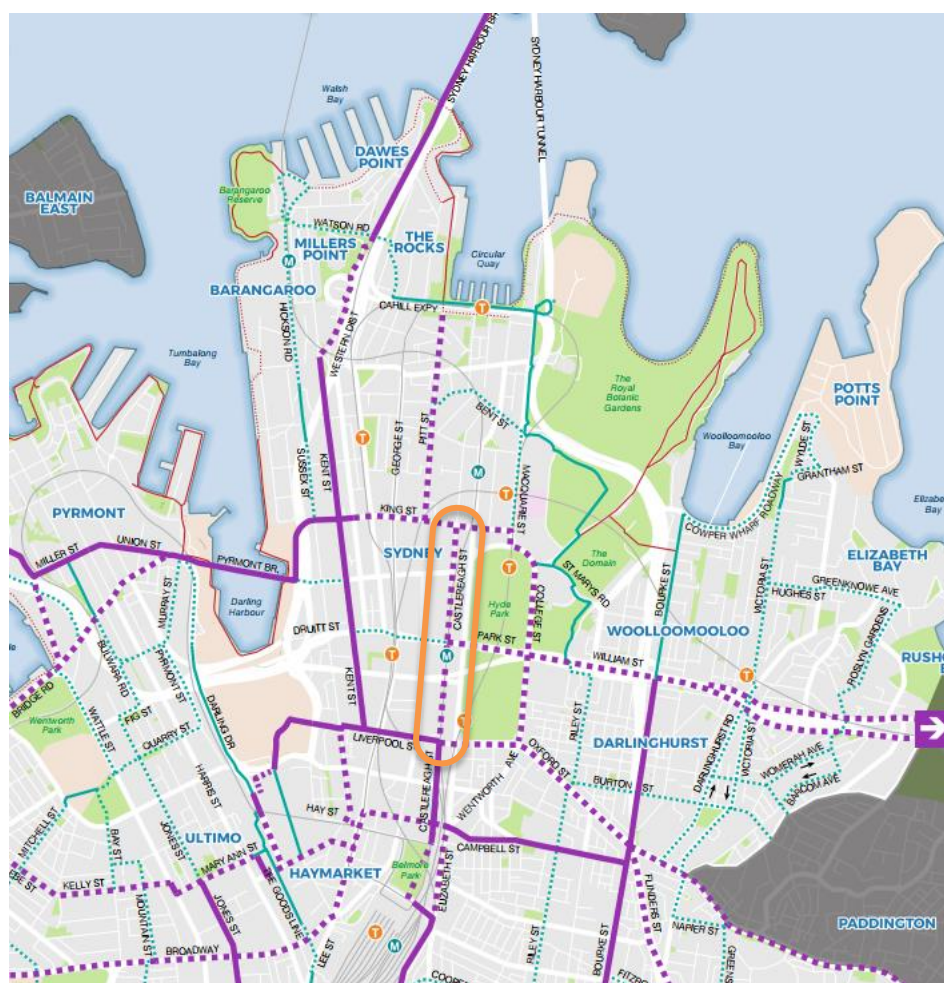


Figure 1:
Extract City of Sydney's future network map showing proposed and completed sections of the Regional Bike Network, updated April 2022
(Source: City of Sydney Council)

