

Ms Monica Barone
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20th March 2022

Dear Ms Barone,

Re: King St to College St cycling link

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed cycling link between King St and College St.

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'*, 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.

Bicycle NSW strongly supports the proposed cycleway which will complete a significant missing link in central Sydney's emerging regional cycling network.

The project includes:

- improving the existing shared space in Queens Square by removing the pinch point at the statue of Queen Victoria
- a new section of separated cycleway on the western lane of Macquarie Street alongside Queens Square
- a new cycleway in the western lane of Prince Albert Road connecting to the College Street cycleway.

The King Street East project was completed in mid-2022 and the College St Cycleway was finalised very recently. There is an **obvious and clear need** for a safe link between the two.

It is essential to provide very high quality walking and cycling environments to maintain global competitiveness and reputation. Sydney is at a tipping point: there has never been a better time to build infrastructure for bike riding and active transport.

We are therefore very excited to see the development of Sydney's bike network gaining such momentum. As has been shown over and over again, if you build it, they will come. The City of Sydney's 2021 Active Transport Survey showed that the number of residents who ride regularly increased from 7% in 2017 to 18% in four years.¹ This growth in ridership can be expected to accelerate sharply as new cycleways are rolled out. Most significant are the projects for Castlereagh St and Oxford St which will be underway within months.

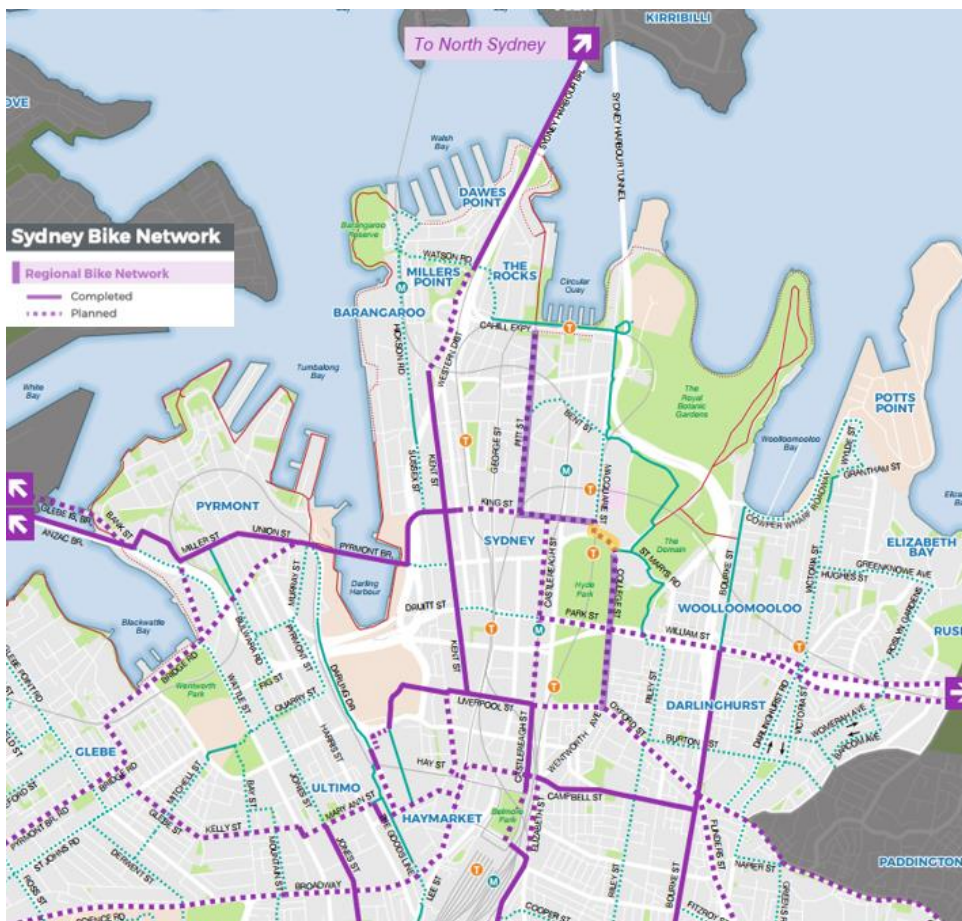


Figure 1: Extract City of Sydney's future network map showing proposed and completed sections of the Regional Bike Network, updated April 2022. The King St to College St Link is highlighted in yellow. (Source: City of Sydney Council)

We applaud City of Sydney Council for constructing separated bicycle paths within road corridors rather than the shared paths on footpaths found in many LGAs. 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.

