

Ms Monica Barone  
Chief Executive Officer  
City of Sydney  
GPO Box 1591  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

[sydneyoursay@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sydneyoursay@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)

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Dear Ms Barone,

**RE: Oxford Street Walking and Cycling Improvements**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the new cycleway proposed for Liverpool Street and Oxford Street in Sydney.

Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group in NSW for over forty-five years, and has over 30 affiliated local Bicycle User Groups. Our mission is to *make NSW better 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 related environment, to provide connections to jobs, schools and services for daily transport and recreation trips. Cycling 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 Oxford Street cycleway will form a critical part of Sydney's bike network and we strongly support the proposed upgrades.**

This section of Oxford 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). It will link up important and heavily-used separated bike paths on Kent Street and Bourke Street. A map of existing routes (Figure 2) highlights how this east-west connection has been left as a high-traffic on-road route, suitable only for 'strong and fearless' cyclists, for far too long. Transport for NSW publishes data on crashes and the severity of injuries. It is clear from the extract in Figure 3, which locates crashes from 2016-2020, that Oxford Street has a high incidence of crashes resulting in serious injuries.

It is so exciting to see the delivery of the Sydney's bike network gaining momentum. A proper safe network is slowly developing. 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 week<sup>i</sup>. 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.<sup>ii</sup>

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

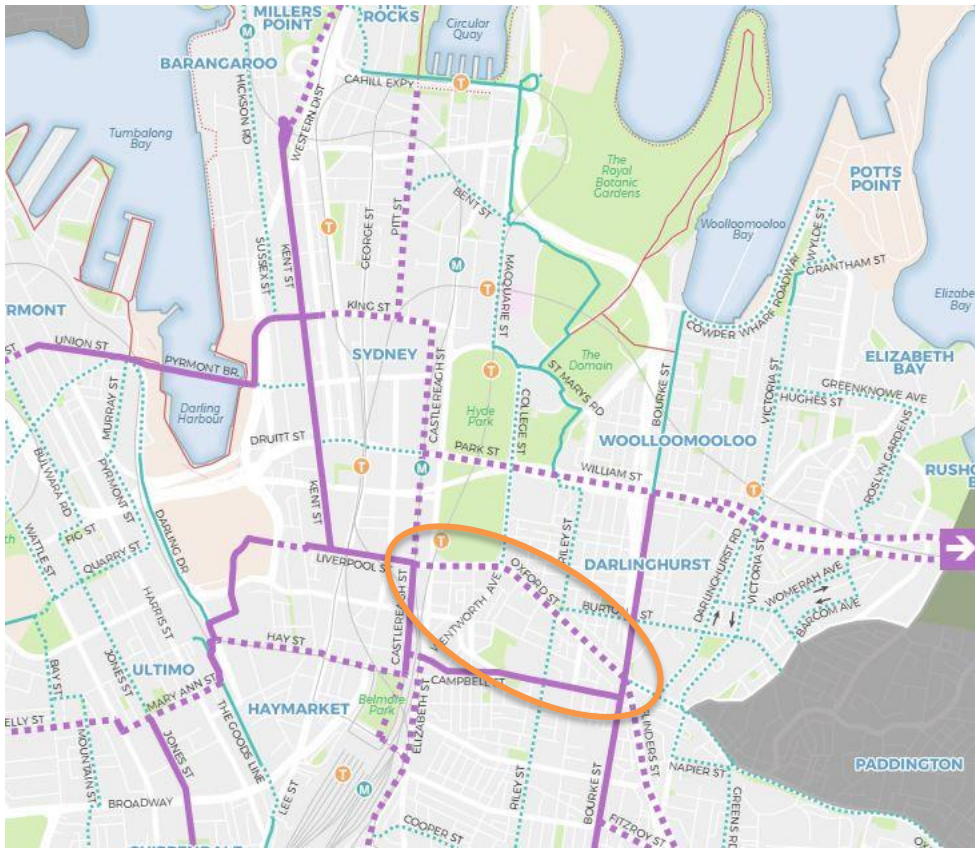


Figure 1: Extract City of Sydney's future network map showing proposed and completed sections of the Regional Bike Network (Source: City of Sydney Council)

