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Inner West Council
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Dear Kate,

Re: Streets Alive - Rozelle Town Centre

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input to the public domain master plan for Rozelle Town Centre.

Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group in NSW for forty-seven 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.

We have long advocated for better walking and cycling facilities in the Inner West.

Working with local Bicycle User Groups over many years, Bicycle NSW has attempted to address the terrible outcomes for pedestrians and cyclists from the [Rozelle Interchange](#) project during construction. Concerned that the final facilities will fall far short of best-practice, we wrote a [detailed issues paper](#) in June 2022.

Bicycle NSW urged immediate action on the redevelopment of Victoria Road as an urban boulevard with separated bicycle paths. It is essential that Transport for NSW capitalises on WestConnex by rebalancing road space and prioritising active and public transport. Victoria Road must be put on a 'road diet' as soon as the new Iron Cove tunnel is completed.

The issues paper also highlighted the failings of the Iron Cove "green link" between the Bay Run and Darling Street. The new shared path falls very far short of the concept of a landscaped boulevard. It is a barren piece of cycleway broken by several dangerous side street intersections.

In April 2022, we submitted [detailed feedback](#) to inform the development of the Inner West Cycling Strategy. As discussed in a [subsequent submission](#), we were delighted to find many of our recommendations are deeply embedded in the 6 priorities of the draft strategy. The reconfiguration of Victoria Road was again a key recommendation.

The master plan for Rozelle Town Centre is an opportunity to finally propose changes to the streets that will reduce through traffic, revitalise the public realm, and allow Rozelle and its community to recover from the pain and disruption inflicted by the NSW Government mega projects.

Bicycle NSW fully supports the reallocation of road space on Victoria Road and appropriate changes to Darling Street to improve amenity for all road users. This submission sets out the strategic context to support such change and a series of recommendations for Inner west Council to consider when developing the masterplan.

The time has come

The Inner West has a collection of vibrant ‘15-minute neighbourhoods’ where all daily destinations could be accessed by an easy walk or bike ride. Despite this, far too much of road network is dedicated to the movement and storage of private vehicles, creating a hostile environment for people walking and cycling, with dangerous intersections, narrow footpaths, fast-moving noisy traffic and long distances between crossings. The major corridors are crowded with cars, buses and trucks and there is little decent cycle or pedestrian infrastructure following years of car- and freight-centric planning. **It is time to rebalance Sydney’s roads.**

Bicycle NSW wishes to stress that this is **the best moment in recent years** for local and State governments to work together to prioritise people over cars, but there is no time to waste.

A raft of NSW Government policies and strategies that aim to achieve a much better balance of movement and place with vastly improved facilities for active transport have emerged in recent years. There is clear agreement from all sides of politics that walking and cycling are essential to enable a healthier, less car-dependent future as Sydney grows. NSW now has a Minister for Active Transport and new impetus to deliver projects for walking and cycling.

In early 2021, Transport for NSW published a ground-breaking policy that require State projects to prioritise road space for active transport. Road User Space Allocation Policyⁱ 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.

The new Transport for NSW Future Transport Strategyⁱⁱ, released in 2022, shows clear intent to reconsider road space under direction E2: *Optimise existing infrastructure*. An excellent diagram (Figure 1) shows how reconfiguring vehicle and parking lanes to prioritise efficient vehicles gets more from existing assets. Bicycle and bus lanes will reduce the number of private vehicle trips and improve the liveability and vibrancy of our communities.

