

General Manager
Burwood Council
PO Box 240
BURWOOD NSW 1805

29th August 2021

Dear Burwood Council,

RE: review of the CSP - Towards Burwood 2036

Thank you for the opportunity to be involved in the review process for **Towards Burwood 2036**, Burwood's Community Strategic Plan (CSP). Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group now in NSW for over forty-five years, and has over 30 affiliated local Bicycle User Groups.

Our mission is to make cycling better for everyone in NSW, 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.

Concerns:

A review of the 2018 iteration of the CSP, Burwood2030ⁱ, reveals some intent to encourage more active travel in the LGA within the 5 key themes and related strategic goals and actions. Action 1.1.3 under *Key Theme 1: Community and Lifestyle* aims to improve services that allow active and passive recreation. Action 3.3.2 under *Key Theme 3: Healthy and Sustainable Environment* refers to promoting the use of public and active transport. Actions 4.1.2, 4.1.3 and 4.1.4 under *Key Theme 4: Planning and Infrastructure* promise to promote alternatives to car travel, develop and integrated transport plan and improve pedestrian safety.

However, Burwood2030 contains no commitment to providing safe infrastructure and no benchmarks, targets or indicators for expanding cycling infrastructure or increasing the uptake of active and public transport.

An Issues Summary has been prepared to help the community define its aspirations for the future and contribute to Towards Burwood 2036. Again **cycling receives little attention**. In Item 6 under *Planning and Development* a need to provide more cycling connections to the future Burwood North Metro is discussed. In item 9 under *Sustainability and Environment*, the delivery of the Green Grid to provide cool, green links to support walking and cycling and community is mentioned.

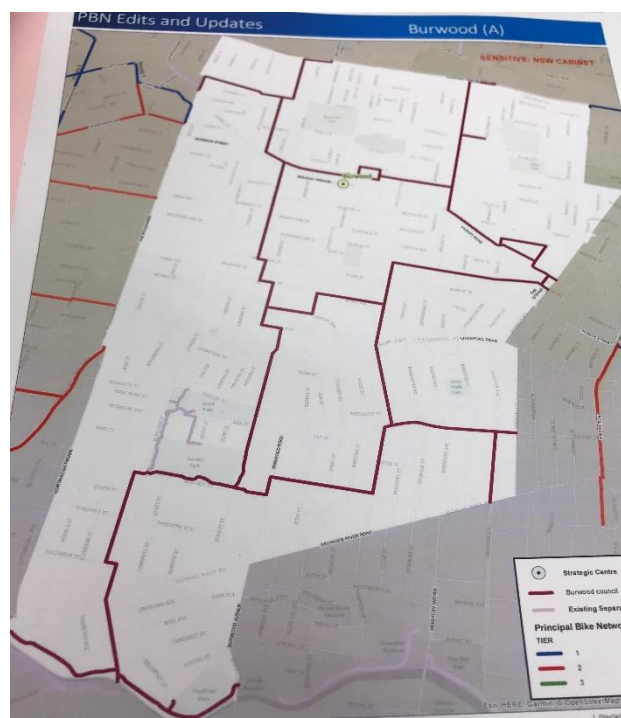
By 2036 the population of the Burwood local government area is anticipated to nearly double to 73,500. This means over 32,000 more people will require housing, transport, schools, healthcare, services, leisure opportunities and green and open spaces. It is essential to plan for a significant modal shift to walking and cycling to ensure that the future Burwood is liveable and sustainable and with equitable access to the opportunities offered by Greater Sydney for residents of all ages and backgrounds.

Opportunities:

The new CSP should be developed with regard to other relevant plans for Burwood LGA to ensure it maximises opportunities to improve the active transport network. These plans include:

Transport for NSW Future Transport 2056 Planⁱⁱ, which commits to providing a regional cycle network in Greater Sydney, known as the Principal Bicycle Network (PBN). A coordinated delivery of bike lanes across Greater Sydney will ensure that routes across council boundaries align and create the most direct path of travel. The proposed network for Burwood is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1:
The proposed Principal Bicycle Network for Burwood.
(Source: Transport for NSW)



Greater Sydney Region Plan, A Metropolis of Three Cities (2018)ⁱⁱⁱ which contains 10 directions to create a city where all residents live within 30 minutes of a metropolitan or strategic centre. Increased liveability will be delivered by focusing on walkability, with a network of green corridors for active transport. The plan locates the Burwood area in the Eastern Harbour City and identifies Burwood as a strategic centre.

