Creating a better environment for all bicycle riders

Parramatta Connect
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2nd April, 2020

Dear Emeline,

RE: Parramatta Light Rail Pedestrian and Cyclist Network and Facilities Strategy

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Parramatta Light Rail Pedestrian and Cyclist Network and Facilities Strategy. Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group now in NSW for over forty three years, and has over 30 affiliated local Bicycle User Groups.

Bicycle NSW exists to create a better environment for all bicycle riders, and our advocacy is guided by three policy pillars to achieve this namely:

Build it for Everyone: cycling infrastructure should be built suitable for all riders, and we say 'from 8-80' as a reminder that children through to elders should all be able to use it independently

Safe Home: because everyone deserves to arrive home safely and laws, regulation and enforcement need to support this

Invest Now for Health: calls for government to recognise the importance of investment in safe cycling to address the rising impact of inactivity on human health

We appreciate that the facilities strategy seeks to integrate and conform with the:

- Future Transport 2056 Plan[i]
- Road Safety Plan 2020 (Towards Zero)[ii]
- Disability Inclusion Plan[iii]
- Tourism & Transport Plan
- Older Persons Transport and Mobility Plan 2018-2022[iv]
- Austroads Guide to Road Design – Part 6A Walking & Cycling[v]
- Australian Standards:
    - AS2890.3 Parking Facilites: Part 3 – Bicycle Parking Facilities
    - AS1742 Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices
    - AS1743 Road Signs - Specifications
- RMS 2013 supplements to the Australian Standards including AS1742 Part 9: Bicycle facilities

These are all vital documents to consider and they inform with how we evaluate provision for bike riding, and advocate for improvements.

We need to alert the project manager to the:

- Austroads Guide to Temporary Traffic Management[vi]
- Austroads Guide to Road Design[vii]
- Austroads Guide to Road Safety[viii]
- Some grammar:

(02) 9704 0800 | info@bicyclensw.org.au | www.bicyclensw.org.au
Bicentennial Drive, Bicentennial Park, Sydney Olympic Park NSW 2127
PO Box 293 Concord West NSW 2138
ABN 26 511 801 801

It has become apparent during our work on the Westconnex Rozelle Interchange Project that outdated traffic management and road safety standards have been used. Unfortunately this has led to the contractor creating hazards to bike riders, and engaging in practices that fall well short of current safety standards expected in NSW. We would expect that the principles, hazard identification, hazard evaluation and control measures specified within the 2019 Guides be implemented on this project.

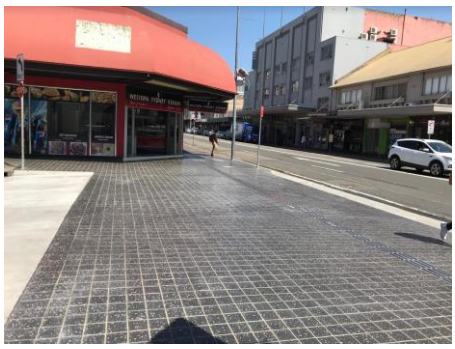
Bicycle NSW appreciates the overall efforts of the project to meet the requirements of the Minister of Planning in condition E14 and conform with the Parramatta Bike Plan 2017-2037[ix].

If all the aforementioned policies, principles, guidelines and plans are implemented on this project, we are confident it will deliver an outstanding result for the community. We have been heartened by the care and consideration taken on the elements of the project around the Westmead Hospital. But Bicycle NSW has become concerned that the standards may have slipped on other elements of the project.

Of the maps used within the draft, the heritage map provides the best detail of the problem that has been reported to us. I have marked below in red on the map the path it used to be possible to take through Horwood place.

This route was direct, calm, free of cars and well used by bike riders. Now a lip has been introduced that causes people trying to turn into Horwood Place from George Street on bicycles to crash. Severing the direct route through this area crossing George Street has forced riders to take a 1.5km diversion on much busier streets. Both of these actions contravene the guidelines detailed above.

Local bike educator and business owner Ms Charlene Bordley of Addventageous – Cycling by the River contacted us and we met with her and Mark Crispin Senior Transport Planner for the City of Parramatta and reviewed this issue. They had been unable to have the problem corrected. Photographs follow depicting the issue.



