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11th May 2023

Dear Councillor Chan,

RE: Moore Park Road and Fitzroy Street pop-up cycleway

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the future of the Moore Park Road and Fitzroy Street pop-up cycleway.

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.

Bicycle NSW fully supports the continuation of the Moore Park Road and Fitzroy Street pop-up cycleway until at least May 2026, and strongly encourages the City of Sydney to deliver a permanent separated bicycle path along this route.

The pop-up cycleway is an excellent facility providing protected space for people of all ages and abilities to cycle safely. It contributes to meeting City of Sydney's aspiration for a thriving sustainable, inclusive and resilient city that supports active travel.

Bicycle NSW would like to thank Bicycle User Group BIKEast for its help with this submission and its dedication to protecting and promoting safe active transport infrastructure in the Eastern Suburbs over many years.

Separated cycleways encourage people of all ages and abilities to ride

Safety, according to City of Sydney's On the Go: How Women travel around our cityⁱ report, is the number 1 factor in encouraging women to ride a bicycle. Indeed, 64% of women said that they prefer separated cycleways. According to the best practice 'cycling segmentation' model, developed in Portland USA to identify the type and needs of existing and potential bike ride ridersⁱⁱ, protected bicycle paths will allow 70% of local residents to consider journeys by bike. 48% would not consider riding if there is no separation from road traffic.

In addition:

- The Moore Park Road cycleway has enabled regular trishaw trips from residents of Eastern Suburbs aged care facilities, as discussed in the submission by Adrian Boss OAM. The safe cycleway on Moore Park Road has allowed outings to extend to popular destinations such as Lady Macquarie's

Chair and Circular Quay using completed City of Sydney cycleways.

- Families and young children would simply choose not to ride for recreation or transport along this route were it not separated from road traffic, limiting opportunities for car-free access to sports and education facilities.
- The Moore Park Road cycleway enhances pedestrian safety by separating people walking and cycling.

The daily ride count is between 350 and 500 trips and growing

These are extraordinary numbers and a credit to City of Sydney's support for cycleways.

- 3,218 trips were recorded for the first week of December 2022. The current weekday trip average recorded at the counter on Moore Park Road near Oatley Road is 500 trips per day Monday to Friday and 360 trips on Saturdays and Sundaysⁱⁱⁱ.
- This data suggests that usage has increased over time and that more people are riding for utility.
- Even better - with an average of 500 daily trips along the 1.5km route, the Moore Park Road Cycleway averts 54 tonnes of CO₂ emissions every year!^{iv}

The separated cycleway has improved safety and reduced bicycle crashes to zero

Between 2009 and 2019, there were an average of 2.3 reported crashes involving people riding on Moore Park Road every year, including the fatality of a bike rider in March 2018^v. During that time, Moore Park Road was the ninth worst road for bike crashes in the City of Sydney Local Government Area^{vi}. Since the pop-up cycleway was installed, there were been no police-reported bike crashes^{vii}.



Figure 1: The pop-up cycleway on Moore Park Road looking east (Source: City of Sydney)

Defending the cycleway

Rugby Australia claims that the cycleway is 'extremely dangerous' for all road users and anecdotally, there 'has been at least one collision between a car and a cyclist'. However, this is not supported by the facts set out above.

Concerns were raised by Rugby Australia about potential accidents between cyclists and vehicles using the Sydney Stadium car park. Safety could be improved by raising the driveway to the car park to the level of the footpath to ensure that vehicles entering and leaving move very slowly across the footpath and cycleway.

It is clear that the real motivation to fight the continued operation of the pop-up is that Rugby Australia wants to use the cycleway lane for event parking and as a drop-off and pick-up zone^{viii}. Rugby Australia has a large car park should be used by taxis and minibuses dropping athletes. Bicycle NSW and BIKEast are not requesting Sydney Stadium to remove their private car storage. How then is it fair or reasonable for them to ask bicycle riders to accept the loss of their protected cycleway?

As for event parking... Sporting bodies are leaders in promoting and role-modelling physical activity, not just spectatorship, as part of their social mission. Sydney Stadium must support walking and cycling to its facilities.

Apart from doing what's right, let's be realistic. Driving is the least efficient and most polluting way of getting to major events. You can't transport tens of thousands of people to a stadium in a densely-populated area in private vehicles. Only public transport and active transport can handle the crowds.