Eastern City District Plan (2018)^{iv} includes Burwood and set out how integrated land use and transport planning can help achieve the 30-minute city through increasing development density near public transit corridors in Planning Priority E10. The need for better accessibility, connectivity and amenity for pedestrian and cyclists is also emphasised in Planning Priorities E4, E17, E18 and E19.

Sydney Green Grid^v, developed by the NSW Government Architect in 2017 and reflected in the district and region plans, proposes an interconnecting network of open spaces that support walking and cycling. The Principal Bicycle Network will integrate the Sydney Green Grid to create important links between activity centres and support active recreation. The Burwood area is covered by the Central District documents which highlight key Green Grid opportunities to link Burwood, Croydon and Strathfield town centres with the Cooks River and the Parramatta River foreshore (Figure 2).

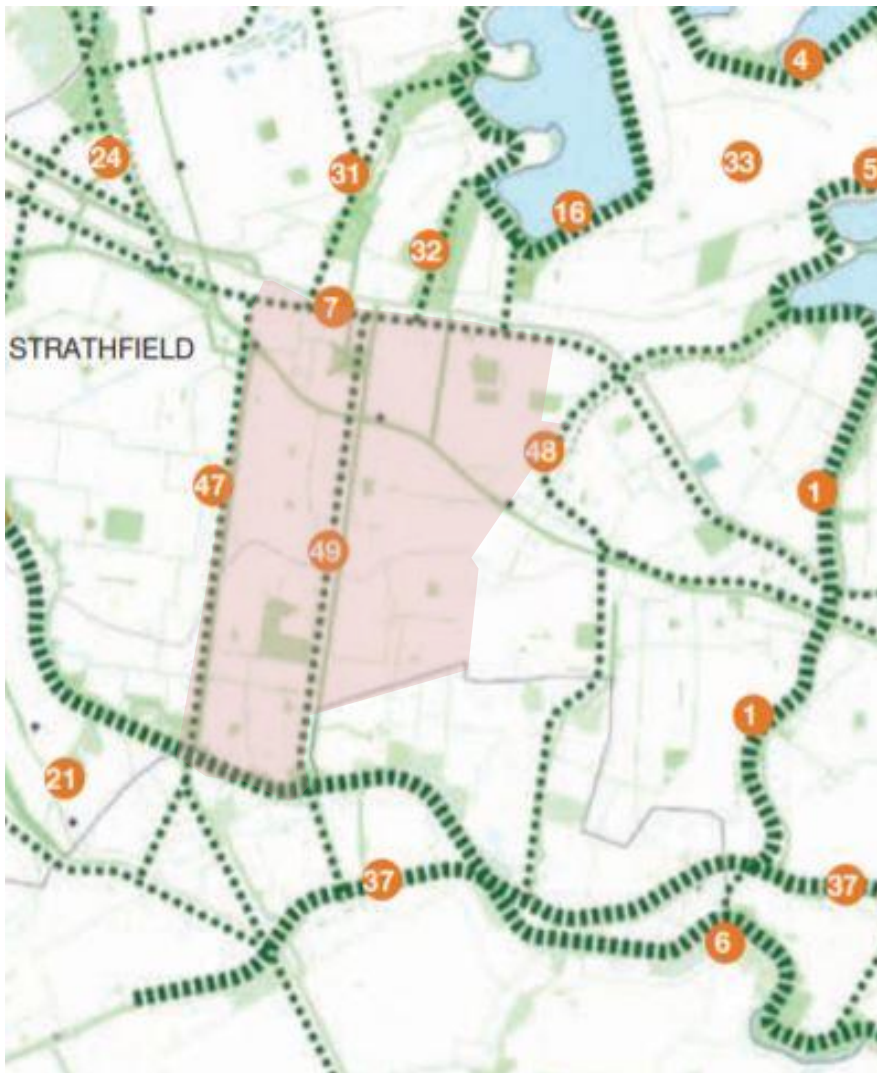


Figure 2:
Extract from the Green Grid showing project opportunities in the Burwood area
(Source: Tyrrell Studio / NSW Government Architect)

Priority project opportunities:

6. The Cooks River Open Space Corridor
7. Parramatta Road Urban Renewal Corridor
47. Cooks River Green Link; Strathfield to Belmore
48. Cooks River Green Link; Ashfield to Canterbury
49. Cooks River Green Link; Burwood to Campsie

Burwood Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020^{vi} which outlines a 20-year vision and four related themes which align with those set out in the Eastern City District Plan. *Planning Priority 1: Plan for a city that is supported by infrastructure* recognises that a high proportion of trips are taken by private cars (53%) and that Burwood does not have a formal bike plan and lacks cycling facilities such as dedicated routes, crossings and bicycle parking, despite the entire LGA, which has mostly flat topography, being accessible by bicycle in less than 25 minutes. There are huge opportunities to increase bicycle mode share but no commitment to any targets. *Planning Priority 12: Deliver Green Grid connections* pledges to work with neighbouring councils to identify and develop green corridors. The green infrastructure structure plan is shown in Figure 3.

Sustainable Burwood Strategy 2021^{vii} is currently being developed to update the 2012 Green Action Plan. Bicycle NSW provided feedback (dated 2nd June 2021) as part of the community consultation process to support the development of active transport infrastructure as an integral element of the strategy.

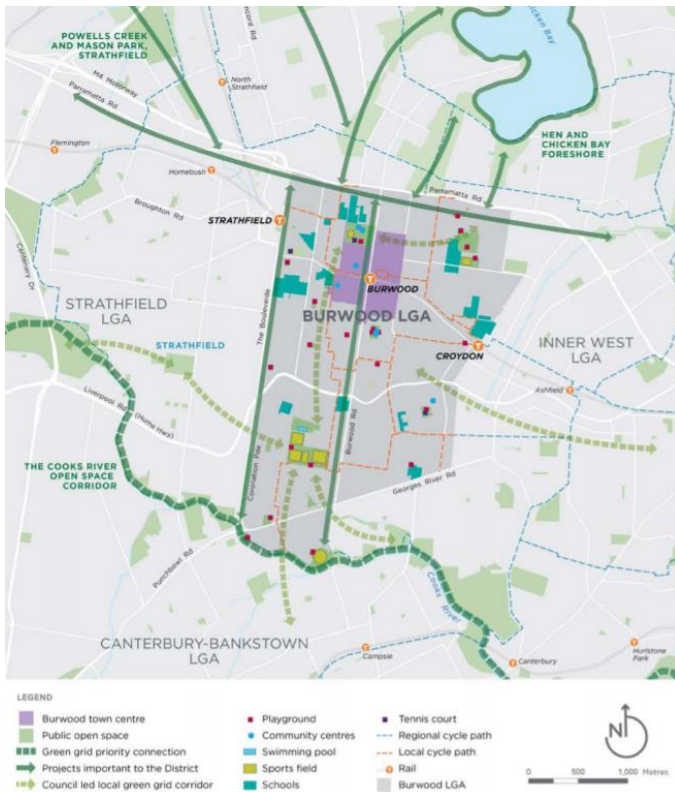


Figure 3: Green Grid project opportunities as shown in the Burwood Local Strategic Planning Statement. (Source: Burwood Council)

A commitment to new cycling infrastructure would help deliver all the priorities of the revised CSP and should be **front and centre of Towards Burwood 2036**. The table shows how active transport should be considered under the themes of the new CSP:

<p>Community and Culture</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We have access to high quality community services that meet our diverse and changing needs 2. We value and promote the arts and local culture 3. We enjoy high quality open space and recreation facilities 4. We are a proud and inclusive community that celebrates diversity 	<p>An inclusive community must have a range of transport options that support equitable access to employment and services and reduce car dependence.</p> <p>High-quality open spaces need generous shared paths that can be used by cyclists as well as wheelchair users and parents with prams.</p>
<p>Planning and Development</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. As our city grows we improve our infrastructure and public amenity 6. Our city is supported by a range of transport options 7. Our city is easy to get around 8. We live in housing that suits our diverse needs 	<p>When best practice active travel infrastructure is provided, a modal shift can occur. An increase in the take up of people walking, cycling and catching public transport will ultimately reduce the number of people choosing to drive, helping to limit air pollution.</p>
<p>Sustainability and Environment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Our city is becoming greener with more trees, landscaping and improved biodiversity 	<p>New green corridors of linked open spaces must incorporate active transport infrastructure to maximise access and benefits for future</p>