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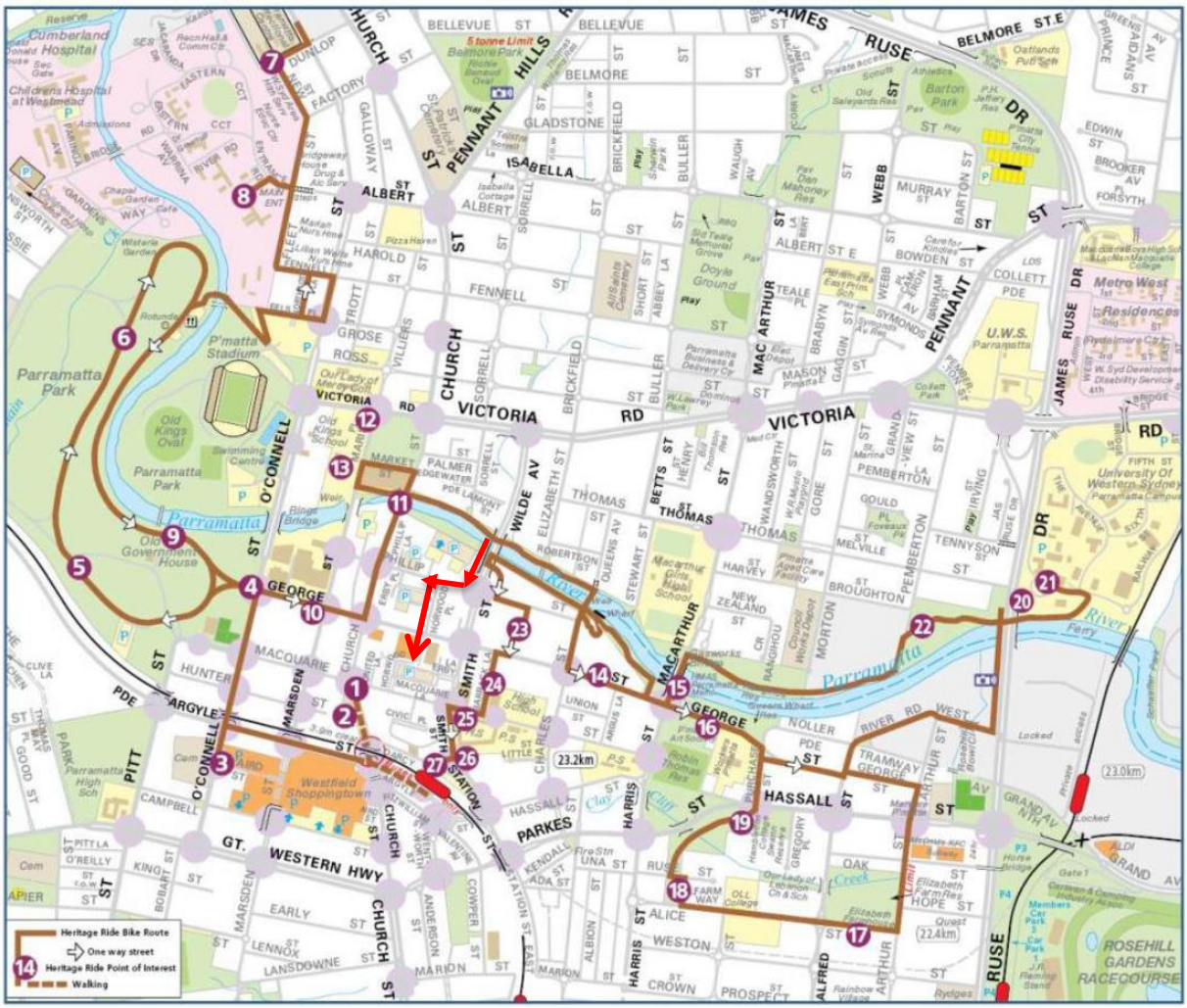