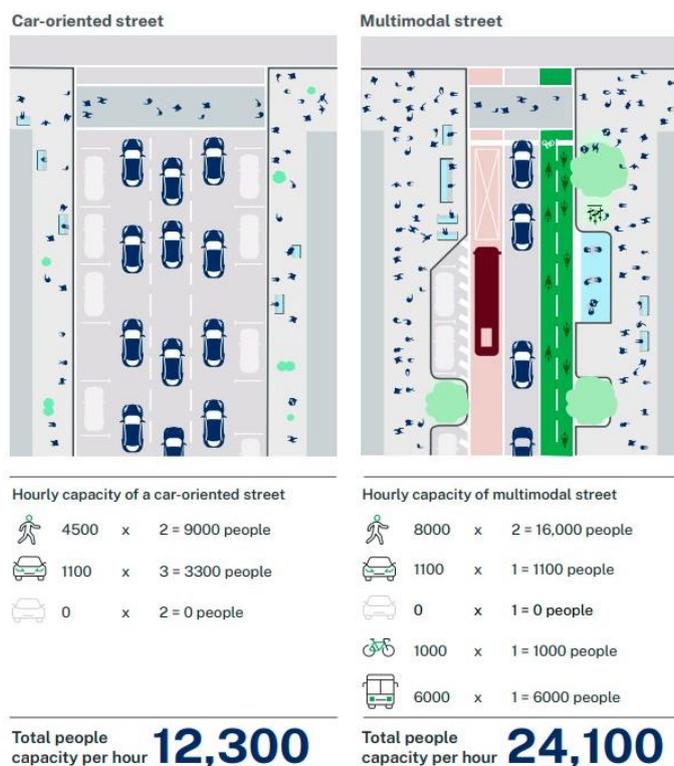


Figure 1: A key diagram from the new Future Transport Strategy that explicitly supports the reallocation of road space, comparing the total number of people moved per hour in the same amount of space on a car-oriented street and a multimodal street (Source: TfNSW)

Such transformations are significant urban design proposals that deliver quieter, calmer, leafier streets that benefit every resident and visitor. Council can factor in health, wellbeing, reduced trauma, reduced noise and increased tree canopy when assessing business cases and applying for grants

In April 2022, under the direction of Minister Stokes, Transport for NSW published the [Eastern Harbour City Strategic Cycleway Corridors](#)ⁱⁱⁱ. 30 strategic corridors have been identified for eastern Sydney, making up approximately 250 km of cycle network (Figure 2).

