M1 to Raymond Terrace Project Manager,
Locked Bag 2030
NEWCASTLE
NSW 2300

3rd October 2023

Submitted via email: m12rt@transport.nsw.gov.au

Dear Project Manager,

Re: M1 Extension to Raymond Terrace

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the M1 extension to Raymond Terrace (the 'Project'). Bicycle NSW notes the following:

The M1 Pacific Motorway extension and Hexham Straight widening projects are being jointly funded with a total investment of $2.1 billion - $1.68 billion provided by the Federal Government and $420 million from the NSW Government.

On opening, the 15 km extension is designed to improve travel times from Sydney to Brisbane by 7 to 9 minutes during peak periods.

The Project is in 2 parts: a Southern section between Black Hill and Tomago and a Northern section which bypasses Heatherbrae. Seymor Whyte is the contractor responsible for Heatherbrae and John Holland Gamuda for Black Hill to Tomago.

Bicycle NSW notes that the Infrastructure Sustainability Council (ISC) technical manual and rating tool specifies the following design principles related to people and place: People - Comfortability, Vibrancy, Safety, and Walkability. Place: Enhancing local economy, environment, and community; Connecting place; Facilitating diverse experiences; Quality and enduring places. (P.4 Introduction Heatherbrae Bypass)

NORTH - Heatherbrae Bypass

Bicycle NSW is concerned that active travel is not considered in the Heatherbrae project.

i) The Project is located in close proximity to the coastal regions of Newcastle, Port Stephens and Hunter Valley region. The location is predominantly rural urban area with manufacturing and industrial uses.

ii) Elements of the Project include: A 5km motorway upgrade connecting the southern section of the M1 Pacific Motorway extension to Raymond Terrace; One interchange at Raymond Terrace; Three bridges including two overbridges and one creek bridge over Windeyers Creek. (P.2 Contextual analysis)

iii) 'This Project is traversable only by a motor vehicle as a result of which there are no areas where pedestrians and cyclists can access the Motorway' (P.23 Design Elements)

iv) Objective 4: Urban Design Objectives, P.3: 'Maintain the accessibility and connectivity of surrounding communities for all users including motorists, public transport users, cyclists and pedestrians and

ensure connections are safe, convenient, logical and integrate the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

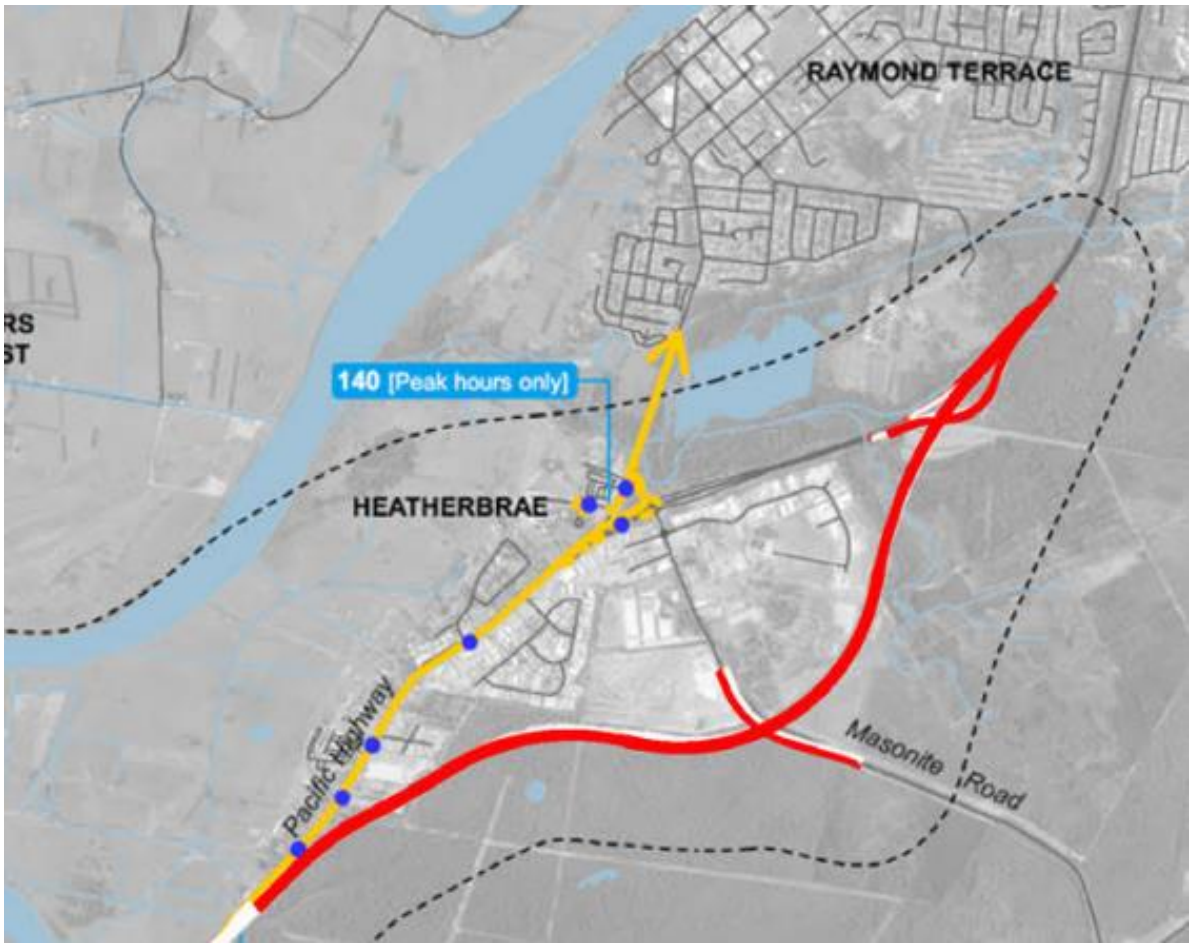

Figure 1: Heatherbrae Project Area in red (P.9 Contextual analysis)

