

Lachlan Wood Senior Sustainable Transport Officer Randwick City Council 30 Frances Street Randwick NSW 2031

council@randwick.nsw.gov.au

Dear Lachlan,

Re: Randwick Active Transport Strategy

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the development of Council's new Active Transport Strategy.

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 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.

Randwick has a collection of vibrant '15-minute neighbourhoods' where all daily destinations could be accessed by an easy walk or bike ride. The built form is compact and the average population density is very high at 3,735 people/sq.kmⁱ, increasing to 5,639 in South Coogee, compared to 1,279 people/sq.km for urbanised land across Greater Sydneyⁱⁱ.

Despite this, nearly 60% of trips are made in a private vehicleⁱⁱⁱ. As is common in Australian suburbs, incremental planning decisions over several decades to prioritise access by car have created a hostile environment for people walking and cycling in Randwick. Far too much of road network is dedicated to the movement and storage of private vehicles. The intersections are dangerous, the footpaths are too narrow, the traffic is fast-moving and noisy, and the long distances between crossings encourage pedestrians and bike riders to take risks. There is very little safe cycle infrastructure following years of inaction.

The Randwick bike network plan was published in 2006 and desperately needs renewing. Neither Anzac Parade or Maroubra Road are included in the proposed network (Figure 1). A 2008 update located a central north-south route in Anzac Parade median south of Kingsford, establishing a long-term strategic plan for this corridor. In 2015, Randwick City Council undertook community consultation to identify 11 routes for priority construction (Figure 2). The Kingsford to Centennial Park link is currently under construction and Council is developing designs for the northern section of the Anzac Bikeway between Kingsford and La Perouse.

However, it is still very difficult to find safe, comfortable and attractive bike routes across the Randwick area, particularly south and east of UNSW.

Bicycle NSW is delighted that Randwick has embarked on the development of a new Active Transport Strategy. We commend Council for working with excellent consultants who have developed many bestpractice proposals; WSP are thought leaders in sustainable transport planning. We look forward to providing detailed feedback on the draft documents late in 2023.

This submission sets out a **preliminary list of topics** that should be considered when developing Randwick's strategy. The topics and themes are distilled from recent Bicycle NSW <u>submissions</u> to other active transport strategies.

11th July 2023

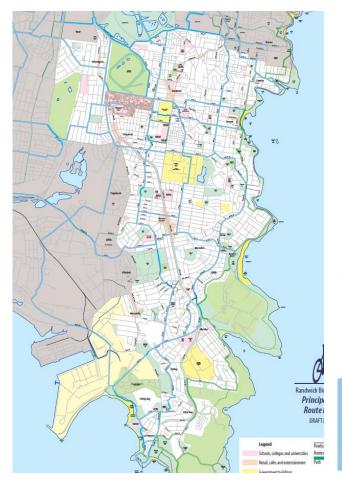


Figure 1: The 2006 Randwick Bicycle Plan network (Source: Randwick City Council)



Figure 2: The 11 priority routes identified by Randwick City Council in 2015 following community consultation (Source: Randwick City Council)

Preliminary recommendations

• Ensure that the strategy is aligned with current local and state plans and policies

Since 2018, there has been a seismic shift in NSW Government policy direction, framed by innovative thinking around 'place' after 70 years of car-centric planning that focused on movement to the detriment of community, urban amenity, walkability, public health and air quality. 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.

The <u>Movement and Place Framework</u> takes a cross-governmental integrated approach to infrastructure projects and land use design. It is bolstered by the <u>Road User Space Allocation Policy</u>, published by Transport for NSW in early 2021. This policy establishes a road user hierarchy that considers pedestrians first and private cars last, and provides local and State governments with a powerful lever to prioritise road space for active transport.

Transport for NSW's 2021 <u>Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy</u> aims to ensure that investment in transport projects is leveraged to deliver high-quality active transport infrastructure. The new <u>Future Transport Strategy</u> has a key ambition to reduce car reliance and prioritise active, public and multi-modal transport options. This was followed in December 2022 by the <u>Active Transport Strategy</u> which strives to double walking and cycling trips and deliver 100km of new cycleways by 2028.

In 2022, Transport for NSW released the Eastern

Harbour City Strategic Cycleway Corridors^{iv} (Figure 3). The 30 corridors aim to connect key centres such as Randwick, Eastgardens and Maroubra Junction. Exact routes will be subject to detailed design and collaboration with councils and the community.