<p>10. We are reducing the environmental impact and volume of our domestic and commercial waste</p> <p>11. We are resilient and adaptable as our climate changes</p> <p>12. We are promoting energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy</p>	<p>sustainability. By ensuring everyone has access to a low- and zero-carbon transport choices, Burwood can better adapt to climate change challenges.</p>
<p>Vibrant City and Villages</p> <p>13. Our local businesses are supported and encouraged to grow</p> <p>14. Our CBD and local villages are thriving and appealing to visitors</p> <p>15. Our community is safe for residents, workers and visitors</p> <p>16. We preserve and protect the built heritage of Burwood</p>	<p>It has been shown that people walking and cycling spend more in shops and help create a vibrant street^{viii}. When road space is reallocated from vehicle traffic and parking, there is space for trees, cycle lanes, seating and safe crossings. Noise and pollution are reduced, creating a more attractive village atmosphere and benefiting local businesses^{ix}.</p>
<p>Civic Leadership</p> <p>17. Our decision-making is transparent and accountable</p> <p>18. We are a well-informed and engaged community, and we participate in decisions that affect us</p> <p>19. We work in partnership with important government and community stakeholders</p> <p>20. Our Council is innovative in improving our services</p>	<p>Providing world-leading facilities for active travel requires innovative political leadership and close partnerships with residents and businesses. Cycling infrastructure has a low cost per km, offering better value than road projects and supporting Council's financial sustainability. Over 100km of bike path can be delivered for the cost of 1km of new road^x.</p>

Recommendations:

The expansion of cycling facilities must be a focus of Burwood's strategic planning. Safe cycling provision gives people travel choices that decongest roads, public transport and parking, that don't contribute to environmental pollution, and people who ride bikes can easily stop at local shops en-route, benefiting local businesses^{xi}.

1. Deliver the active transport network as soon as possible

There has never been a better time to build for bike riding and active transport, as evidenced in the new Transport for NSW policies that require State projects to prioritize road space for active transport (Figure 4):

- Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy CP21001^{xii}
- Road User Space Allocation Policy CP21000^{xiii}

Any small increase in inconvenience to car drivers created by reducing road space for driving and parking private vehicles will incentivise the mode-shift that Transport for NSW and Burwood Council seek, benefitting local residents with quieter streets, and less pollution, noise and through-traffic.

Order of Road User Space Considerations



Figure 4: Diagram expressing Transport for NSW's road user priority. (Source: Transport for NSW)

The bicycle network in Burwood has developed in line with the proposed PBN, as shown in the extract from Google Maps in Figure 5. However, most routes are on-street where cyclists mix with traffic and the Green Grid links between the Cooks River and the Parramatta River foreshore are missing, as are important connections to the Canada Bay bike network.

