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Dear Aaron,

Re: Planning for Rozelle Parklands

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the development of Inner West Council's revised masterplan and new Plan of Management for Rozelle Parklands.

Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group in NSW for forty-eight 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.

It is very good news that NSW Government has responded to Council and community advocacy and agreed to provide Inner West Council with an additional \$20 million to address deficiencies in facilities and amenities at the Rozelle Parklands. We recognise that there will be many competing demands on this funding pot.

Although delighted by the new shared paths and active transport bridges delivered by the Rozelle Interchange, the bike community is very frustrated that many critical connections to adjacent streets and the wider bike network were neglected or ignored by the project team.

Some connections are urgently needed for safety and to ensure that the excellent new shared paths can be accessed by local residents of all ages and abilities, and provide a real alternative to sitting in car on the congested surface road around the Rozelle (or Roze-hell!) Interchange. Other links are important but could be delivered over a reasonable timeframe.

Bicycle NSW's submission will focus on actions that must be taken in the short term to improve the active transport links into and around the Parklands.

Where permanent upgrades need to be considered as part of a large and complex project (for example, the much-needed redesign of Lilyfield Road), we recommend the use of temporary materials to create safe and comfortable crossings and ramps. We understand that stakeholder engagement, funding, design and approvals for major upgrades will take time. But there must be no delay in creating safe access before the Parklands reopen in a few weeks.

Don't let Transport for NSW off the hook

The missing active transport connections represent a failure to meet the Conditions of Approval for WestConnex. Many of our suggested upgrades should therefore be undertaken and funded by TfNSW and the project team. It should not be necessary to dip into the Inner West Council's \$20million funding pot to correct mistakes made by a State Government project.

The NSW Minister for Planning's [original conditions](#) E57 to E60 considered pedestrian and cyclist access, both during and after construction. Condition E58 specified that "the Proponent must provide improved connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians between Roberts Street and Springside Street". E60 required a Pedestrian and Bicycle Implementation Plan, outlining connections to existing local and regional routes. All identified works arising from this condition were to be implemented prior to the commencement of project operations, in accordance with relevant Australian Standards and Austroads guidelines.

The Urban Design and Landscape Plan (UDLP) stated that one of the project's objectives is to support active transport through the development of safe, accessible, and well-integrated walking and cycling infrastructure.

The need to provide good quality cycle connections to and across the Parklands (and not just within the site boundary) was given further impetus by the **2022 Strategic Cycleway Corridors** program. Two strategic cycleways pass the Parklands, connecting Drummoyne and Lilyfield to the Sydney CBD. The 'Lilyfield Connection', is listed as one of these top five priorities for the NSW Government.

Please refer to our detailed 2022 issues paper [Rozelle Interchange: Moving Forwards](#) for detailed commentary on the opportunities offered by the project.

What has emerged from the rubble within a 1km radius of the project?

- The Lilyfield Connection remains an illusion of fantasy for Inner West bike riders

Although the excellent shared path through the Parklands to the Anzac Bridge has delivered a high-quality facility east of Ryan Street, nothing has been done to improve comfort and safety on Lilyfield Road west of the Parklands, despite many years of advocacy and consultation. The speed limit was reset to 50km/h, completely inappropriate in an area busy with vulnerable road users. In addition, essential pedestrian and cycle crossings to allow access to the Parklands across Lilyfield Road were not delivered.

- Connectivity for cyclists has not been improved between Roberts Street and Springside Street

E58 did not specifically require the cycleway to be provided in the Victoria Road reservation. A back street mixed-traffic route that avoids Victoria Road was chosen to meet the condition. The WestConnex team made some very minor improvements to an existing route from Moodie Street to the Rozelle Parklands via Gordon St. But this route is entirely substandard. It climbs steep hills and uses narrow streets clogged with parked cars and rat-running drivers. It is poorly signposted and unclear. It is not suitable for children, elders, less confident riders or commuters needing a fast, direct trip. It will do nothing to grow ridership on this important regional route.

WestConnex also promised to improve the shared path on the northside of Victoria Road to give bike riders a second possible route. In the end, very limited changes were made, and these happened alongside multiple downgrades of the facility. The Victoria Road shared path remains a dog's dinner, interrupted by dangerous side street intersections and obstructed by poles, electricity boxes, and bus shelters. There are now 102 poles and other obstacles on the 1400m from Springside to Roberts - an average of one pole or obstruction every 14m!

- Victoria Road remains an ugly, congested traffic sewer

Of course, our advocacy to [NSW Government](#) and TfNSW to reduce space for vehicles on Victoria Road, in line with 50% drop in traffic promised to the community, and deliver the changes set out Inner West Council's draft [Rozelle Town Centre Masterplan](#), has been completely ignored. A golden opportunity has been missed

to capitalise on WestConnex, rebalance road space, prioritise active and public transport, and boost economic activity and housing supply with mixed used development.