Figure 3: Extract from the new Strategic Cycleway Corridor network map (Source: TfNSW)

The <u>Sydney Green Grid</u>^v, developed by the NSW Government Architect in 2017 and reflected in the district and region plans, proposes an interconnecting network of open spaces that support walking and cycling. The Green Grid creates important links between activity centres and support active recreation. The project opportunities for the Randwick area are shown in the extract from the Green Grid in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Extract from the Green Grid showing project opportunities in the Randwick area (Source: Tyrrell Studio / NSW Government Architect)

Priority project opportunities:

- 2. The Great Coastal Walk: South Head to La Perouse
- 3. Anzac Parade: Moore Park to La Perouse
- 8. Mill Stream and Botany Open Space Corridor
- 19. Eastern Beach Suburb Street Green Links
- 21. Freight Rail Lines Chullora to Port Botany
- 23. Fitzgerald Avenue Heffron Park Open Space, Botany
- 26. Joseph Banks Reserve and Foreshore Drive
- 34. Randwick Barracks and Environment Park to Coast Link
- 40. East-West Coastal Green Links: Mascot to Maroubra
- 41. East West Coastal Green Links: Randwick to Coogee



(02) 9704 0800 | info@bicyclensw.org.au | www.bicyclensw.org.au Gadigal Country, Tower 2, Level 20, 201 Sussex Street, Sydney NSW 2000 ABN 26 511 801 801

• Aim to separate bike riders from vehicles and pedestrians on most streets

Bicycle NSW does not generally support shared paths in the road-related environment. There are several reasons why shared paths are not appropriate for important and well-used sections of a cycling network. These include conflict between people walking and cycling, which will get worse as population and active travel increase; the loss of verges, vegetation and, in some instances, mature trees; the uncomfortable pinch points caused by bus stops, power poles and retained trees; and constant interruptions when crossing side streets where vehicles effectively have priority. Importantly, no attempt is made to change the dial on car use when bicycles are squeezed into pedestrian spaces. By leaving the road between the kerbs as the unchallenged domain of private cars, with wide vehicle lanes and ample parking, car travel is encouraged, unsafe speeds are common and the modal shift needed to meet climate, health and liveability imperatives may not occur.

Segregated bicycle paths have many benefits over shared paths:

- · People riding bikes are separated from pedestrians and vehicles, reducing conflict.
- Street trees and green verges are not impacted.
- The narrower vehicle lanes will slow traffic, reducing noise and improving safety for all road users.
- No additional asphalt is required, reducing issues with urban heat and stormwater.
- Sufficient space is created to enable a significant modal shift to active transport.
- New landscaping and important pedestrian safety features such as kerb extensions can be incorporated into the buffers and the parking lanes.
- The cycle paths can be prioritised over driveways and minor road intersections.
- Motorists exiting driveways have a better sightline to approaching cyclists, improving safety.
- · Dedicated bicycle paths are proven to entice new riders of all ages and abilities

Randwick City Council must continue brave discussions with the community about reallocating road space from private cars to reflect the priorities set out in the Road User Space Allocation Policy and Council's own policies.

The road-related environment is a public asset that must be shared equitably between all road users. Any increase in inconvenience to car drivers, created by reducing road space for driving and parking private vehicles, will incentivise the mode-shift that Transport for NSW and Council seek. This will benefit local residents with quieter streets, and less pollution, noise and through-traffic.

We recommend following City of Sydney's lead and extending bus stops into the kerbside lane to enable 'inlane' bus stopping. This design solution creates more space in the verge for landscaping, accommodates continuous bicycle paths, space for bike parking, reduces conflict and prioritises bus passengers.

An alternative to separated bicycle paths, only suitable for quiet residential streets with low traffic volumes, is a shared space 'quietway' treatment where traffic calming interventions ensure very slow vehicle speeds. Most bike riders will feel safe using the vehicle lanes if traffic speeds and volumes are low. This treatment is discussed further in the next section.

Shared user paths will continue to be appropriate for off-road green corridors and along arterial roads with very low pedestrian activity. It is important to future proof shared paths by allowing for increased demand at the outset. Paths should be wide enough for overtaking and must accommodate a range of mobility options such as cargo bikes and disability scooters. 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^{vi} (see Figure 5). It is important that faster cyclists can overtake and that pedestrian comfort is never compromised. In busy areas, or on steeper sections, paths should be wide enough to provide separate space for pedestrians.