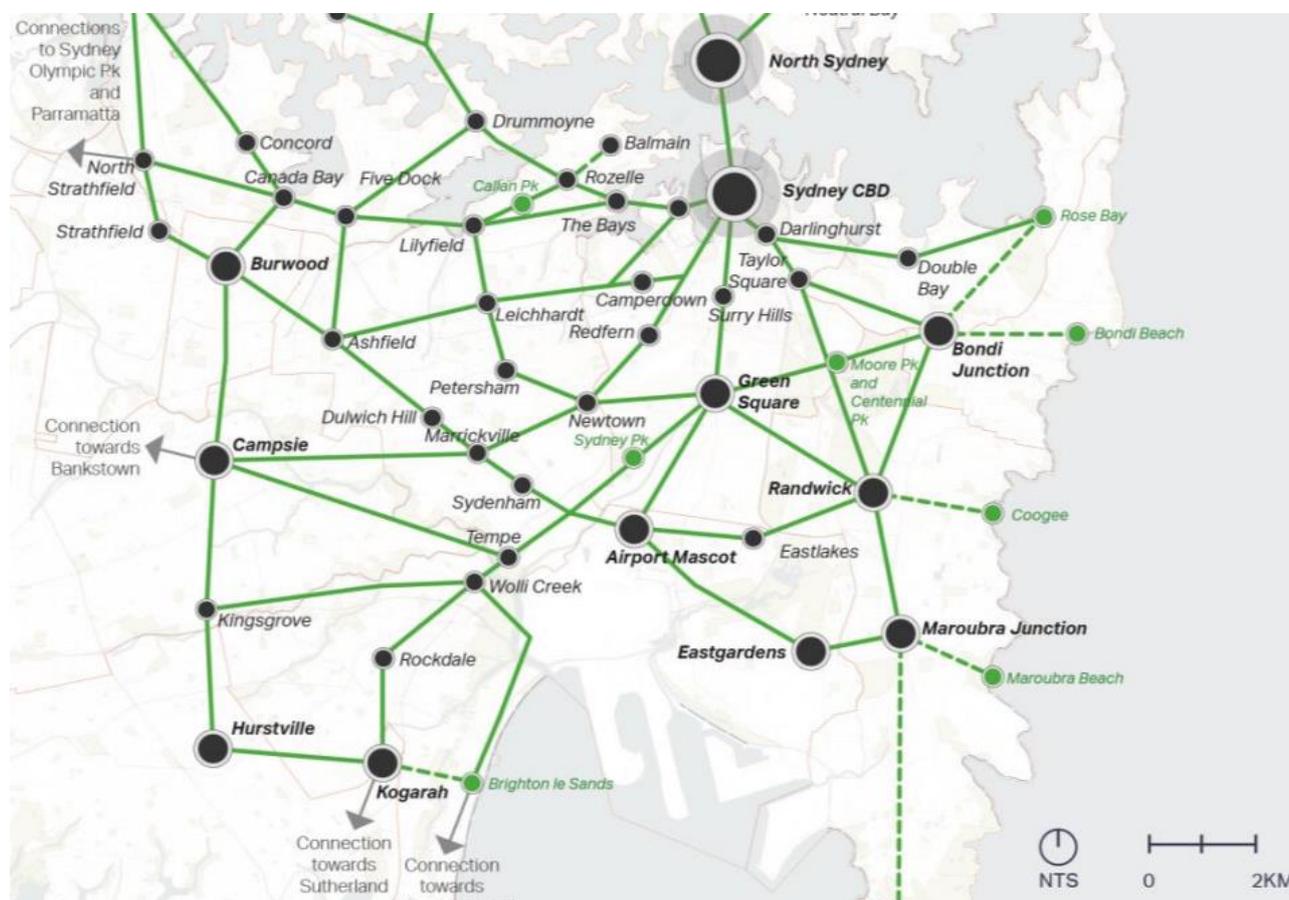


Figure 2: Extract from the new Strategic Cycleway Corridors network for the Eastern Harbour City (Source: TfNSW)

The corridors will connect key centres and form the backbone of the Principal Bicycle Network. Exact routes will be subject to detailed design and collaboration with councils and the community. However, the Minister's team has stated that **the cycleways should be mostly planned on reallocated vehicle lanes on State roads to streamline and accelerate delivery**^{iv}.

Two strategic corridors intersect at Rozelle. It is clear that Victoria Road and Darling Street are the most appropriate locations for the new infrastructure required. Inner West Council has the same view, allocating these streets for priority routes in the new strategic bike network (Figure 3).

A similar 'road diet' is being undertaken by Transport for NSW at Sydney Park Junction. The proposals will see driving lanes reduces from 6 to 4, speed limits lowered to 40km/h. new separated bicycle paths, widened pavements and new landscaping. This project provides exciting evidence that the city can move forward from decades of car domination and sets a precedent for better place outcomes throughout Sydney. Changing the dial on how we measure the success of a movement corridor will have huge implications for reimagining arterial roads.

Bicycle NSW wrote a detailed [submission](#) in October 2021 to support the upgrades at Sydney Park Junction.



Figure 3: Extract from Inner West Council's strategic bike network, as established in the 2022 draft Cycling Strategy (Source: Inner West Council)

Developing the master plan

The following recommendations largely re-iterate those set out in our previous submissions:

- Advocate for NSW Government to adhere to its excellent plans and policies that aim to decarbonise the transport system, improve liveability and prioritise active transport. Future Transport Strategy 2061^v, the Movement and Place framework, and the Road User Space Allocation^{vi} and Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects^{vii} policies must all be considered when proposing changes to roads and streets.
- Collaborate with Transport for NSW to implement the Eastern Harbour City Strategic Cycleway Corridors^{viii}.
- Remove at least one vehicle lane in each direction on Victoria Road and implement a full refurbishment from building line to building line. The future street scape will include separated bicycle paths, wider footpaths, new pedestrian crossings, continuous footpaths across minor side streets, new street furniture and trees.
- Ideally the separated bicycle paths on a narrowed Victoria Road will extend north towards Gladesville. At a minimum, it is necessary to re-design the junctions where the existing shared path crosses Toelle and Callan Streets. The wide, curving kerb lines have been engineered for fast vehicle entry and exit. These present extreme hazards to pedestrians and bike riders and should be re-constructed with reduce kerb radii and raised pedestrian/bike crossings.