Inner West Council must proactively progress projects

Although we urge Inner West Council to advocate that Transport for NSW completes connections into and around Rozelle to meet WestConnex project obligations, Council staff cannot sit back and wait for others to initiate projects. It is essential that Council's planners and engineers proactively develop best-practice design solutions in collaboration with the community, and pursue State Government funding for enhancements beyond WestConnex's scope.

The Rozelle Parklands Active Transport and Community Hub Incorporated has prepared a very comprehensive report listing the defective, non-compliant and missing elements of active transport infrastructure in and around the project site. Please refer to this.

The [Inner West Bicycle Coalition has developed a detailed list of upgrades](#) and improvements to streets in the area. Several of issues highlighted are located beyond the project footprint, reflecting how WestConnex missed opportunities to improve the wider walking and cycling. We **strongly support the IWBC suggestions** for the Crescent, Johnson Street, Railway Parade, Balmain Road and Catherine Street, even though these are not included in our submission.

Bicycle NSW asks Inner West Council to work very closely with our advocacy partners at every stage of its endeavours to tackle unsafe and substandard elements of the walking and cycling network.

Bicycle NSW's six priorities

For this submission, we will focus on several issues immediately adjacent to the Parklands. These are located on the map in Figure 1.

1. Complete the Lilyfield Connection so bike riders can reach the western entrance to the Parklands safely

Our report [Rozelle Interchange: Moving Forwards](#) discussed several possible ways for developing a safe and comfortable connection from Iron Cove to Rozelle Parklands. There are well-conceived options that bypass parts of Lilyfield Road. These options recognise that inserting dedicated, separated bicycle infrastructure on Lilyfield Road is very contentious as it is narrow and lined with terrace houses that rely on street parking. In addition, the gradient west of James Street is challenging.

However, in the short term, Inner West Council needs to get on and implement [its most recent plans for Lilyfield Road](#), drawn up by Complete Urban. The plans proposed traffic calming, new raised crossings and an on-road cycleway, with cycle lanes on uphill sections and mixed traffic cycling on downhill sections. Although not an all ages and abilities facility that meets the criteria of a strategic cycleway corridor, a much wider range of bike riders will be comfortable using a modified Lilyfield Road, particularly as increased e-bike use irons out the hills.

Some modifications will be required to the 2019 plans now that the final configuration of the Rozelle Parklands paths is clear. East of Balmain Road, Lilyfield Road is bordered by non-residential uses on the southern side. In places there is **not even a footpath** here. Please consider reconfiguring the road space and verge to accommodate a wide, bi-directional bicycle path and a continuous footpath between Balmain Road and the Parklands.



Figure 1: The Rozelle Parklands plan with Bicycle NSW's 6 priorities indicated in green (Source: TfNSW/Bicycle NSW)

Legend:

- 1 Complete the Lilyfield Connection so bike riders can reach the western entrance to the Parklands safely
- 2 Add new pedestrian and cycle crossings to facilitate safe access to the Parklands across Lilyfield Road
- 3 Introduce a default area-wide 40 km/h speed limit, and further reduce the limit to 30km/h on some streets
- 4 Upgrade the back street cycleway route from the Rozelle Parklands to Moodie Street via Gordon Street
- 5 Build continuous, comfortable and compliant shared paths on both sides of Victoria Road
- 6 Improve the connection from the Rozelle Parklands to Whites Creek

2. Add new pedestrian and cycle crossings to facilitate safe access to the Parklands across Lilyfield Road

Four locations, clearly marked on Figure 1, urgently need new raised crossings and other modifications to ensure that people of all ages and abilities, whether walking, pushing prams, in wheelchairs or on bikes, can safely cross Lilyfield Road.

2a: At the western exit of the Parklands near the Ryan Street steps



Figure 2: The temporary ramp and missing footpath at the western exit of the Parklands to Lilyfield Road (Images: Bicycle NSW)

The shared path through the Rozelle Parklands ends abruptly at the sandstone kerb. The temporary yellow ramp is already damaged. It is a hazard for cyclists and highly unsuitable for this location. Bike riders heading east have no safe way of making the right turn into the park from Lilyfield Road. For pedestrians heading west, there is no footpath on the southern side and no safe way to cross to the northern footpath. The road curves, making it hard to see approaching cars.

Kerb extensions and a raised crossing level with the Parklands path are required. Bike riders can make a hook turn using the crossing if not confident to turn right across the vehicle lane.

2b: At Easton Park

There is an exit from the Parklands near Easton Park (Figure 3). It is intended for vehicles but pedestrians feel invited to use it. But there is no safe crossing, and it is a blind corner. There is no kerb cut or clear path up into Easton Park.

