

The General Manager
Cumberland City Council
PO Box 42
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15th August 2023

council@cumberland.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Fitzgerald,

Re: Draft Cumberland Walking and Cycling Strategy

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on Cumberland City Council's new Walking and Cycling Strategy (the 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.

Bicycle NSW is delighted that Cumberland has embarked on the development of a new Walking and Cycling Strategy. We strongly support Council's vision for *'a high quality, well-connected walking and cycling network that will enable and encourage residents and visitors to choose walking and cycling for recreation, and to access jobs and services.'*

Active travel projects that stitch the suburbs together and enable people of all ages and abilities to get around without a car are more sustainable than megaprojects. Such projects have big benefits, and not only for reducing pollution and congestion. Active mobility improves public health, activates high streets, helps build social connections and addresses inequality.

The draft Strategy is a good foundation for Council's future development of active transport facilities. In this submission, we draw attention to **positive elements** of the Strategy, but we also raise **several concerns**. We hope our **recommendations** will inform further refinement of the strategy. We finish with a more general discussion of contemporary active transport planning that should be reflected in the final document.

We know that Cumberland is already progressing major Green Grid corridors, building upon existing paths and parks to improve the quality of open space for recreation. Bicycle NSW recently wrote very supportive submissions on the masterplans for the [Duck River Parklands](#) and [Prospect Pipeline Corridor](#). Both include walking and cycling connections. We also made comments to inform the [Lidcombe Public Domain Plan](#). Please refer to these submissions as they contain details and recommendations that are not repeated here.

We have consulted closely with Bicycle User Group CAMWEST to better understand priorities and issues for bicycle riders in the area. CAMWEST has prepared its own [submission](#), drawing on members' local knowledge and expertise to make detailed comments on elements of the proposals. We align with their advocacy regarding key routes, missing links and short connections that would achieve an optimal network for residents of all ages and abilities.

Bicycle NSW thanks CAMWEST members for their efforts to improve bike riding in Cumberland over 3 decades.

The Strategy highlights:

- The Strategy aspires to meet the walking and cycling needs of a diverse, multicultural community and ensure that infrastructure is equitable and caters to the needs of all genders, ages, and abilities. This is important as Cumberland is one of the most culturally, socially and economically diverse communities in Sydney. 66% of residents speak a language other than English at home and 60% were born overseas (compared to 29% and 35% for NSW as a whole)¹.
- There is an excellent focus on walking. Walking is the primary active mode and safe comfortable facilities for walking are essential to support the use of public transport. Actions under Direction One to finalise and implement the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan and audit walking infrastructure around schools are clearly important priorities for Cumberland.
- Background research and community engagement has been well summarised. Much work is evidently needed to encourage cycling, particularly to access education!
- The strategic context has been presented clearly and we are pleased that two important recent documents are highlighted - the new [Future Transport Strategy](#), which has a key ambition to reduce car reliance and prioritise active, public and multi-modal transport options, and the December 2022 [Active Transport Strategy](#) which strives to double walking and cycling trips and deliver 100km of new cycleways by 2028.
- The Strategy sets out an inspiring and ambitious network of 18 active transport corridors (Figure 1). These build on existing networks and pick up some important regional and green grid corridors.
- Trials and pop-up interventions will test and refine walking and cycling opportunities. The use of temporary materials to demonstrate best-practice infrastructure has been proven to be effective in building community support for changes to the streets.

Concerns about the draft Strategy:

- The draft Walking and Cycling Strategy is very high-level. It is not suitable to support funding applications or provide stakeholders with a clear vision of what Council is planning to deliver in the short-, medium- and long-term.
- The strategic context lacks important detail and policies. The Movement and Place Framework and the recent Strategic Cycleway Corridors (SCC) are presented with almost no explanation or discussion. There is no map of the Green Grid, and no reference to overarching targets, priorities or actions that Cumberland is striving to meet. Importantly, there is no mention of the Road User Space Allocation Policy.
- Minimal transport data is included in the Strategy. There are no figures for current mode share, or analysis of who is walking and cycling and where. Although it is probably wise to simplify information in a document that aims to present clear information to the community, we hope that much more data has been collected to support the prioritisation of infrastructure and funding applications.
- Too much space is allocated to generic diagrams from NSW documents such as the Cycleway Toolbox, the Walking Space Guide and the Movement and Place Framework. These diagrams lack explanation or illustration and will be meaningless to the intended audience.