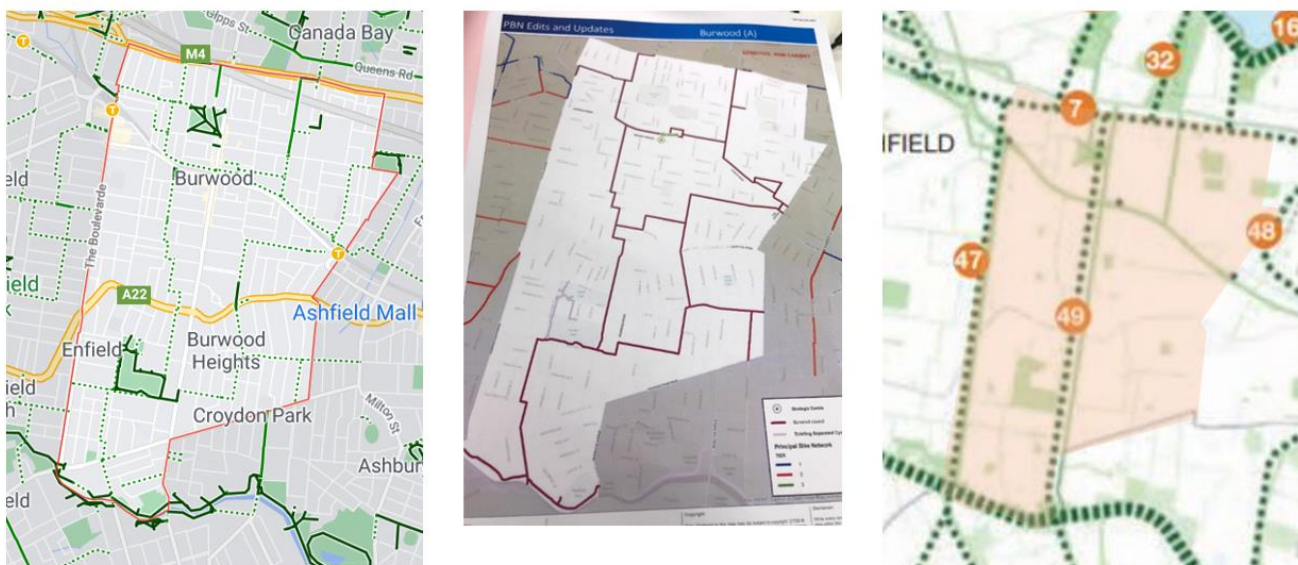


Figure 5: Burwood's existing bike network compared with the proposed PBN and intended Green Grid links. (Source: Google Maps, TfNSW, Tyrrell Studio)

Many cities, including City of Sydney, have installed **pop-up cycleways to expand the network quickly**. These lanes have demonstrated the importance of physical separation to the usability of bike infrastructure while showcasing less expensive ways to provide it. Burwood could rapidly complete the PBN in the LGA using similar techniques. Permanent changes to curbs, parking and landscaping can then be made when funds allow.

Bicycle NSW has drawn together the relevant standards, policies and resources on our [website](#) and we are happy to support Council's efforts to test and implement cycleways and new treatments.

2. Set targets to increase the mode share of walking, cycling and public transport

Burwood must set **ambitious numerical targets** to reduce reliance on private vehicles and expand the cycling network, rather than a vague aim to 'increase' active and public transport options by 2036.

The population of the LGA is predicted to double by 2036, and congestion is already a problem. A significant reduction in private vehicle use per resident – halving the proportion of trips taken by car – will be required just to maintain today's levels of congestion.

Bicycle NSW encourages Burwood to set a much more aspirational target in the CSP to reduce the overall level of congestion and the associated pollution, noise, health and safety issues.

3. Create a Burwood Active Transport Advisory Group

An active transport advisory group would help Burwood Council develop bike and pedestrian plans that have grass roots support, effective objectives and continued oversight by committed local advocates. Bicycle NSW would be delighted to help Council find motivated cyclists, Walk Sydney could nominate pedestrian advocates and BayBUG members are happy to mentor Burwood advocates.

4. Provide segregated infrastructure rather than shared paths in most locations

One of the three guiding policy themes at Bicycle NSW is 'Build it for Everyone'^{xiv} and we advocate for safe connected 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^{xv}, such cycle paths will allow 70% of local residents to consider journeys by bike (Figure 5). The area is fairly level and the increasing use of e-bikes and other micromobility devices will ensure that active transport options are accessible to all residents.



Figure 5:
Four general categories of comfort levels for cycling as transportation.
Source: North Sydney Council

The provision of properly segregated infrastructure on key PBN routes with space to accommodate future demand must be a key policy position of Burwood Council. Shared paths are not suitable for areas with high 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. Door zone bike lanes, bike stencils on the road and dangerous intersections will continue to deter the 48%^{xvi} of people who are 'interested but concerned', from making the switch to cycling.

5. Reduce speed limits to 30km/h on any local streets with on-road cycle routes

30 km/h has been shown as an optimal speed limit to allow people driving and cycling to share the road safely^{xvii} and is becoming a standard speed limit in many parts of the world. All single lane roads in Spain have been under a 30km/h limit since May 2021 and 30% of UK residents live in 20mph areas^{xviii}.

Bicycle NSW supports the use of trials and pop-ups to introduce 30 km/h zones to the community. Low-cost physical interventions such as extended curbs, narrowed lanes, new landscaping and filtered permeability will slow vehicles and may reduce the need for separate bicycle infrastructure.

Lower speed limits are an important building block for Vision Zero, an approach to road safety that was launched in Sweden in 1994 with the simple premise that no loss of life is acceptable. The Vision Zero approach has been highly successful and has spread to many other countries. The key policies include prioritizing low urban speed limits, pedestrian zones, physical separation between bicycle and car traffic, data-based traffic enforcement and behaviour-change education^{xix}.