Figure 5: Suggested shared user path widths (Source: Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 6A: Paths for Walking and Cycling AGRD06A-17

	Suggested path width (m)		
	Local access path	Regional path ⁽³⁾	Recreational path
Desirable minimum width	2.5	3.0	3.5
Minimum width – typical maximum	2.0 ⁽¹⁾ - 3.0 ⁽²⁾	2.5 ⁽¹⁾ - 4.0 ⁽²⁾	3.0 ⁽¹⁾ - 4.0 ⁽²⁾

1. A lesser width should only to be adopted where cyclist volumes and operational speeds will remain low.

2. A greater width may be required where the numbers of cyclists and pedestrians are very high or there is a high probability of conflict between users (e.g. people walking dogs, in-line skaters etc.).

3. May be part of a principal bicycle network in some jurisdictions.

Bicycle NSW recommends referring to the new Cycleway Design Toolbox^{vii} and the 2017 Austroads Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides (AP-G88-17) to ensure that the paths are constructed to current best practice.

It is also recognised that a small percentage of 'strong and fearless' bike riders prefer the direct routes offered by busier roads and are comfortable in traffic. Cycling can be made safer on these roads with reduced speed limits, forward stop lines at intersections, head start green lights, and regular maintenance to ensure smooth surfaces.

• Make every street a cycle street

In 2016 BIKEast prepared the case for *Safe-street Neighbourhoods*^{viii}. This strategic document has been endorsed by Bicycle NSW and outlines ideas to slow traffic on residential streets to provide a convenient network of cycling routes that complement and connect the priority separated network on key corridors. It is an urban design-based approach to tame the behavior of motorists and make local streets safe for everyone to share and enjoy. Specific design initiatives include:

- Introduce 30km/h speed limits for residential streets and local high streets
- Implement initiatives to reduce traffic volumes such as street narrowing or closing off some streets (while retaining filtered permeability for people walking or riding bikes)
- Primarily serve residential needs while maintaining essential vehicular access
- Re-landscape land currently covered in bitumen.

This approach aligns with the quietway or 'bicycle boulevard' treatments outlined in the Cycleway Design Toolbox^{ix} which suggests a range of traffic calming interventions applied to ensure very slow vehicle speeds and low traffic volumes.

An additional tool is allowing **contraflow cycling on one-way streets** to make it easier for people riding to avoid busy roads and use quiet, low-traffic streets. In August 2022 the City of Sydney exhibited <u>a proposal</u> to allow two-way bike traffic on 159 one-way streets. A recent study has shown that contraflow cycling does not increase cyclist crash or casualty rates and that all one-way streets should be evaluated to allow contraflow cycling to improve cycling network connectivity^x.

Calming traffic, lowering speeds and putting people first is fully supported by the <u>Better Streets for New</u> <u>South Wales</u> campaign, launched in November 2022.

• Reduce speed limits to 30km/h for all local streets and shopping areas

The Vision Zero goal of lowering speed limits to 30 km/h on residential streets and around schools and town centres is considered international best practice and is gaining momentum in Australian and New Zealand. This approach includes pedestrian zones, physical separation between bicycle and car traffic, data-based traffic enforcement and behaviour-change education^{xi}. The British Medical Journal^{xii} found that the use of 20mph (32km/h) over a twenty-year period from 1986–2006 significantly improved road safety for users of all transport modes and ages.

The rate of children under 15 years old being killed and seriously injured dropped by 50% in areas where the speed limit is reduced to 20mph (32km/h). Most Australians already support lowering speed limits in neighbourhoods^{xiii}. Acceptance usually increases after implementation, as has been the case in countries like the UK and Germany. Several 30km/h trials run in Melbourne and New Zealand before 2020 have been successful. Popularity increased further after people experienced the benefits^{xiv}. The UN resolution of August 2020^{xv} urged all countries to adopt 30 km/h limits in areas where people are walking and playing.

There is sufficient evidence from Sydney and overseas that low speed environments improve safety and amenity. Randwick should follow hot on the heels of Transport for NSW trials in Manly and the Illawarra by reducing the speed limit to 30km/h in residential streets and shopping areas.

Another huge benefit of lower speed limits is that vehicle lanes can be narrowed, allowing more road space to be reallocated to wider footpaths and landscaping.

• Be strong about removing surface parking

Removal of street parking will be necessary in places to create safe raised crossings, wide footpaths and shared paths, and separated bicycle paths. Council must be strong when faced with resident opposition. Onstreet parking is fundamentally the storage of private property in the public domain. Free and abundant parking encourages car use for short local trips. Filling public space with car parking reduces opportunities for creating attractive places for people that are proven to have higher economic and social benefit.

