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Bicycle NSW feedback - Arncliffe and Banksia to Riverine Park Pedestrian and Cycle Links

1 message

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To: haveyoursay@bayside.nsw.gov.au, planningourfuture@bayside.nsw.gov.au, Robbie Allen <Robbie.Allen@bayside.nsw.gov.au>, Peter McLean <peter.mclean@bicyclensw.org.au>

Dear Robbie and the Bayside team,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the concept plans for the Arncliffe and Banksia to Riverine Park Pedestrian and Cycle Links.

This is a very important project. These east-west connections between the high-growth areas on the western side of the Princes Highway to Barton and Riverine Parks are so very much needed in a area with a booming population. There is no way the road network, or the environment, can sustain everyone travelling in cars. A business as usual approach to transport planning is not viable and massively expanded active transport infrastructure is essential.

Bicycle NSW strongly supports Bayside developing the project in more detail and applying for available grants to get this done!

The additional crossings are fantastic, as are the raised intersections to side streets. This will slow vehicles and prioritise people walking and cycling as they cross the roads. It is great that new trees will be planted between parking spaces, rather than crammed on the narrowed verges. They will break down the visual dominance of lines of parked cars and they will be able to grow to a large and healthy size. Landscaped kerb extensions will make the streets easier to cross. Spring Street will be calmer and leafier.

The signalised crossings at the intersection of West Botany Street and Spring Street, and the intersection of the Princes Highway and Terry Street / Hattersley Street are absolutely essential.

The project should include upgrades to the shared path in Beehag Reserve as this is very narrow and an important connection to residential streets to the south.

A few comments on shared paths:

As set out in our February 2023 submission Bayside's draft Bike Plan (<https://bicyclensw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/230203-draft-Bayside-Bike-Plan-submission.pdf>), 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. 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.

If Spring St has a 12.8 m wide cross section, it should be possible to fit in two vehicle lanes, two parking lanes and a 2.4m wide segregated bicycle path, as set out in the TfNSW Cycleway Design Toolbox.

Segregated bicycle paths have many benefits over shared paths:

- × People riding bikes are separated from pedestrians and vehicles, reducing conflict - an growing issue as e-bikes explode in popularity.
- × 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.
- × Motorists exiting driveways have a better sightline to approaching cyclists, improving safety.
- × Dedicated bicycle paths will put a green carpet to encourage more people all ages and abilities to take to two wheels - it is a virtuous cycle!

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 hope that Bayside Council will initiate brave discussions with Transport for NSW and the community about reallocating road space from private cars for future projects to reflect the priorities set out in the Road User Space Allocation Policy and Council's own policies.

However, it is an imperfect world and for this project, a shared path is a good solution.

The shared path also creates walking space on the south side of Spring Street where there is currently no footpath. A shared path will be easier for the community to accept in an area very much wedded to cars and resistant to major changes to the road-related environment.

Note that shared paths should be wide enough for overtaking and must accommodate a range of mobility options such as cargo bikes and disability scooters. 2.5m shared paths are not strictly best practice and where there is space, Bayside should aim for a minimum of 3.0m. It is important that faster cyclists can overtake and that pedestrian comfort is never compromised.

Bicycle NSW recommends referring to the new Cycleway Design Toolbox and the 2017 Austroads Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides (AP-G88-17) to ensure that the paths are constructed to current best practice. The Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 6A: Paths for Walking and Cycling AGRD06A-17 contains the following table with suggested shared path widths:

	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.

It is important that Bayside recognises that 'strong and fearless' bike riders will prefer to ride on the road. They ride at higher speeds than appropriate on a shared path, prefer to avoid navigating intersections and driveways, and feel comfortable in traffic. **Bike stencils** should be placed on the road, in the centre of each vehicle lane, to make it clear to all road users that they need to share the road safely and patiently with bike riders. We also recommend a consistent 40km/h speed limit across the area, forward stop lines at intersections, head start green lights, and regular maintenance to ensure smooth surfaces.

In conclusion:

If the project is delivered as shown on the concept plans, with new signalised crossings, raised intersections, wombat crossing, new trees and landscaped kerb extensions, it will be a huge win for active travel in Bayside.

Many kind regards,



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