Moore Park Road cycleway beyond 2026

The cycleway on Moore Park Road and the facility proposed for Oxford Street perform specific functions within an evolving bicycle network. The future separated cycleway on Oxford Street will help reactivate Oxford Street as a vibrant high street. It will be game-changing for cycling in the Eastern Suburbs and connect thousands of riders with important destinations. But it will involve lots of signalised junctions. Some bike riders will prefer the quicker run on Moore Park Road, particularly if heading to the Central Station area or the Inner West. As discussed, good active transport connections will always be required along Moore Park Road to ensure that it is safe and convenient to walk or cycle to sporting events at Sydney Stadium.

It would be unthinkable to trade all car access on Oxford Street for Moore Park Road. Why then are we considering closing such an important cycleway after another gets built?

We note that the decommissioning works listed in the REF make for a depressing read. Reinstating a slip lane, removing kerb ramps, and returning space to vehicles after 3 years of traffic adjusting to the current conditions? These are all backward steps - costly and unnecessary. No upgrades to the public realm or pedestrian experience are proposed. City of Sydney is working hard to continually reduce space for vehicles on its roads to meet all the strategic goals. Why increase capacity again on this corridor after behaviour change has been achieved?

The construction of one cycleway is not a valid reason for removing another. **Bicycle NSW will support City of Sydney to deliver a permanent cycleway on Moore Park Road alongside the Oxford Street East project.**

Conclusion

The pop-ups installed in 2020, 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^{ix}.

The City of Sydney's 2021 Active Transport Survey found that the number of residents who ride regularly has increased from 7% in 2017 to 18% in 2021. The survey also shows significant improvements in riders' perceptions of safety. 86% felt confident riding on the streets, up from 75% in 2017.^x And of course, cycleways are brilliant for business. The Queensland Department of Transport estimated that due to health and decongestion, investment in bicycle infrastructure returns \$5 for every dollar spent^{xi}.

Connected bike infrastructure has strategic economic benefits that reduce sprawl making cities safer and more attractive. Many pop-ups are now permanent and it is so exciting to see the delivery of Sydney's bike network gaining momentum. As has been shown over and over again, if you build it, they will come.

Bicycle NSW thanks City of Sydney for remaining so resolute in the face of criticism of the Moore Park Road pop-up cycleway. It has enormous value in providing sustainable, equitable, safe and healthy transport options for people of all ages and abilities. In so doing, the pop-up contributes to the decongestion and decarbonisation of Sydney road network while improving urban walkability and liveability.

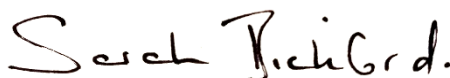
We very much look forward to cycling along Moore Park Road long into the future!

Yours faithfully,



Francis O'Neill

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Bicycle NSW



Sarah Bickford

Bike Planner
Bicycle NSW

ⁱ City of Sydney. 2020, May. On the Go: How women travel around our city. https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/-/media/corporate/files/2020-07-migrated/files_o/on-the-go-how-women-get-around-our-city.pdf?download=true

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

ⁱⁱⁱ City of Sydney. 2023, February. Draft Review of Environmental Factors. <https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/-/media/corporate/files/projects/proposed-works-and-maintenance/your-say-updated-review-environmental-factors-moore-park-road-centennial-park-fitzroy-street/continued-operation-use-moore-park-road-fitzroy-street-ref.pdf?download=true>

^{iv} Based on carbon emission for a typical Australian passenger vehicle of 200g/km.

^v TfNSW. Centre for Road Safety Interactive Crash Statistics.

<https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/statistics/interactivecrashstats/index.html>

^{vi} SMH. 2018, April 23. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/where-sydney-s-cyclists-are-most-likely-to-have-an-accident-and-when-20180423-p4zb3x.html>

^{vii} Daily Telegraph. 2023, May 05. <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/central-sydney/rugby-australia-venues-nsw-call-for-city-of-sydney-to-remove-moore-park-rd-cycleway/news-story/df489d9c38bf25f3b241dad088da5a8c>

^{viii} Daily Telegraph. 2023, May 05. <https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/central-sydney/rugby-australia-venues-nsw-call-for-city-of-sydney-to-remove-moore-park-rd-cycleway/news-story/df489d9c38bf25f3b241dad088da5a8c>

^{ix} 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>

^x 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>

^{xi} <https://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Travel-and-transport/Cycling/Cycling-investment-in-Queensland>