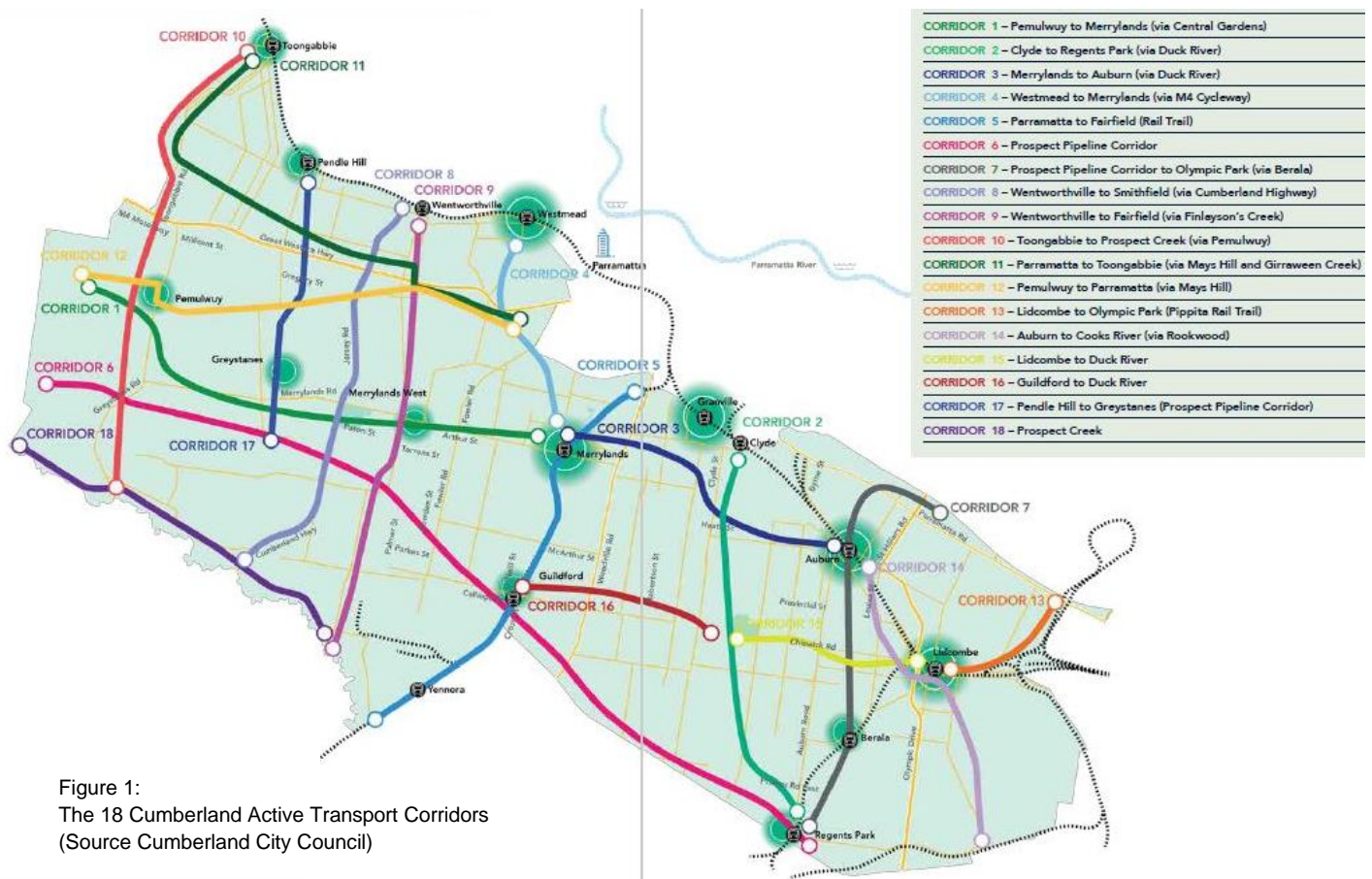


Figure 1:
The 18 Cumberland Active Transport Corridors
(Source Cumberland City Council)