Studies show that parking spaces in commercial areas are less significant for customers than many businesses expect, with owners overestimating the proportion of customers arriving by car by a factor of 3^{xvi}. Visitors themselves overwhelmingly prefer widened footpaths, even if it means sacrificing some parking spaces. Cyclists and pedestrians are better customers, spending over twice as much time in the area and 40% more money per month than people driving. A report from London showed that improvements to the public realm to enable safer walking and cycling lead to a 30% increase in trade^{xvii}.

The parking supply should be reduced in parallel with the development of sustainable access options such as the cycleways and better pedestrian infrastructure. Limited, appropriately-priced parking is a mechanism for discouraging the use of private cars. Parking for bicycles, scooters and car share vehicles must be prioritised over parking for private vehicles.

It is getting easier and easier to access a car for trips that are too awkward by public or active transport. Car sharing and ride hailing are slowly chipping away at the one-person, one-car mentality that Australians are accustomed to after 60 years of car-centric planning. Membership of local car share schemes grows every year, showing a huge appetite for new models of vehicle use^{xviii}.

Remember that the best places always have a parking problem! Council should concentrate of making the best possible use of public space to create town centres and beach precincts that people will flock to, even if they have to park off-street in a private facility or a find a street space a little further away from their destination.

• Ensure that new cycle infrastructure is inclusive

All types of bikes should be accommodated by the cycling infrastructure, including cargo bikes and tricycles. The width of the paths is critical and it is important to consider turning radius, 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 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 urban 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^{xix}.

• Prioritise pedestrians and cyclists at all 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 Council 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 should be optimised with the following features:

- · Instant green on demand for pedestrians and bicycles at mid-block crossings, with induction loop detectors for bicycles/wheelchairs/mobility scooters and fully accessible push buttons.
- · 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 will slow cars and improve safety.
- Bicycle paths must continue across the raised and signalised crossings so people riding bikes are not required to dismount.

• Include targets for new infrastructure and cycling mode share

Vague indicators to increase active and public transport mode share are not enough. As population grows, a substantial reduction in vehicle trips per person will be needed to ensure that Sydney remains liveable. Please research best-practice mode shift ambitions from comparable urban area across Australia and overseas and set numerical targets to work towards. For example, Waverley has high levels of bike riding accounting for nearly 5% of all trips, double the Sydney average^{xx}. Randwick should aspire to similar levels.

The expansion of active transport infrastructure should also be set against a target for new kilometres delivered so that Council can work with a clear mandate from the community and report on progress. Build good infrastructure and people will quickly start to cycle more.

• Develop clear mapping for the proposed and existing active transport network

A detailed cycling network map that covers as area as large as Randwick can be unclear and hard to interpret within an A4 document.

We suggest that it is best to avoid committing to routes in too much detail in a high-level guidance document that will form the basis of decision-making over several years. Instead, Randwick City Council should investigate a dynamic <u>online mapping system</u> such as the one embedded in the Northern Beaches Bike Plan 2020^{xxi}. The location and treatment of each element of cycleway can be described and updated quickly as projects evolve.

• Ensure that children can walk and cycle safely to school

According to the NSW School Safety Survey, 36% of parents don't let their children walk or ride to school due to unsafe road crossings. 25% of Australian children aged 2-17 and 67% of adults are considered overweight or obese. Obesity linked to physical inactivity is a major contributor to type 2 diabetes with estimates showing that eliminating obesity from the population can potentially reduce the incidence of diabetes by over 40%.

Safe paths to school were unanimously voted as the 'most achievable goal for active transport' at the 2022 Transport for NSW Mobility Summit. A key <u>Better Streets</u> ask is that 75% of children walk, cycle or use public transport to get to school. Safe paths to school can be rolled out rapidly and cheaply through relatively minor adjustments to existing infrastructure. New pedestrian crossings, greater pedestrian priority at intersections, continuous raised footpaths across minor intersections and footpath upgrades with pram ramps, landscaping and seating will encourage more walking and cycling.

• Use temporary materials to demonstrate best-practice infrastructure

Bicycle NSW suggests that Randwick City Council continues to use pop-up methods to trial separated cycle paths. Moveable lane barriers can be installed quickly to create stretches of protected path (Figure 6) to show how unfamiliar cycle infrastructure can fit into the street. Ridership can be observed over several months using electronic counters to monitor use, and issues with parking and buses can be resolved before permanent infrastructure is constructed. Once Council has demonstrated demand for safe cycling, permanent changes to kerbs, parking and landscaping can be made when funding allows.