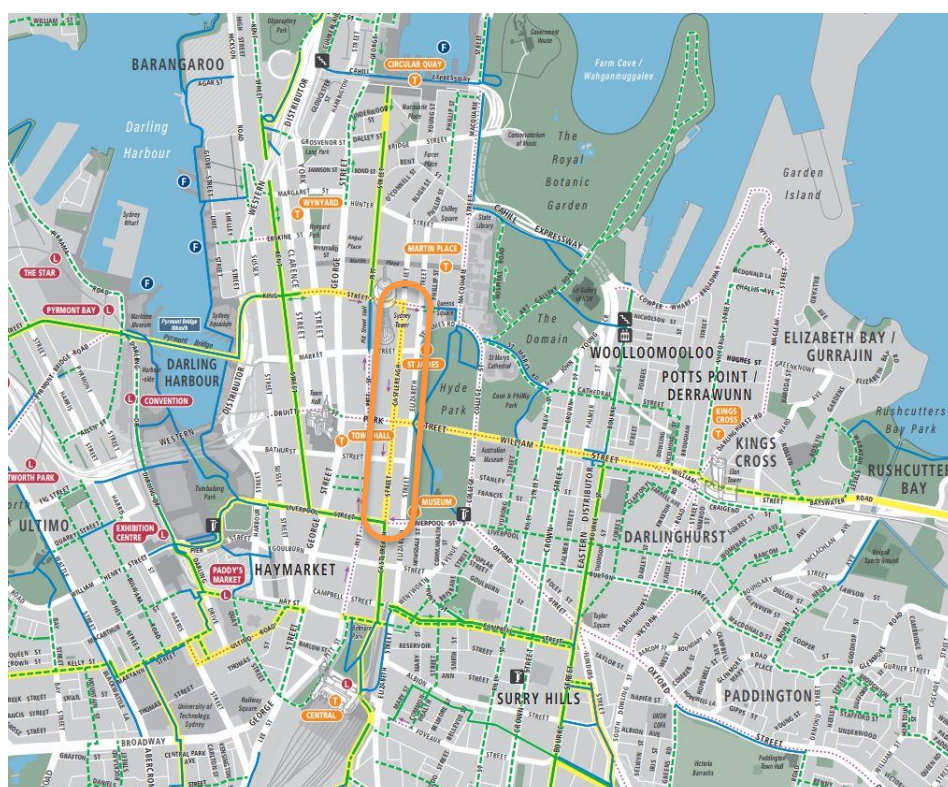


Figure 2:
Extract from the Sydney Cycling Map showing Oxford Street is still a high traffic on-street route
(Source: City of Sydney Council)

pedestrian and cycling activity and will not lead to an acceptable level of amenity and safety for either walkers or riders, with conflict occurring between different users.

Reallocating road space to active modes begins to address the unsustainable and inequitable nature of the current transport system. The road between the kerbs can no longer be the unchallenged domain of private cars, with wide vehicle lanes and ample parking that encourage car travel and unsafe speeds, if the modal shift needed to meet climate, health and liveability imperatives is to occur.

As Lord Mayor Clover Moore sets out in **Sustainable Sydney 2030—2050 Continuing the Vision**ⁱⁱⁱ, the reconfiguration of streets does not only achieve transport objectives. Projects such as Castlereagh Street are significant urban design proposals with a vision to deliver quieter, calmer, leafier streets that benefit every resident and visitor in the city's heart.

There are inspiring plans for many more regeneration projects that will return street space to people in order to meet the ten strategic directions of Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050, including Direction 2: a leading environmental performer, Direction 3: Public spaces for all, Direction 4: Design excellence and sustainable development, Direction 5: A city of walking, cycling and public transport and Direction 6: An equitable and inclusive city^{iv}.

It is essential to provide very high quality walking and cycling environments to maintain global competitiveness and reputation. A target has been set for 90% of trips to work in central Sydney to be by walking, cycling or public transport. Sydney is at a tipping point: there has never been a better time to build infrastructure for bike riding and active transport. As the new Minister for Infrastructure, Cities and Active Transport, Rob Stokes MP, set out in a recent speech^v, active travel projects that stitch the suburbs together and enable people to get around without a car will be a major focus for the NSW Government. This mission is supported by **Transport for NSW's Road User Space Allocation Policy CP21000**^{vi}, which establishes a road user hierarchy that considers pedestrians first and private cars last. Multiple environmental and health benefits will flow from increased walking, cycling and public transport use. The streets will be more equitable for Sydney-siders of all ages, incomes and abilities.

Comments and recommendations

- **The importance of stakeholder engagement**

Bicycle NSW appreciates the huge effort undertaken by the City of Sydney Cycleways team to work with stakeholders along the route and resolve access and parking issues. The adaptations to the design outside the Masonic Club and the fire station will accommodate the needs of these organisations for access to the kerb and demonstrate how close collaboration can ensure that the streets work for all users.

- **Focus on the delivery of safe intersections**

One of the three guiding policy themes at Bicycle NSW is 'Build it for Everyone'^{vii} and we advocate for infrastructure that is suitable for riders from 8 to 80 years of age to use independently. According to the best practice 'cycling segmentation' model, developed in Portland USA to identify the type and needs of existing and potential bike riders^{viii}, separated bicycle paths such as that proposed for Castlereagh Street will allow 70% of citizens to consider journeys by bike (Figure 3).