- The mapping of existing networks and crashes is unclear and hard to read or interpret. Plenty of good data has informed these maps and it needs to be accessible.
- The active transport corridors routes (Figure 1) must be developed in much more detail. The lines on the map are vague and always stop short of town centres – the very places with important daily destinations that residents need to access on foot or two wheels. Alignment with the Strategic Cycleway Corridors is inadequate. There is no delineation of existing and proposed sections of the routes.
- In spite of including *Action 3.2: Collaborate with other Councils to improve connections in walking and cycling routes across boundaries*, both the 'Existing Cycling Routes' and the 'Cumberland Active Transport Corridors' maps don't show proposed or even existing paths crossing council boundaries.
- The classification of 'existing', 'partially completed' and 'new' corridors does not align with what is on the ground. CAMWEST has noted many discrepancies in its submission. Some routes, such as Route 2, the Duck River, are marked as 'new' when substantial sections of shared path are already in place. Almost every corridor has some existing segments, although we know that upgrades are needed everywhere!
- The route prioritisation and evaluation tool has NOT actually been applied to any future walking and cycling routes in the LGA as part of the development of the Strategy.
- There is no clear action plan for delivering elements of the network in the short-, medium- and long-term. Of course, without undertaking work to prioritise routes according to the identified criteria, it is difficult to determine what can be achieved in any specified timeframe.

- The Strategy does not refer to many important aspects of a successful and accessible active transport network – such as lower vehicle speeds, tree canopy and shade, prioritizing pedestrians at intersections, separation of pedestrians and bikes where possible, creating facilities that are suitable for all ages and abilities using a range of micromobility devices, or bike parking.

Key recommendations for the revised Strategy:

- **Ensure that the NSW Government policy framework is clearly articulated**

It is important to consider Cumberland's streets through the lens of the [Movement and Place Framework](#) and we are pleased this is mentioned in the Strategy. However, the inclusion of the graph with no context or explanation is pointless. Diagrams should be supported by photos from local places to clarify the typologies.

In the same vein, generic diagrams from NSW Government guides such as the Cycleway Design Toolbox and the Walking Space Guide need to be complemented by images and descriptions of different types of facilities. This will help the lay community understand Council's aspiration to deliver best-practice infrastructure.

Two important policies should also be referenced in the Strategy to ensure they are considered by Cumberland planners and decision makers:

- Movement and Place is bolstered by the [Road User Space Allocation Policy](#), 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.
- Also signed off in 2021, the [Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy](#) aims to ensure that investment in transport projects is leveraged to deliver high-quality active transport infrastructure.
- **Align the Cumberland active transport corridors with NSW Government strategic planning for active transport**

A comparison of Cumberland's proposed active transport corridors (Figure 1) with the Green Grid (Figure 2) and the Strategic Cycleway Corridors (Figure 3) reveals several discrepancies.

Possible amendments to the Cumberland corridors include:

- The Strategy omits the corridor from Regents Park to Rookwood to the Cooks River, long considered by advocates as one of the most important regional active transport links for Western Sydney
- The Toongabbie to Westmead corridor is not included. Much of this route is on the northern side of the railway corridor and is included in Parramatta's Bike Plan. However, a key section to the east of Westmead Station is in Cumberland and the entire route should be indicated on Cumberland's map.
- The Strategy's corridors end abruptly near the boundaries of the LGA. It is important to clarify connections into neighbouring LGAs to facilitate Action 3.2 'Collaborate with other Councils to improve connections in walking and cycling routes across boundaries'

However, Bicycle NSW is pleased that Cumberland has included some important routes that were omitted from the Strategic Cycleway Corridor network, despite our feedback to the TfNSW project team. Of note is Route 10 from Pemulway to Toongabbie, Route 6, the Prospect Pipeline to Regents Park and elements of the M4 cycleway.



Figure 2: Extract from the Green Grid showing project opportunities in the Cumberland area. The [Sydney Green Grid](#)ⁱⁱ, 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. (Source: Tyrrell Studio / NSW Government Architect)