- Reduce speed limits to 40km/hour on Victoria Road. This is in line with an Inner West Council initiative to implement a 40km/h limit on most roads to improve road safety and local amenity. It would be the first time such a move would impact an entire LGA. A motion on the issue received unanimous support when it was brought to Council in June 2022. A similar project is underway on key arterial roads in [Newtown](#).
- Remove existing clearways on Darling Street. Clearways are only used for a couple of hours each day but prevent the use of the parking lanes for landscaping, kerb extensions, bus stops and outdoor dining. The Committee for Sydney has written [an excellent report](#) highlighting how clearways prevent Sydney's high streets from thriving. They bring fast-moving traffic too close to pedestrians and prevent footpath widening and round-the-clock parking to support business and amenity.
- Reduce speed limits to 30km/h on Darling Street and add raised crossings and landscaping to manage traffic speed and volumes. Marrickville Road was successfully configured in this way 15 years ago and most cyclists are comfortable sharing the road with vehicles.
- Follow City of Sydney's lead and extend bus stops into the kerbside lane to enable 'in-lane' bus stopping. This design solution leaves the footpath clear, accommodates continuous bicycle paths, prioritises bus passengers and creates more space for landscaping, seating, and bike parking.
- Avoid shared paths in the road-related environment, except where needed to fill missing links and expedite delivery of an integrated network.
- Use quietway or 'bicycle boulevard' treatments on appropriate residential streets with a range of traffic calming interventions applied to ensure very slow vehicle speeds and low traffic volumes.
- Future-proof cycleways and shared paths by allowing for increased demand at the outset. A minimum width of 3m should be achieved at all times with extra width considered where volumes of people walking and cycling may be high.
- Refer to the new Cycleway Design Toolbox^{ix} and the 2017 Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides (AP-G88-17) to ensure that cycleways are constructed to current best practice.
- Ensure that new cycle and walking infrastructure is inclusive and accommodates all types of bikes and mobility devices, including cargo bikes, tricycles, hand-cycles, recumbents and wheelchair scooters.
- Prioritise active travel at all intersections with traffic light phasing, raised crossings and continuous footpaths and cycleways designed to optimise pedestrian and bicycle level of service.
- Reduce speed limits to 30km/h on all residential streets and high pedestrian activity areas in line with global best practice and the UN resolution of August 2020.^x
- Remove street parking where necessary to create safe raised crossings, wide shared paths and separated bicycle paths. Council must be strong when faced with resident opposition. On-street parking is fundamentally the storage of private property in the public domain. It makes driving easier and generates car trips.
- Provide additional bike parking and end-of-trip facilities, alongside an updated development control plan that sets minimum standards for cycle storage in new residential, community and commercial projects.
- Ensure that cycleways integrate with bus stops and future metro stations, delivering a multi-modal transport network that unlocks car-free mobility across the entire city.

- Deliver upgraded urban realm designed by Sydney's world-class landscape architects. New trees and landscaping will support traffic calming, reduce urban heat and provide increased habitat. Artwork, quality paving, benches, bike racks and water fountains will add delight and amenity to daily trips.

Conclusion

Bicycle NSW looks forward to working with Inner West Council to progress the delivery of the Rozelle Town Centre masterplan. Please reach out with any questions or help needed. If requested, we would be delighted to assist with advocating for new active transport infrastructure through our connections with politicians, Transport for NSW and neighbouring metropolitan councils.

Yours faithfully,



Sarah Bickford

Bike Planner
Bicycle NSW



Francis O'Neill

Head of Advocacy
Bicycle NSW

ⁱ 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

ⁱⁱ Transport for NSW. 2022. Future Transport Strategy. <https://future.transport.nsw.gov.au/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Transport for NSW. 2022, April. Eastern Harbour City Strategic Cycleway Corridors.

<https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2022/strategic-cycleway-corridor-eastern-harbour-city-program-update.pdf>

^{iv} Bicycle NSW. 2022, Nov 1. How active leadership supports active transport. <https://bicyclensw.org.au/how-active-leadership-supports-active-transport/>

^v Bicycle NSW. 2022, November 1. Future Transport Strategy 2061 is out! <https://bicyclensw.org.au/future-transport-strategy-2061-is-out/>

^{vi} NSW Government, Road User Space Allocation Policy CP21000.

www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2021/road-user-space-allocation-policy.pdf

^{vii} NSW Government, Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy CP21001,

<https://s23705.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/providing-for-walking-and-cycling-in-transport-projects-policy.pdf>

^{viii} Transport for NSW. 2022, April. Eastern Harbour City Strategic Cycleway Corridors.

<https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2022/strategic-cycleway-corridor-eastern-harbour-city-program-update.pdf>

^{ix} 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>

^x 20's Plenty. 2020, August. General Assembly of the United Nations says 20's plenty.

http://www.20splenty.org/un_says_20splenty