Figure 6: Pop-up infrastructure in Sydney (Source: Bicycle NSW / Randwick Today)

• Develop and promote multi-modal options for local and regional trips

Multi-modal connectivity will improve access within <u>and</u> beyond the LGA for residents of all ages and abilities. The seamless integration of buses, light rail, shared cars, cycleways, secure bike parking and highquality pedestrian realm is key to making active and public transport attractive alternatives to the private vehicle for more trips, more often.

Bikes can be carried on light rail trains. To augment multi-modal transport, Council should work with bus operators to allow carriage of cycles on front-mounted bike racks. This is common in Canberra and parts of Victoria, and would unlock car-free mobility across the entire city, including areas not served by rail. In addition, Council should explore exciting opportunities for micromobility technologies to support multimodal end-to-end journeys.

Increase tree canopy cover over the walking and cycling network

Climate change is causing an increase in hot weather in Sydney. Many areas experience 10-20 days each year where the maximum temperature is greater than 35°C. Maximum summer temperatures are predicted to increase by 2.3°C by 2070 when 40 annual hot days over 35°C are likely. It is essential to create a tree canopy over footpaths and shared paths to ensure that they are comfortable to use in the warmer months, allowing opportunities for exercise and mitigating the health impacts of inactivity, such as diabetes and heart disease.

• Provide adequate bike parking and end-of-trip facilities

Secure bike parking is required at residential and commercial developments. Randwick's development control plan must be reviewed to ensure it contains best-practice standards for cycle storage and end-of-trip facilities in new residential, community and commercial projects. <u>Austroads publishes extensive guidelines</u> regarding bike parking provision and the benefits it offers – such as improving the transport network, reducing reliance on commercial car parking and creating opportunities for placemaking.

Outdoor bike hoops at sporting, leisure, retail and beach destinations should always be installed in locations with good passive surveillance.

• Develop physical and digital mapping to highlight walking and cycling routes

Wayfinding must support visitors by clearly articulating and communicating the most efficient and safest way to reach a destination on foot or bike. Active transport is often inhibited by a lack of knowledge about attractive and convenient routes. Even life-long residents of a neighbourhood may not realise that a trip could be completed more quickly and efficiently on foot than by car. Signage style for wayfinding should be consistent throughout each town and reflect the diversity of the community.

• Develop compelling storytelling and communications strategies

Communicate proposed changes to residents in terms of road safety, children's independence, traffic calming, noise reduction, business improvement, environmental amenity improvements. Avoid focusing on what bike riders or pedestrians gain, or highlighting the number of car parking spaces lost. The <u>Better</u> <u>Streets</u> alliance has resources to help frame projects in a way that will bring everyone on board.

• Establish a programme of proactive community initiatives

Randwick City Council could mobilise its artistic capital to create inclusive, fun street activations that connect people and places whilst leaving out the cars. Not only does this stimulate street business and assist with post-COVID recovery through concentration of human-paced traffic; it also warms the community to the significant social and retail benefits of walkable, liveable streets.

A range of educational initiatives should be developed to help residents build cycling skills and confidence, understand the network as it is delivered, and share the road more safety, whether walking, rolling or driving.

Support Council staff, local businesses, school children, women and families to ride and walk with e-bike and cargo bike trials, bike buses and community events that celebrate cycling.

• Keep the pipeline of shovel-ready active transport projects stoked

Cycleways and new footpath infrastructure represent a substantial investment. It is much easier to apply for funding and secure grants for projects if detailed design and community engagement is complete.

As discussed, projects to reconfigure streets are not just about cycling. Council must factor in health, wellbeing, reduced trauma, reduced noise and increased tree canopy when assessing business cases and applying for grants.

Note that strategic cycleway routes should get funding from TfNSW while local routes rely more on Council funding.

Conclusion

Bicycle NSW wishes to stress that this is the best moment in recent years for local and State governments to collaborate to create a truly transformational network for cycling, but there is no time to waste.

We look forward to working with Randwick City Council to progress the delivery of high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure. Please reach out with any questions or help needed. If requested, we would be delighted to assist with advocating for new bicycle facilities though our connections with politicians, Transport for NSW and neighbouring metropolitan councils.

Yours sincerely,

Seich Tichbrd.

Sarah Bickford

Active Transport Planner Bicycle NSW

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Peter McLean

Chief Executive Officer Bicycle NSW

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