

Transport Planning Team
City of Parramatta Council
PO Box 32
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

29th August 2021

Dear City of Parramatta Council,

RE: Alfred Street pedestrian and cyclist upgrade

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the upgrades to Alfred St, Harris Park. Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group in NSW for over forty-five years, and has over 30 affiliated local Bicycle User Groups.

Our mission is to make cycling better for everyone in NSW, 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.

Alfred Street in Harris Park is identified as a priority cycling route in both Transport for NSW's Principle Bicycle Network Planⁱ, and the City of Parramatta Bike Plan. Alfred Street is also recognised as a key pedestrian route in the ParramattaWays strategy. When complete, residents will be able to cycle safely, separated from vehicles and pedestrians, between the key regional cycle routes along the Parramatta River and the M4 motorway. **The Alfred Street bicycle path is a critical missing link in the local network and we strongly support the proposed upgrades.**

Bicycle NSW is very excited by the recent developments in the cycling infrastructure in the Parramatta area and applaud the 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 benefiting local businesses, as people who ride bikes can easily stop at local shops en-route.ⁱⁱ

There has never been a better time to build for bike riding and active transport, as evidenced in the new Transport for NSW policies that require State projects to prioritize road space for active transport (Figure 1):

- Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy CP21001ⁱⁱⁱ
- Road User Space Allocation Policy CP21000^{iv}

Any small 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 Parramatta Council seek, benefitting local residents with quieter streets, and less pollution, noise and through-traffic. As traffic studies have shown, the current street parking spaces on Alfred Street are 70-80% occupied during the day and the proposed loss of 10% of spaces will have minimal impact.

Order of Road User Space Considerations



Figure 1: Diagram expressing Transport for NSW’s road user priority (Source: Transport for NSW)

It is fantastic that Parramatta Council is constructing separated bicycle paths rather than the shared paths on sidewalks 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.

One of the three guiding policy themes at Bicycle NSW is ‘Build it for Everyone’^v and we advocate for infrastructure that is suitable for riders from 8 to 80 years of age to use independently. According to the best practice ‘cycling segmentation’ model, developed in Portland USA to identify the type and needs of existing and potential bike riders^{vi}, separated bicycle paths will allow 70% of local residents to consider journeys by bike (Figure 2). The area is fairly level and the increasing use of e-bikes and other micromobility devices will ensure that active transport options are accessible to all residents.

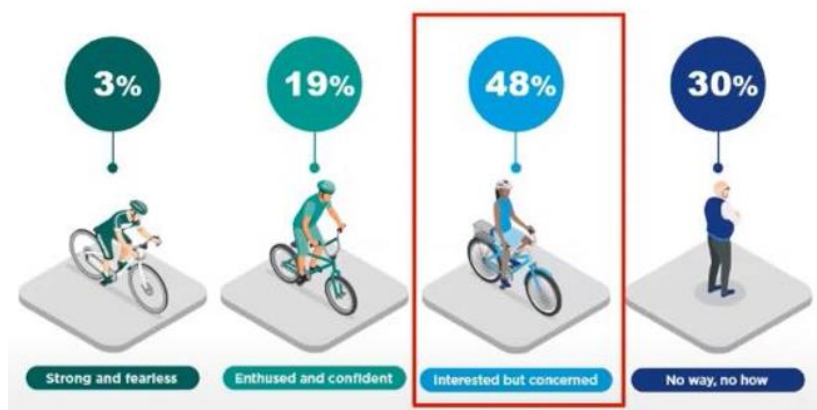


Figure 2: Four general categories of comfort levels for cycling as transportation. (Source: North Sydney Council)

Door zone bike lanes, bike stencils on the road and dangerous intersections will continue to deter the 48%^{vii} of people who are ‘interested but concerned’, from making the switch to cycling, and parents will still feel driving their children to school and activities is the only way to keep them safe from being hit by cars.