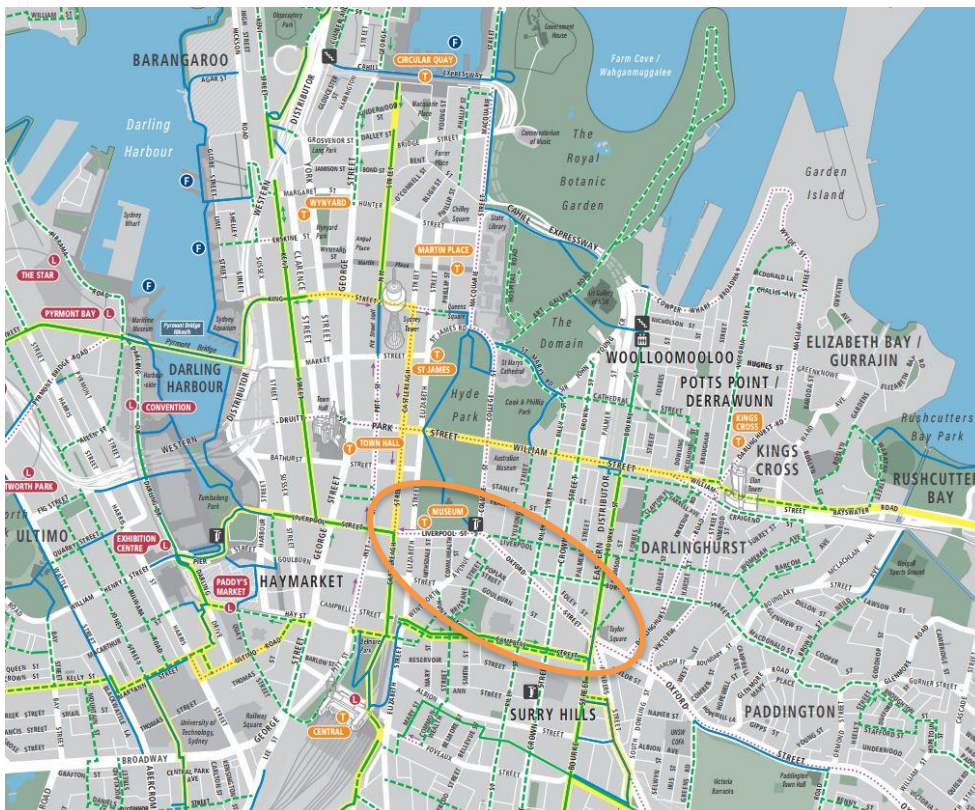


Figure 2: Extract from the Sydney Cycling Map showing Oxford Street is still a high traffic on-street route (Source: City of Sydney Council)



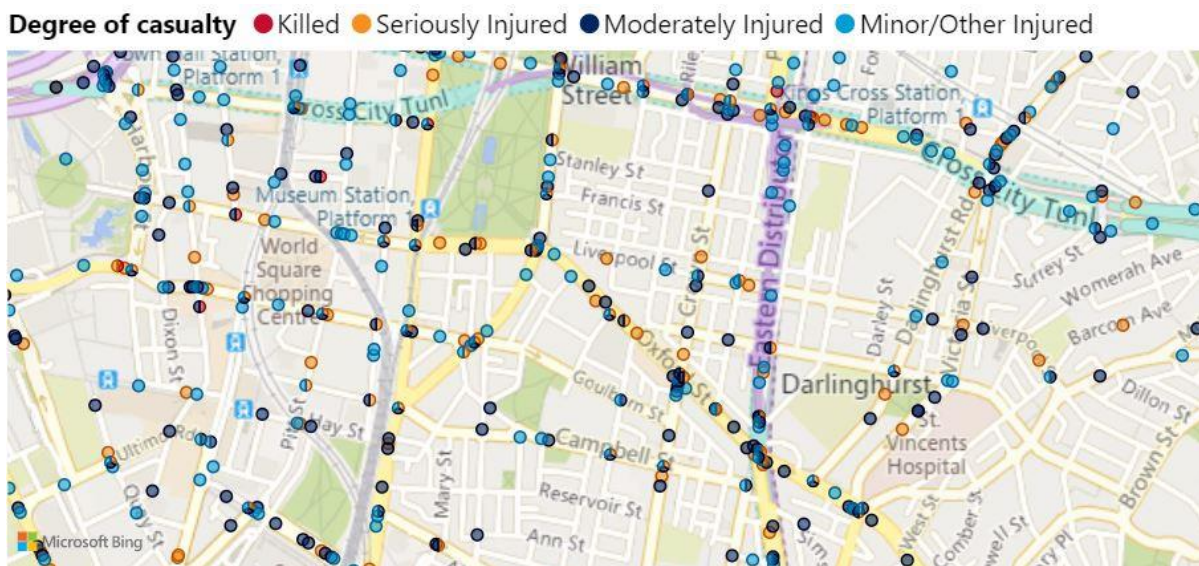


Figure 3: A 'crash map' for 2016-2020 showing a high incidence of serious injuries due to road trauma on Oxford Street (Source: Transport for NSW Centre for Road Safety)

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.

One of the three guiding policy themes at Bicycle NSW is 'Build it for Everyone'<sup>iii</sup> 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<sup>iv</sup>, separated bicycle paths will allow 70% of citizens to consider journeys by bike (Figure 4). The area is fairly level and the increasing use of e-bikes and other micro-mobility devices will ensure that active transport options are accessible to all residents, commuters and visitors.