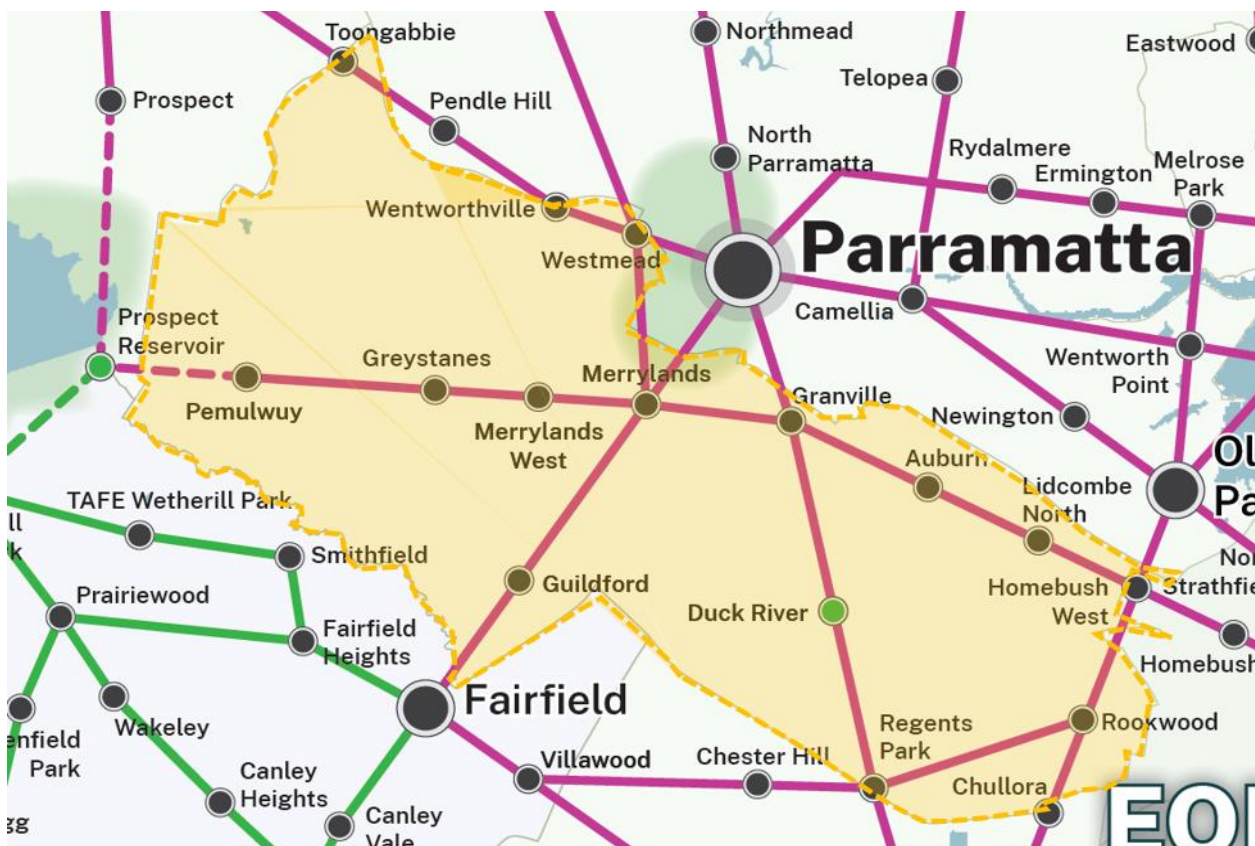


Figure 3: Extract from the new Central River City Strategic Cycleway Corridor network map (Source: TfNSW)

CAMWEST members have applied their detailed local knowledge to highlight significant omissions and propose additional routes. Please refer to the CAMWEST [submission](#). Bicycle NSW asks Cumberland to carefully consider all these suggestions for the final iteration of the corridor map.

- **Progress detailed network mapping to identify missing links and priority projects**

The Cumberland map, as with the Strategic Cycleway Corridors network and the Green Grid, is very schematic. It is very hard to use a simplistic diagram to explain to stakeholders where routes might lie on the ground and how they relate to existing paths, streets and open spaces. And without a systematic analysis of completed infrastructure, missing links and essential upgrades, it is impossible to draw up an Action Plan to deliver priority projects.

The Active Transport team at TfNSW has developed a method to marry the Strategic Cycleway Corridors to preferred routes. The process involves a detailed analysis of existing infrastructure, route options assessment, identification of missing links and options prioritisation. This work has been described to Cumberland City Council staff during engagement with the Active Transport team.

The resulting map for the Cumberland area is in Figure 4. It is clear where to focus efforts in order to complete corridors.