It is important that Parramatta’s active transport network is developed with regard to future growth in demand. The status quo of walking and cycling activity in the area is likely to change rapidly. The density of walkers will increase when new housing and retail is delivered as proposed. An upswing in travel by bikes has occurred recently due to Covid, individual reactions to climate change, a surge in local delivery services and the growing popularity of e-bikes. In addition, State policies to address climate change and urban liveability will add to pressures on councils to secure a much bigger travel share for walking and cycling.

Bicycle paths must be designed with the maximum possible width allowing for safe recovery and overtaking as ridership increases. Bicycle NSW recommends referring to the new Cycleway Design Toolbox^{viii} to ensure that the paths are constructed to current best practice.

Parking and other end of trip facilities should be provided at journey end locations to further support riders and encourage participation. Wayfinding supports visitors to vibrant centres by clearly articulating and communicating the most efficient and safest route. Signage style for wayfinding should be consistent throughout the LGA.

Congratulations Parramatta. We look forward to riding on the completed Alfred Street bicycle path and experiencing one of Australia's first protected roundabout treatments!

Figure 3: An extract from the 2021 Cycleway Design Toolbox from Transport for NSW showing the preferred treatment for a bidirectional bicycle path around a roundabout. As highlighted, this intersection has not been applied within the Australian context but it is proposed for Alfred Street. (Source: TfNSW)

Roundabout

- Main design principle: provide high level of service and safety to people walking and cycling, and reduce speed of intersecting traffic and people cycling
- Where space allows, a design with a smooth alignment (preventing 90 degree turns for riders) should be considered to make it easier to manoeuvre
- Design elements:
 - Prioritised and continuous bicycle path along the roundabout and pedestrian crossings on all legs
 - Raised crossing platform and clear road marking
 - Narrow all branches of roundabout and apply deflection angle for motorised traffic to reduce speed
 - Raised island in the centre for use by wide-turning vehicles (ie. trucks and buses)
- This intersection has not yet been applied within the Australian context, but provides a higher level of service and enhanced safety for people walking and cycling than existing guidance and treatments

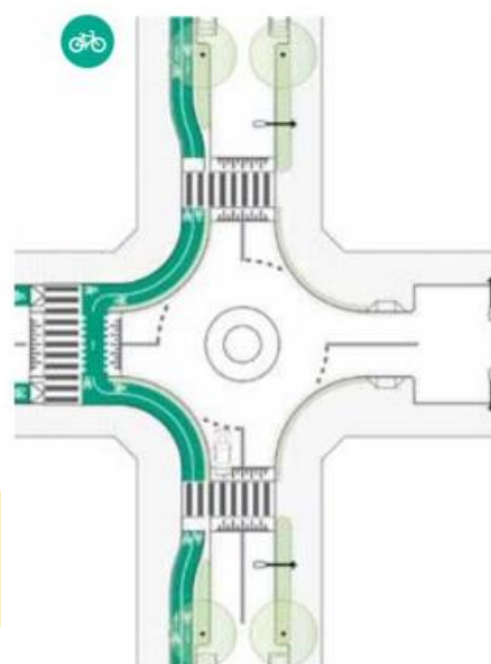


Figure 3.36 Bicycle path (two-way), separated roundabout - plan

Yours faithfully,

Sarah Bickford

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Bicycle NSW

ⁱNSW Government, Future Transport 2056 [Online 1/4/2020] <https://future.transport.nsw.gov.au/plans/future-transport-strategy/future-transport-greater-sydney>, Points 3-5

ⁱⁱJerome 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 \(theconversation.com\)](https://www.theconversation.com)

ⁱⁱⁱNSW Government, Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy CP21001, [Online as at 19/2/2021] www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2021/providing-for-walking-and-cycling-in-transport-projects-policy.pdf

^{iv}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

^vBicycle NSW, Policy Framework. [Online as at 19/7/2021] <https://bicyclensw.org.au/our-policy/>

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

^{vii}70% of people when surveyed said they would ride more if they felt safe, NSW Government, Sydney's Cycling Future (2013) [Online as at 24/2/2021] <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/media/documents/2017/sydneys-cycling-future-web.pdf>

^{viii}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>