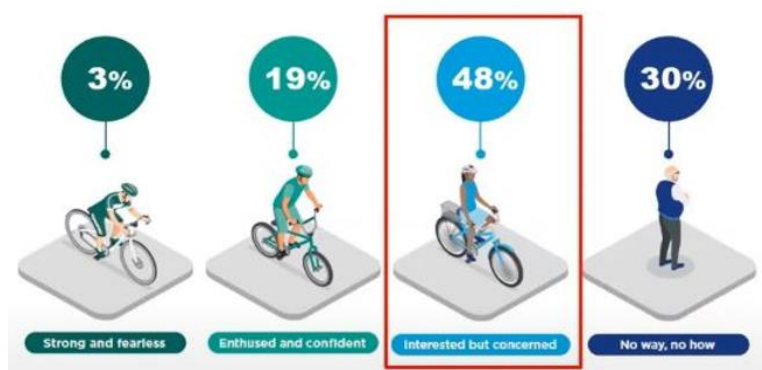


Figure 4: Four general categories of comfort levels for cycling as transportation. (Source: North Sydney Council)

### Completing Oxford Street

It is now vital to plan for the extension of the bicycle path up Oxford Street from Taylor Square into the heart of Paddington and on to Bondi Junction and Centennial Park. This route will pass shops, offices, schools and St. Vincent's Hospital, everyday destinations for thousands of residents. We appreciate that the Oxford St cycleway will replace the pop-up along Moore Park Road, but this offers increased opportunities to activate local shops, improve the urban amenity of Paddington, and provides riders with a connection along a ridgeline instead of requiring them to ride up-hill to connect to offices and city destinations.

It may be necessary to remove a general travel lane to accommodate a wide separated bicycle path and this has hindered the planning of the cycle route to date. However, the City of Sydney now has extra leverage in its negotiations with State Government and other stakeholders in the form of two new Transport for NSW policies that require State projects to prioritize road space for active transport - Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy CP21001<sup>v</sup> and the Road User Space Allocation Policy CP21000<sup>vi</sup>.

Bicycle NSW is looking forward to the imminent re-instatement of the College Street route that will link the new Oxford Street bicycle path with Macquarie Street, the Domain and Circular Quay.

## Further considerations

### 1. Future-proof all walking and cycling infrastructure

It is important that Sydney's active transport network is developed with regard to future growth in demand. The status quo of walking and cycling activity in the area is likely to change rapidly. The density of walkers will increase when new housing is delivered as proposed. An upswing in travel by bikes has occurred recently due to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, 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.

Cycling infrastructure must be designed with the maximum possible width allowing for safe recovery and overtaking as ridership increases. Bicycle NSW recommends referring to the new Cycleway Design Toolbox<sup>vii</sup> to ensure that the paths are constructed to current best practice.

### 2. 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<sup>viii</sup>.

### 3. Prioritise pedestrians and cyclists at all major intersections

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.

### 4. Ensure equitable access to the kerb

It is important that the bus platforms are generous enough to allow passengers in wheelchairs to safely negotiate the crossing of the bicycle path. The use of the platforms for taxis to pick-up and drop-off (PUDO) passengers and for vehicles making deliveries must also be considered. If the bicycle path hinders access to the kerb, then dedicated zones in the side streets must be allocated for taxis, ride share, disabled parking

and loading. Time-of-day variations to the availability of the kerb for different uses would further improve efficiency.

## 5. Maintain a focus on the important details of the cycle network

Bike parking and other end-of-trip facilities should be provided at journey end locations to further support riders and encourage participation. Parking must accommodate non-standard cycles such as cargo bikes and e-bikes with suitably-sized and spaced racks with step-free access. Wayfinding should support visitors, residents and commuters 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 residents and the bicycles ridden.



Figure 5: Fabulous graphics by advocacy group Walk Ride Bath that celebrate the diversity people cycling (Source: Wheel for Wellbeing)

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, as people who ride bikes can easily stop at local shops en-route.<sup>ix</sup>

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

Yours faithfully,

***Sarah Bickford***

Bike Planner  
Bicycle NSW

<sup>i</sup> 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>

<sup>ii</sup> 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>

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

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

<sup>v</sup> NSW Government, Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy CP21001, [Online as at 19/2/2021] [www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2021/providing-for-walking-and-cycling-in-transport-projects-policy.pdf](http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2021/providing-for-walking-and-cycling-in-transport-projects-policy.pdf)

<sup>vi</sup> 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](http://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2021/road-user-space-allocation-policy.pdf)

<sup>vii</sup> Cycleway Design Toolbox: designing for cycling and micromobility. Transport for NSW. <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2021/Cycleway-Design-Toolbox-Web.pdf>

<sup>viii</sup> 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](https://wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/FC_WfW-Inclusive-Guide_FINAL_V03.pdf)

<sup>ix</sup> 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-business)