6. Future proof the active transport network

The status quo of walking and cycling activity in the Burwood area is likely to change rapidly. The density of walkers will increase when new housing and retail is delivered as proposed. An upswing in travel by bikes has occurred recently due to Covid, individual reactions to climate change, a surge in local delivery services and the growing popularity of e-bikes. In addition, State policies to address climate change and urban liveability will add to pressures on councils to secure a much bigger travel share for walking and cycling. It is important to future proof the cycle network by allowing for increased demand at the outset. Paths should be wide enough for overtaking and pedestrian and cyclists should be separated. Shared paths on sidewalks will be not be adequate to meet future needs.

Bicycle NSW recommends referring to the new Cycleway Design Toolbox^{xx} to ensure that the paths are constructed to current best practice.

7. Make every street a cycle street

In 2016 BIKEast prepared the case for *Safe-street Neighbourhoods*^{xxi}. This strategic document has been endorsed by Bicycle NSW and outlines ideas to slow traffic, provide a convenient network of cycling routes and complement cycling networks to neighbouring areas. It is an urban design-based approach to tame the behavior of motorists and make local streets safe for everyone to use and enjoy. Specific design initiatives include:

- Make all vulnerable users safe by introducing 30km/h speed zoning for local residential streets and local high streets
- Implement numerous other initiatives that slow traffic - through infrastructure adaptations such as street narrowing or closing off some streets (while retaining filtered permeability for people walking or riding bikes)
- Primarily serve residential needs while maintaining essential vehicular access
- Further improve amenity through adaptations that serve people's use and enjoyment
- Make 'every street a cycle street' for a connected neighbourhood and city
- Re-planning and re-landscaping land currently covered in bitumen - making more liveable neighbourhoods.

8. Maintain a focus on the important details of the cycle network

While creating a regional network is essential, it is the detailed design of cycle routes, end of trip facilities and wayfinding that will encourage the uptake of cycling and reduce dependence on private vehicles.

It is essential to ensure that popular daily destinations such as town centres, schools and stations are easy to reach by bicycle for all residents of all ages and abilities. In particular, safe connections with all education facilities along the routes must be incorporated. Cycling infrastructure needs to be safe and continuous to increase the mode share of cycling and reduce congestion associated with school journeys. Without proper separation from vehicles and safe intersections, parents will still feel driving their children to school and activities is the only way to keep them safe from being hit by cars.

Integration of the routes with bus stops is essential to ensure easy access by bike and foot. All public transport journeys start and finish with a walk or cycle. Providing high-quality, safe conditions for active travel to bus routes will break down the first/last mile barrier which can inhibit take-up of public transport

Parking and other end of trip facilities should be provided at journey end locations to further support riders and encourage participation. Wayfinding supports visitors to vibrant centres by clearly articulating and communicating the most efficient and safest route. Signage style for wayfinding should be consistent throughout the LGA and reflect the diversity of Burwood's residents.

Conclusion:

Bicycle NSW encourages Burwood Council to plan for game-changing upgrades to the active transport network in the LGA. Safe infrastructure to support walking and cycling will benefit everyone in the community, reducing congestion and pollution while improving public health, providing more equitable access to employment, services and public transport and attracting tourism.

We look forward to working with Burwood Council to progress the delivery of active transport infrastructure in the near future.

Yours faithfully,

Sarah Bickford

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Bicycle NSW

ⁱ Burwood Council, Burwood2030 Community Strategic Plan. 2018.

https://www.burwood.nsw.gov.au/files/sharedassets/public/ipampr-plans-and-reports/burwood2030_community_strategic_plan_final_file.pdf

ⁱⁱ 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

ⁱⁱⁱ Greater Sydney Commission, A Metropolis of Three Cities, 2018. <https://www.greater.sydney/metropolis-of-three-cities>

^{iv} Greater Sydney Commission, Eastern City District Plan, 2018. <https://www.greater.sydney/eastern-city-district-plan>

^v Sydney Green Grid, Central District. Tyrrell Studio, 2017.

<https://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/resources/ga/media/files/ga/plans/sydney-green-grid-plan-4-central-district-2017.pdf>

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^{vii} Burwood Council [online as at 2/6/2021] <https://www.burwood.nsw.gov.au/Our-Council/Have-Your-Say/Community-Consultation/Sustainable-Burwood-Strategy>

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