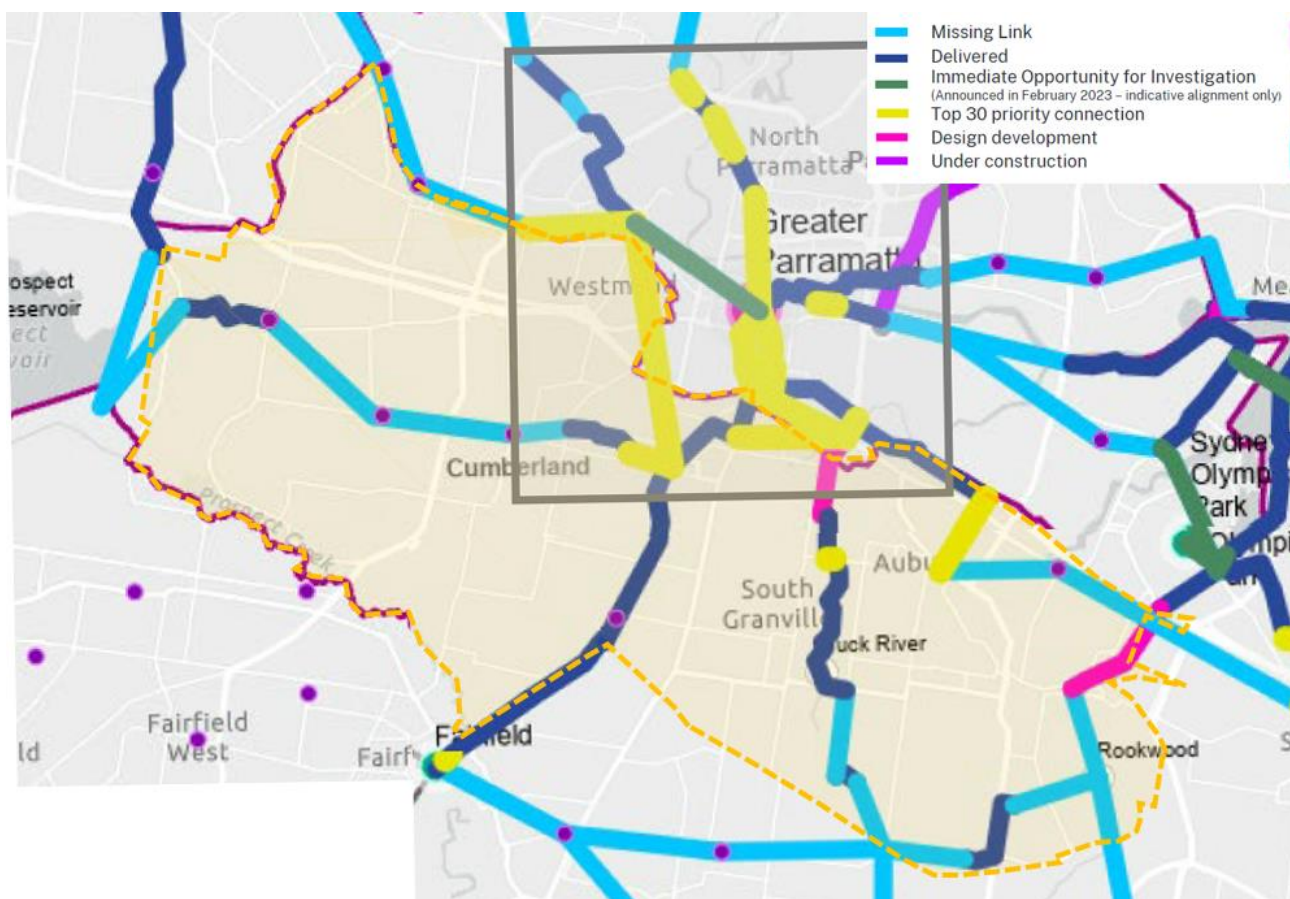


Figure 4: An extract from the TfNSW prioritisation plan showing the preferred alignment of the Cumberland area Strategic Cycleway Corridors. Note this is a draft for consultation and the map will evolve (Source: Transport for NSW)

Bicycle NSW recommends advancing the Cumberland Active Transport Corridors map in the same way. There is no need to reinvent the wheel – and Cumberland probably doesn't have the resources or staff to do so. It makes sense to build on work already done.

Incorporate the mapping already undertaken for the Strategic Cycleway Corridors as these should align Cumberland's regional routes. Then use a similar process for district routes. The final map would update and extend the existing cycle network map on Page 15 of the Strategy. It would be easy for the community to interpret.