Contradictions in the Urban Design and Landscape Plan

Question: How does the Heatherbrae bypass meet design Objective 4, Part 3 of 'connectivity for all road users including cyclists and pedestrians' when it states in Design Elements (p.23) that 'there are no areas where pedestrians and cyclists can access the Motorway'?

Clearly, motorways are constructed as movement corridors exclusively for vehicles, not pedestrians and cyclists. But the UDLP is also governed by place-making objectives which extend beyond aesthetics and include impacts to communities. Given that cyclists and pedestrians exist, and Heatherbrae is an urban rural place with a variety of uses, what provision is made for permeability of active travel in and through this corridor?

Therefore, how might the project attempt to upgrade the existing highway to meet Objective 4 and make it more amenable for AT?

Bicycle NSW looks forward to a resolution of these contradictions and the Heatherbrae extension acknowledging walking and cycling. This will require development and coordination with Black Hill to Tomago and local government plans for active travel.

SOUTH - Black Hill to Tomago

Bicycle NSW is satisfied with active travel plans for Black Hill to Tomago and looks forward to more detail.

i) Like Heatherbrae, Black Hill to Tomago draws on Infrastructure Sustainability Council (ISC) people and place standards: People › Comfortability › Vibrancy › Safety › Walkability.Place › Enhancing local economy, environment, and community › Connecting places › Facilitating diverse experiences

ii) Contextual analysis: 'Improve on-road cycle routes.'

iii) Key elements of the Project include: A 10 kilometre M1 Pacific Motorway extension that ties into the northern package, connecting the existing Pacific Highway, north of Heatherbrae; Upgrades to Pacific Highway to New England Highway between Black Hill and Tarro; Three interchanges at Black Hill, Tarro and Tomago; Eight bridges; Retaining walls, Noise walls at Black Hill and Tarro; Improved pedestrian and cyclist access.

iv) Design implications: 'Maintain access and connections between urban areas.' (P.7 Contextual analysis)

v) 'Minimal pedestrian and cycle infrastructure is present and limited to footpaths and pedestrian crossings at the Pacific Highway and Tomago Road intersection, and cycle lanes at the intersection at Weakleys Drive and John Renshaw Drive. A dedicated off-road cycleway is proposed by the City of Newcastle between Tarro and Shortland.'

vi) Design implications: Facilitate the legibility of the M1 Pacific Motorway, New England Highway and Pacific Highway that will connect both sides of the Hunter River floodplain; Enhance a more direct and continuous cycle route between Black Hill and Raymond Terrace; Ensure planned cycle links by Councils (Tarro to Shortland) are not precluded.

Figure 2: Aerial View, Black Hill Interchange looking North.

Figure 3: Aerial View Tomago Interchange looking West

Figure 4: Aerial View Black Hill Interchange looking East showing enhancing shared path and active transport connections from HRBG to Pacific Highway.

Provision for active travel in the Black Hill to Tomago section looks appropriate for this corridor despite the complexity of some of the interchanges.

Bicycle NSW is pleased about the acknowledgement and need for safe, direct and legible active travel routes in the Black Hill to Tomago portion of the UDLP. It is also positive to see emphasis placed on direct, continuous cycle routes connecting both sides of the Hunter River floodplain. Whilst detail is thin, the fact that JHG mentions walking and cycling throughout the UDLP and states the need to coordinate with the Heatherbrae extension and local governments' active travel plans is a positive.

Question 1: What wayfinding signage, street lighting and water facilities have been made for walking and cycling at this section of the M1?

Question 2: What will the walking and cycling light signal phasing intervals be like at the intersections? Will they be automatic and enable pedestrians to cross without having to wait multiple traffic cycles? Or will they be long and therefore encourage risk-taking?

Question 3: Tree shade is an important environmental and safety consideration for active travel. To what extent has this been incorporated into the shared path in the UDLP?

Conclusion

The $2.1 billion M1 extension to Raymond Terrace is a motorway project governed by key Infrastructure Sustainability Council elements which include provision for active travel. Whilst the Black Hill to Tomago portion acknowledges and plans for walking and cycling in coordination with existing plans, the Heatherbrae portion does not. Moreover, Seymour Whyte's UDLP discusses 'connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians' once, then states that 'there are no areas' for walking and cycling along the Heatherbrae motorway. The document is hence too contradictory for recommendation and requires clarification. By contrast, the JHG Black Hill to Tomago documents discuss walking and cycling throughout. This includes the stated need for continuity and legibility with local governments and the Heatherbrae bypass plans. We would like to see more detail from JHG regarding the shared path routes and facilities with respect to Black Hill to Tomago. We also request clarification about Seymour Whyte's provision for active transport and coordination with JHG.

Yours faithfully,

Francis O'Neill

Head of Advocacy
Bicycle NSW

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. 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.