

The Hon. Rob Stokes  
Minister for Infrastructure, Cities and Active Transport  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Submitted via [website](#)

10<sup>th</sup> June 2022

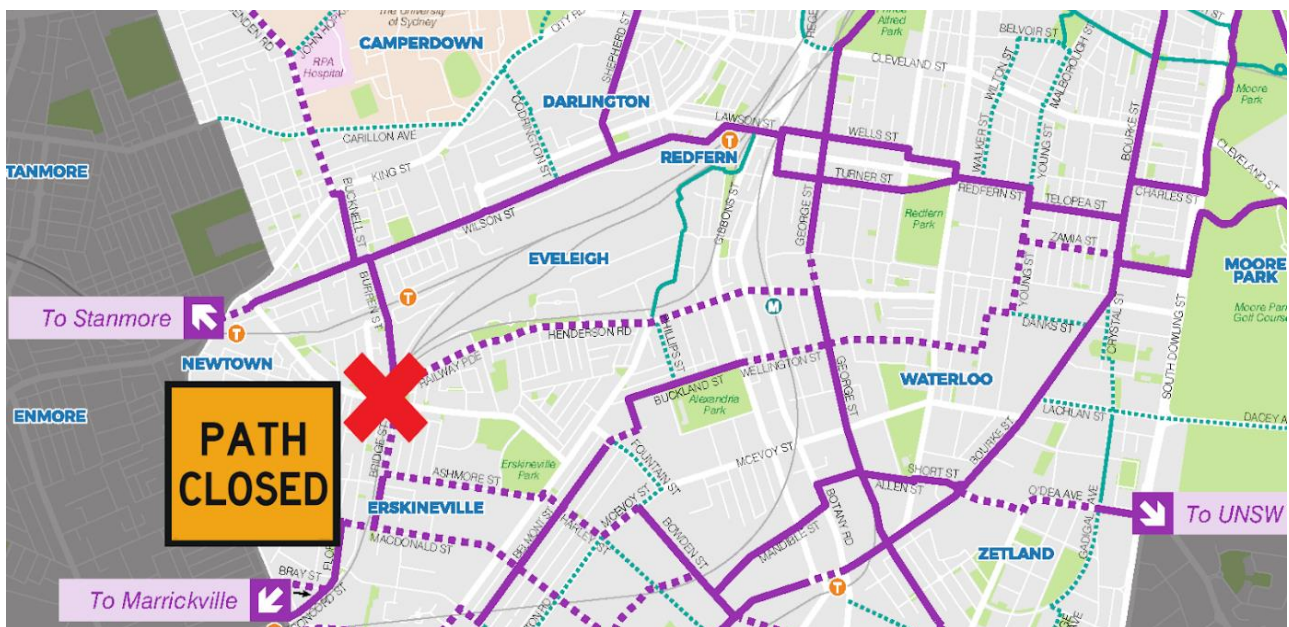
Dear Minister Stokes,

**RE: Proposed closure of Swanson St Bridge bicycle lane, Erskineville**

We write to you regarding the proposed closure of the Swanson St Bridge bicycle lane in Erskineville.

We join the Friends of Erskineville (FOE) and ask that priority be given to pedestrians and cyclists in this vital strategic corridor.

*'This bicycle lane connects the Wilson St/Burren St Cycleway with the Bridge St and Railway Pde/Henderson Rd Cycleways. It provides thousands of residents - including children - with access to major local destinations, including Erskineville Public and other schools, Erskineville and Macdonaldtown stations, Erskineville Village, The University of Sydney, Sydney Park, the South Eveleigh Precinct and the Ashmore Precinct.'* (FOE)



Extract from City of Sydney's Bike Network map showing the location of the Swanson Street Bridge. (Source: City of Sydney/FOE)

As you know, 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' be they 8 or 80. We support active transport (AT) in all its forms because it is, 'an innate environmental and human right' and a vital civilizing influence. We applaud the excellent work done by the City of Sydney and supported by your ministry in making places livable and walkable again. Like London,

Sydney's pop-up cycleways, have exploited the opportunity presented under COVID to rapidly decarbonize and future-proof our cities. We still have a long way to go.

BNSW and FOE regard the closure of the Erskineville cycleway as a backward step, and the safety rationale as a rubbish concession to a tired paradigm. Safety is created by applying the TfNSW Road User Space Allocation and Providing for Walking and Cycling policies, not by redirecting bikes and pedestrians in favor of cars. What is the problem if drivers have to queue for an additional 20 seconds at the intersection to go straight? Driving through this picturesque and diverse suburb is a privilege affording 20 extra seconds to reflect upon how much prettier it could be without the traffic.

Better active transport infrastructure is the only way to ride down those precious seconds. We urge TfNSW to heed its Movement and Place Framework and recognize Erskineville as a **place** along the Strategic Cycleway Corridor, not just a thoroughfare for cars. It will be a much healthier, safer and more prosperous place when AT is placed front and centre rather than sidelined.

BNSW endorses all the important points raised by Dr Chris Standen of FOE, regarding the illogic of induced demand upon which this allocation for cars is based:

1. *'While adding a left turn lane may marginally increase the level of service (for motor vehicles) at the Swanson Street / Railway Parade intersection, this will make driving for short, discretionary, local trips more attractive - i.e., it will cause induced demand. In addition, it will encourage through-traffic to use this local street instead of major arterial roads - i.e., rat-running.*
2. *The removal of the bicycle lane will make cycling for transport significantly less attractive.*
3. *The combined effect of making driving more attractive and cycling less attractive will be to increase driving mode share and therefore increase traffic, congestion and associated impacts (traffic noise, danger and pollution) in Erskineville Village, and around Erskineville Station and Public School.'*

We are at the crossroads of competing paradigms with a long path ahead of us to reclaim the public space that has been for decades lost. Now is the time to move forwards not backwards. We anticipate that progress will not always come without a fight. We will support you in this and ask that you do the same.

Yours faithfully,



Francis O'Neill

Head of Advocacy  
Bicycle NSW



Peter McLean

Chief Executive Officer  
Bicycle NSW