It is particularly important to interrogate how the routes will link into and through town centres such as through Lidcombe, Auburn and Merrylands. The draft Strategy doesn't address the current lack of connectivity.

- **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.

The work to assess route options and identify priority projects (discussed in the previous step) will allow an Action Plan to be compiled. Cumberland City Council can then progress the design and consultation of each project in a logical manner as resources allow. Council should always aim to have several projects ready to construct if funding becomes available.

Regional active transport routes should get funding from TfNSW while local routes rely more on Council funding.

Remember, projects to reconfigure streets and develop green corridors 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.

- **Include numerical targets for new infrastructure and cycling mode share**

Vague indicators to increase active transport mode share, reduce crashes and improve community wellbeing are not enough. The outcomes set out under 'Monitoring the Strategy' should have more precise targets. 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 averageⁱⁱⁱ. Cumberland 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**

Detailed network maps that cover an area as large as Cumberland 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, Cumberland City Council should investigate a dynamic [online mapping system](#) such as the one embedded in the Northern Beaches Bike Plan 2020^{iv}. The location and treatment of each element of cycleway can be described and updated quickly as projects evolve.

Further considerations for the final Strategy

- **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

Cumberland City Council must initiate 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 'in-lane' 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^v (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 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^{vi} 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*^{vii}. 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^{viii} 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 [a proposal](#) 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^{ix}.

Calming traffic, lowering speeds and putting people first is fully supported by the [Better Streets for New South Wales](#) 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^x. The British Medical Journal^{xi} 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^{xii}. 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^{xiii}. The UN resolution of August 2020^{xiv} 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. Cumberland 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. On-street 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^{xv}. 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^{xvi}.

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^{xvii}.

Remember that the best places always have a parking problem! Council should concentrate on making the best possible use of public space to create town centres that people will flock to, even if they have to park off-street in a private facility or 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^{xviii}.

- **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.

- **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 [Better Streets](#) 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.

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

Multi-modal connectivity will improve access within and beyond the LGA for residents of all ages and abilities. The seamless integration of buses, light rail, shared cars, cycleways, secure bike parking and high-quality 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 city 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 LGA, 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. Cumberland'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. [Austroads publishes extensive guidelines](#) 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 education destinations should always be installed in locations with good passive surveillance.

- **Create 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 [Better Streets](#) alliance has resources to help frame projects in a way that will bring everyone on board.

- **Establish a programme of proactive community initiatives**

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 safely, whether walking, rolling or driving.

Direction 2: A city that is inclusive and encourages healthy active behaviour sets out some proposals for encouraging active transport. Additional ideas include supporting Council staff, local businesses, school children, women and families to ride with e-bike and cargo bike trials, bike buses and community events that celebrate cycling.

Cumberland City Council should 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.

Conclusion

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 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.

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.

In 2016, Cumberland recorded a population of 226,000. This figure will likely increase by 35% to 304,800 by 2036. Merrylands and Wentworthville are expected to experience the largest population growth^{xix}. Congestion is an escalating problem. To maintain lifestyle amenity going forwards, Council will need to balance transport options and ensure that the good access is provided to important destinations. It is imperative not to continue with a business-as-usual approach to transport where a high proportion of trips are made by private car.

We look forward to reading the final Walking and Cycling Strategy and working with Cumberland City Council to progress the delivery of high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure.

We do feel it is important to expand and add detail to the Strategy. The recent [Inner West Cycling Strategy and Action Plan](#) provides a good benchmark – brief but rich in inspiring ideas and a clear set of deliverables. It addresses most of the issues raised in this submission.

Please reach out with any questions or help needed. If requested, Bicycle NSW would be delighted to assist with advocating for new bicycle facilities through our connections with politicians, Transport for NSW and neighbouring metropolitan councils.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Bickford

Active Transport Planner
Bicycle NSW



Peter McLean

Chief Executive Officer
Bicycle NSW

- ⁱ ABS. 2021. Quickstats for Cumberland LGA. <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA12380>
- ⁱⁱ Sydney Green Grid, Central District. Tyrrell Studio, 2017. <https://www.governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/resources/ga/media/files/ga/plans/sydney-green-grid-plan-4-central-district-2017.pdf>
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