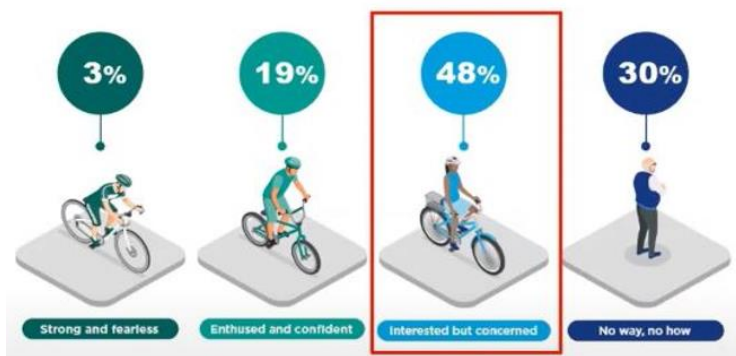
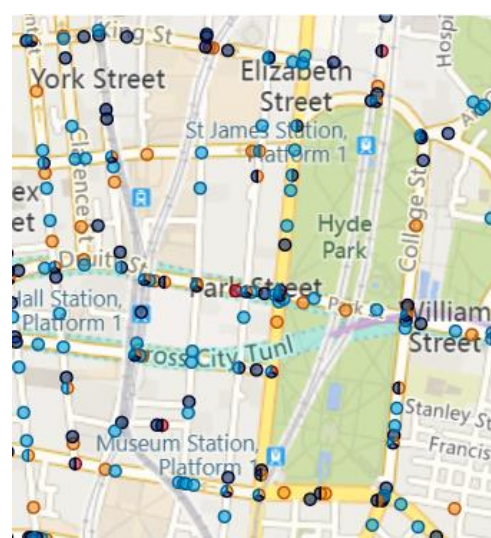


Figure 3:
Four general categories of comfort levels
for cycling as transportation.
(Source: North Sydney Council)

However, at the intersections, bike riders are left exposed to vehicle traffic. Transport for NSW publishes data on crashes and the severity of injuries. It is clear from the extract in Figure 4, which locates crashes from 2016-2020, that most incidents occur at intersections.

Figure 4: A 'crash map' for 2016-2020 showing a high incidence of serious injuries due to road trauma on and around Castlereagh St.
(Source: Transport for NSW Centre for Road Safety)



Degree of casualty ● Killed ● Seriously Injured ● Moderately Injured ● Minor/Other Injured

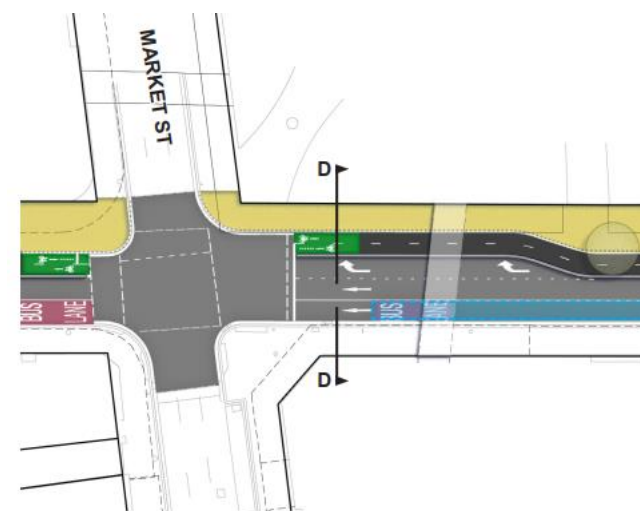
Safety at the intersections with the Castlereagh Street cycleway will be much improved by the removal of right turns at Bathurst Street and King Street to reduce opportunities for conflict. This has the added benefits of (i) allowing the lights to be green for cyclists for the full cycle of green for cars, reducing wait time and inconvenience for cyclists, and (ii) enabling space used by turn lanes to be reallocated to wider footpaths. We fully support the progress made by Transport for NSW and the City of Sydney to change traffic flows to prioritise people walking and cycling.

Two turning lanes still compromise the safety and urban design outcomes for Castlereagh Street. Bicycle NSW urges Transport for NSW to consider:

1. removing the left turn lane on Park Street. Cars turning left could wait in another lane or share the bus lane. The volume of traffic will reduce once the upgrades are complete and buses only use the street for a short period each day. As explicitly set out in the Road User Space Allocation policy, the comfort of pedestrians must be put ahead of the convenience of car drivers. It is much more important to maximise the footpath space outside the new metro station, where pedestrian activity levels are expected to be extremely high. Major changes to Park Street are proposed in the Sustainable Sydney 2030-2050 strategy to create a tree-lined boulevard with far less through traffic. It is hoped that proposals for a fully protected intersection with Castlereagh St will be developed in due course.