Start at Parramatta Station

1) Town Hall, St John's Anglican Cathedral, World War Memorial
2) Centenary Square's sandstone clock and drinkin fountain mark Parramatta's 1888 centenary
3) St John's Cemetery, Australia's oldest cemetery (1790).
17 First Fleeters buried here
4) Tudor Gatehouse (1885)
5) Observatory Site, Bath house (1820s), Boer War Memorial (1903) and Hart Flight Memorial (1911)
6) Dairy Precinct (1798-1804)
7) Parramatta Gaol, built 1837-1856
8) Female Factory Precinct
9) Old Government House, Australia's oldest publically owned building, dates from 1799
10) Brislington (1821) and Courthouse Tower
11) Lennox Bridge (1839)
12) St Patrick's Catholic Cathedral
13) Second King's School (1836-1968)
14) First King's School (1832-1835)
15) Macarthur St "Gasworks" Bridge (1885)
16) Queens Wharf, where paddle steamers and overseas sailing ships landed trade goods in the 19th Century
17) Elizabeth Farm, commenced 1793. Australia's oldest existing European building
18) Experiment Farm Cottage (1830), on the site of Australia's first land grant
19) Hambledon Cottage (1824), second house on Elizabeth Farm Estate
20) Boundary Stone below James Ruse Drive Bridge
21) Female Orphan School (1818), now WSU
22) Boludarri Wetlands
23) Convict Drain (1820s)
24) Workers Huts (1840s)
25) Arthur Phillip High School
26) Lancer Barracks (1819)
27) Parramatta Station (1860)

Visit **www.parramattaheritagerides.net** for more details and to join a heritage cycling tour.

Figure 5-12: Parramatta Heritage Ride *(Source: City of Parramatta Council, 2019)*

Bicycle NSW is also concerned that banning bikes from light rail corridors, and the possibility of the City of Parramatta building safe cycleways in the future, is to be used as an excuse for stopping bike riding in and through Parramatta now.

This is inadequate, unsafe and fails to conform with the policies, guides, strategies and principle as outlined above. Transport for NSW have received our report following the many and repeated hazards introduced into the riding environment during the construction of the Sydney Light Rail Project. We are prepared to share this again if needed so that lessons can be learned for Parramatta.

Danny Egan lost his life in Newcastle after that light rail project was constructed with an intersection that was impossible to cycle across safely.

There is an opportunity to set a new standard in Parramatta. Bicycle NSW would be pleased to work together with the contractor on in a new way that conforms with the Austroads standards. We will are offering to:

- train key project managers
- enlist local riders and BUG members provide a 'rider's eye view' of what we need, in terms of
  - diversions,
  - wayfinding and
  - the final construction
- by providing 'ride throughs' and independent reports on the safety, suitability and conformity of the project features and diversions with the guidelines and policies detailed above

We believe this more intensive investment now will save time, injuries, rework costs[1] and even lives in the future. Bicycle NSW will then use what we learn through this exercise and re-shape how we work in future with Transport for NSW and the NSW Government.

A Bicycle NSW member prepared the following road safety and diversion audit videos related to the some of the issues with the Rozelle Interchange Project.
https://youtu.be/nK6Q3shTHsw https://youtu.be/fr5XQjAEqt0 https://youtu.be/ZIdPUHLHejc

We have the opportunity to learn from a project that has made mistakes and used outdated standards. Bicycle NSW would be happy to pilot a new approach on an 'at cost' basis, to help ensure the Parramatta Light Rail Project delivers on its full potential, and can set a new standard for project excellence in NSW.

Yours faithfully,

Bastien Wallace BA LLB
General Manager – Public Affairs
Bicycle NSW

[i] NSW Government, Future Transport 2056 [Online 1/4/2020] https://future.transport.nsw.gov.au/plans/future-transport-strategy/future-transport-greater-sydney, Points 3-5
[ii] NSW Government, Road Safety Plan 2020(Towards Zero) (2018) [Online 1/4/2020] https://towardszero.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-02/road-safety-plan.pdf
[iii] NSW Government, Disability Inclusion Plan (2015) [Online 1/4/2020] https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/download?file=313495
[iv] NSW Government, Older Persons Transport and Mobility Plan 2018-2022 (2018) [Online 1/4/2020] https://future.transport.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/media/documents/2018/Older%20Persons%20Transport%20and%20Mobility%20Plan_0.pdf
[v] Austroads Guide to Road Design – Part 6A Walking & Cycling (2017) [Online 1/4/2020] https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-design/agrd06a
[vi] Austroads Guide to Temporary Traffic Management (2019) [Online 1/4/2020] https://austroads.com.au/publications/temporary-traffic-management/agttm-set
[vii] Austroads Guide to Road Design (2019) [Online 1/4/2020] https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-design/agrd-set
[viii] Austroads Guide to Road Safety (2019) [Online 1/4/2020] https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-safety/agrs-set
[ix] City of Parramatta Council, Parramatta Bile Plan 2017, [Online 1/4/2020] https://www.cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au/sites/council/files/2017-07/D05179028%20Parramatta_Bike_Plan_2017.pdf

[1] Of thousands if not millions of dollars

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