Reallocating road space to active modes begins to address the unsustainable and inequitable nature of the current transport system. The road between the kerbs can no longer be the unchallenged domain of private vehicles. Wide vehicle lanes and ample parking encourage car travel and unsafe speeds.

Change to the status quo is supported by **Transport for NSW's Road User Space Allocation Policy**ⁱⁱ, which 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.

Sydney's world-leading cycleway projects will deliver quieter, calmer, leafier streets that benefit every resident and visitor in the city's heart and help meet the climate, health and liveability aims set out in **Sustainable Sydney 2030—2050 Continuing the Vision**ⁱⁱⁱ.

Comments and recommendations

● The importance of stakeholder engagement

Bicycle NSW appreciates the time and effort undertaken by the City of Sydney Cycleways team to work with stakeholders along the route and resolve any issues. We note the extremely high level of support for the proposed King St to College St link on the Social Pinpoint map that formed part of the engagement process.

● The Queens Square shared space

The use of Queens Square as a shared space is supported. With low riding speeds and a mutual sense of responsibility for safety and comfort, there is sufficient space for people walking and riding to co-exist.

Landscaping, street furniture and paving should be reconfigured to clarify the route bike riders should take to avoid the congested area in front of the church and the courts, and connect seamlessly with the separated bicycle paths on King St and Macquarie St. We suggest avoiding [bollards](#)!

The revamp of Queens Square should endeavour to eliminate the step that runs parallel to Macquarie St, which rises from level near the courts to 2 steps near the statue. The uneven step is a hazard for pedestrians and a barrier for bikes. It is currently very easy to cycle too far north on the approach to Hyde Park and then need to dismount to navigate the step.

If speed limits need to be marked, we would prefer simple painted numbers on the ground. Please keep signage on posts minimal.

It will be a **careful balancing act** to provide appropriate visual and physical cues for bike riders and pedestrians without encouraging cyclists to assume priority. We suggest City of Sydney work with a very skilled landscape designer and we look forward to seeing detailed designs for Queens Square.

Additional requests:

- Include a gap in the concrete separator close to the northern end of the Macquarie St separated path to allow bike riders to move onto the road and continue north on Macquarie St.
- Reduce the kerb radius at the south-east corner of Queens Square to give pedestrians waiting to cross towards Hyde Park or the Barracks more space, and reduce the speed of turning traffic as it moves across the cycleway.
- Convert the bicycle/ pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Phillip St, installed as part of the King Street East project, to a raised crossing to improve safety for bike riders and pedestrians. Existing issues with vehicles not stopping will be exacerbated as ridership grows with the extension of the bike network.

● Traffic light phasing

A new traffic movement will be introduced at the intersection of Prince Alfred Road and Macquarie Street requiring the reconfiguration of the traffic lights. Every opportunity must be taken to design light phasing and sensors to favour active modes and 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.

Pedestrian and bicycle level of service could be optimised with the following features:

- Detection loops located well in advance of intersections so that lights can change for approaching cyclists, reducing the number of stops needed on a trip through the city.
- Longer crossing times so that pedestrians of all ages and abilities have time to cross safely and without stress.
- Automatic green for pedestrians/bicycles at all signalised intersections so there is no need to press a 'beg button'
- Raised crossings at unsignalised intersections to slow cars and improve safety.

It is essential that City of Sydney continues work to develop best-practice intersections that are safe and comfortable for bike riders of all ages and abilities. Designs must be future-proofed and consider the predicted growth in ridership once a completed cycle network is in place, as well as the needs of micro-mobility devices such as cargo bikes and e-scooters.

- **The next step – continue the good work!**

It is fantastic to see existing vehicle lanes reallocated to cycling on Macquarie St and Prince Albert St, as has recently happened on King, Pitt, College and Castlereagh Streets. St James Road should also be narrowed to reduce the dominance of fast traffic and improve the pedestrian realm. And we would love to see a proposal for a separated bicycle path all the way down the west side of Macquarie St to the Opera House forecourt!

Conclusion

Bicycle NSW applauds 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.^{iv}

We look forward to riding on the completed King St to College St link in the near future!

Yours faithfully,



Sarah Bickford

Bike Planner
Bicycle NSW



Peter McLean

Chief Executive Officer
Bicycle NSW

ⁱ 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>

ⁱⁱ 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

ⁱⁱⁱ City of Sydney. 2022. Sustainable Sydney 2030—2050 Continuing the Vision. https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/-/media/corporate/files/projects/vision-setting/your-say-our-plan-sustainable-sydney-2030-2050/ss2030-2050_vision_draft-1.pdf?download=true

iv 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 \(theconversation.com\)](http://theconversation.com)