2. eliminating the right hand turn from Market Street.
Again, the turning bay constrains the footpath space and creates an unnecessary kink in the bicycle path. Cars can access Market Street from Elizabeth Street



The Castlereagh Cycleway will intersect with the two east-west bicycle paths being delivered at King Street and Liverpool Street. Figure 5 show the preliminary proposals for the intersections. These junctions are complicated and we know that the design team is rigorously exploring how to keep bike riders safe while minimising wait times. Options may include protected storage bays, separate bicycle signals, cycleway turning lanes, additional green paint and light phasing that gives cyclists a head start or a dedicated phase. Bicycle NSW would like the opportunity to provide further feedback as the designs progress.

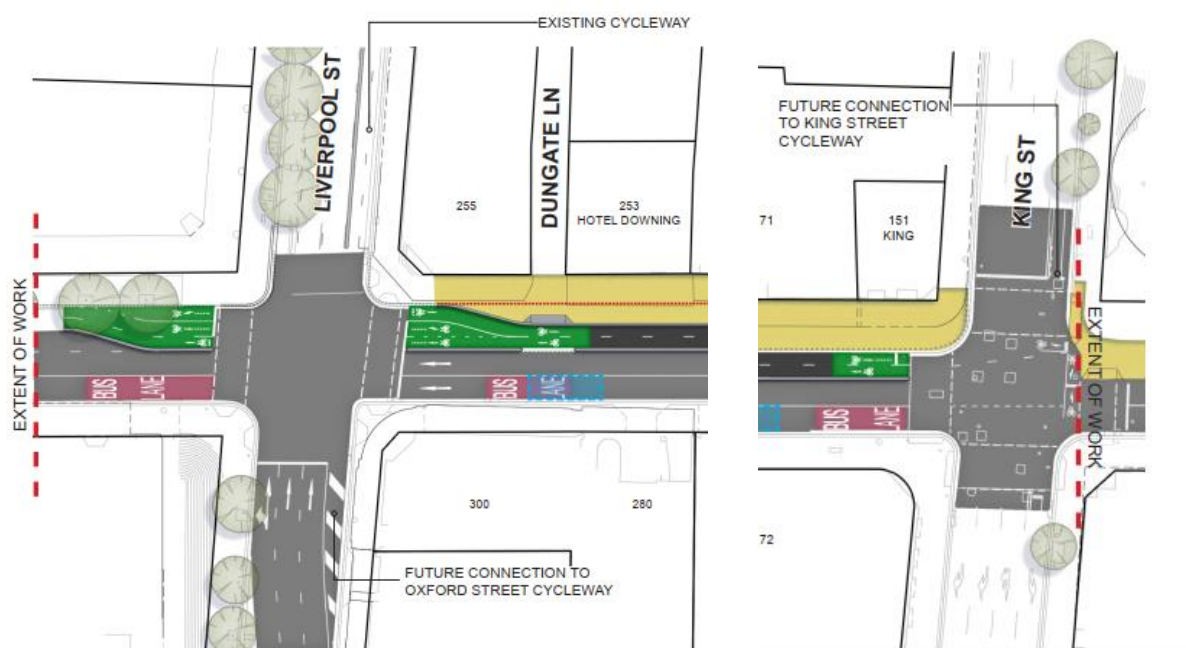


Figure 5: Preliminary proposals for the intersection of the Castlereagh, Liverpool and King Street cycleways

It is essential that City of Sydney continues work to develop best-practice intersections that are safe and comfortable for bike riders of all ages and abilities. Designs must be future-proofed and consider the predicted growth in ridership once a completed cycle network is in place, as well as the needs of micro-mobility devices such as cargo bikes and e-scooters.

- **Prioritise the movement of pedestrians and cyclists**

Traffic light phasing and sensors must favour active modes to encourage more people to walk and cycle. In line with the Road User Space Allocation Policy and other State and local strategies, small delays to vehicle traffic should never prevent the delivery of safer, more efficient and more attractive active transport infrastructure. Pedestrian and bicycle level of service could be optimised with the following features:

- Detection loops located well in advance of intersections so that lights can change for approaching cyclists, reducing the number of stops needed on a trip through the city.
- Instant green on demand for pedestrians and bicycles at mid-block crossings, with induction loop detectors.
- Longer crossing times so that pedestrians of all ages and abilities have time to cross safely and without stress.
- Automatic green for pedestrians/bicycles at all signalised intersections so there is no need to press a 'beg button'
- Raised crossings at unsignalised intersections to slow cars and improve safety.

- **Ensure that cycle infrastructure is inclusive**

All types of bikes should be accommodated by the cycling infrastructure, including cargo bikes and tricycles. Again, the width of the paths is critical and it is important to consider turning radii, dropped kerbs, ramps and the design of modal filters to ensure that non-standard bikes not excluded from the network. Cargo bikes will increasingly be used for inner-city deliveries and have huge potential to play a key role in a sustainable transport system. Non-standard bikes such as hand-cycles, recumbents and wheelchair bikes offer disabled people independent mobility but are a rare sight on city streets due to barriers caused by poor urban design. Any measures enabling cycling by disabled people will support a growth in cycling by novice cyclists, children and older people, and improve conditions for those using mobility scooters^{ix}.

Another call for the completion of the King Street cycleway

Bicycle NSW has long advocated for the delivery of the final section of separated cycleway on King Street from Pitt Street to Clarence Street to provide a safe route towards Darling Harbour, the Anzac Bridge and the Inner West. Thousands of bike riders use this stretch of King Street every day and there are far too many close calls as they are forced to merge from the cycleway from Pyrmont Bridge into a complicated mix of traffic. It will be necessary to remove a general travel lane to accommodate a wide separated path and this has hindered the planning of a cycleway.

As the City of Sydney rolls out the network in the CBD, the missing link on King Street will become an increasing glaring gap. The consultation process for the King Street East cycleway in October 2021 showed huge demand for a cycleway that connects Pitt Street to Kent Street and Darling Harbour. 85% of those supporting the project asked for its continuation to Clarence Street.^x The time has come for Transport for NSW to apply its policy for Road User Space Allocation and bravely take road space from private vehicles. We urge Minister Stokes to put the delivery of this short three block cycleway at the very top of his priority list for the Active Transport portfolio.

Conclusion

Bicycle NSW is delighted by recent developments in the cycling infrastructure in the City of Sydney and commends Council's ambitions to provide sustainable, equitable transport options for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities. Safe cycling facilities help decongest roads, public transport and parking, don't contribute to environmental pollution and benefit local businesses.^{xi}

We look forward to riding on the completed Castlereagh Street bicycle path in the near future!

Yours faithfully,



Sarah Bickford

Bike Planner
Bicycle NSW



Peter McLean

Chief Executive Officer
Bicycle NSW

ⁱ City of Sydney. 2021, March 18. Pitt Street leads the way with plans for a permanent cycleway <https://news.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/articles/pitt-street-leads-the-way-with-plans-for-a-permanent-cycleway>

ⁱⁱ City of Sydney. 2021, August. Active Transport Survey 2021. <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/-/media/corporate/files/publications/surveys-case-studies-reports/city-of-sydney-active-transport-survey-2021-report.pdf?download=true>

ⁱⁱⁱ City of Sydney. 2022. Sustainable Sydney 2030—2050 Continuing the Vision. https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/-/media/corporate/files/projects/vision-setting/your-say-our-plan-sustainable-sydney-2030-2050/ss2030-2050_vision_draft-1.pdf?download=true

^{iv} City of Sydney. 2022. Sustainable Sydney 2030—2050 Continuing the Vision. https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/-/media/corporate/files/projects/vision-setting/your-say-our-plan-sustainable-sydney-2030-2050/ss2030-2050_vision_draft-1.pdf?download=true

^v Stokes, Rob. 2022, Feb 10. Footpaths and cycleways are an act of democracy – ask Steph. Fifth Estate. <https://thefifthestate.com.au/urbanism/planning/footpaths-and-cycleways-are-an-act-of-democracy-ask-steph/>

^{vi} NSW Government, Road User Space Allocation Policy CP21000, [Online as at 19/2/2021] www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2021/road-user-space-allocation-policy.pdf

^{vii} Bicycle NSW, Policy Framework. [Online as at 19/7/2021] <https://bicyclensw.org.au/our-policy/>

^{xvi} Roger Geller. (2009). Four types of cyclists. Portland Bureau of Transportation. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/264746>

^{ix} Wheel for Wellbeing. 2020. A Guide to inclusive cycling. https://wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/FC_WfW-Inclusive-Guide_FINAL_V03.pdf

^x City of Sydney. 2021, November. King Street engagement report. <https://meetings.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/documents/s59165/Attachment%20C%20-%20Engagement%20Report.pdf>

^{xi} Jerome N Rachele. Do the sums: bicycle-friendly changes are good for business, The Conversation [Online as at 24/2/2021] [Do the sums: bicycle-friendly changes are good business \(theconversation.com\)](https://theconversation.com/do-the-sums-bicycle-friendly-changes-are-good-for-business)