The new Parklands have changed the way people move through Easton Park and it is important to connect the two green spaces. A better spot to access Easton Park is a little further east near the amenities block. Again, a raised crossing is required, with kerb extensions that allow pedestrians to wait to cross in front of the line of parked cars.



Figure 3: Children try to cross the road in a very dangerous location opposite Easton Park. There is a reasonable path into the park by the amenities building which could be upgraded (Images: Bicycle NSW)

2c: At Gordon St



Figure 4: The intersection of Gordon Street and Lilyfield Road is complex with zero visibility of approaching cars when crossing to the north (Image: Bicycle NSW)

The new path from the Parklands to Gordon Street is meant to provide a link to the E58 back street cycle route over to Iron Cove. But heading north, it is impossible to cross Lilyfield Road. There is a blind corner and cars routinely speed. The intersection is very wide, parked cars block sightlines, and a slip lane entering from the northern side adds complexity (Figure 4).

In addition, the brand-new kerb ramp into the Parkland has a non-compliant lip that is very unsafe for bike riders (Figure 5).



Figure 5: An Inner West Bicycle Coalition advocate show where a 5cm high lip has been incorporated into a dropped kerb – on a cycle route! (Image: Bicycle NSW)

The intersection must be reconfigured so it can fulfill its new role as a key node in the active transport network. There are several design solutions to explore. Bicycle NSW suggests raising the entire area to be level and continuous with the path into the Parklands, removing the slip lane, adding kerb extensions to take the footpaths past the parked cars, and introducing landscaping. This area should be treated as a shared, low speed zone. A generous median with a refuge island is another option that would narrow the vehicle lanes, encourage slow driving, and allow bike riders to navigate one lane at a time.

2d: At the intersection with Victoria Road



Figure 6: The wide and very dangerous mouth of Lilyfield Road. The speed hump is well beyond the pedestrian crossing point. (Image: Bicycle NSW)

The entrance to Lilyfield Road has been constructed as a gaping, 4-lane wide intersection. Speeding cars coming off City West Link do not slow down as they turn in. There is nothing to indicate that they need to look out for cyclists navigating the shared path network. The kerb cuts are right on the corner, well before the speed bump that nudges drivers to slow down before proceeding along Lilyfield Road.

The speed hump must be rebuilt as a raised pedestrian and bicycle crossing, and the kerb cuts realigned well away from the corner.

3. Introduce a default area-wide 40 km/h speed limit without delay, and further reduce the limit to 30km/h on streets with high pedestrian activity

The existing 50km/h speed limit on streets adjacent to the Rozelle Parklands is **far too high**, given the changed character and usage of the area. The sporting and recreational venues attract many children, and the active transport links will be busy with people walking and cycling.

An **area-wide 40km/h limit** is a 'Key Project' under *Principle 2: Improve safety, personal security, and provide equitable access for full community participation* in '[Going Places](#)', Inner West Council's 2020 Integrated Transport Strategy.

A motion on the issue received unanimous support when it was brought to Council in June 2022. In 2023, Council exhibited the [Inner West @ 40](#) report, setting out rigorous data-driven evidence to support reduced speed limits. The very supportive [Bicycle NSW submission](#) provides further commentary.

The importance of this initiative cannot be overstated. Setting a 40km/h speed limit across an entire LGA is ground-breaking in scope and Inner West Council is to be commended for its ambition. Our roads are becoming less safe every year. The [road toll is rising](#). Slowing down traffic has a transformative effect on our

communities. The change will significantly improve safety for everyone in the community, particularly people walking and cycling, children going to school and other vulnerable road users outside a car.

The urgent need to lower speed limits has been a constant theme in our submission to Inner West plans and strategies. Please refer to feedback on the [GreenWay Missing Links](#), [Sydney Park Junction](#), [Iron Cove Creek](#), and the Public Domain Masterplans for [Rozelle](#), [Enmore](#), [Dulwich Hill](#) and [Marrickville](#). We also wrote comprehensive suggestions at both stages of the development of the [Inner West Cycling Strategy](#).

Bicycle NSW aligns with the [Better Streets](#) coalition campaign and advocates that Inner West Council **further reduces the speed limit to 30km/h** on streets with a high concentration of pedestrian activity and streets which form part of the Inner West Bicycle Network. This would include Lilyfield Road and Gordon Street. A 30 km/h speed limit facilitates on-road mixed traffic cycling in conjunction with the low-cost 'quietway' treatments outlined in the [Cycleway Design Toolbox](#).

A 30km/h speed limit was in place for Lilyfield Road during construction of Rozelle Interchange. This helped bike riders move safely through the chaos. It was incredibly disappointing that TfNSW reverted the speed limit to 50km/h.

The [NSW speed limit guidelines](#) have recently received a much-needed update. There are now official recommendations for 30km/h speed zones and it is easier for councils to implement change. Over short trips, a 30km/h speed limit makes virtually no difference in travel time.

Lower vehicle speeds make a difference to road safety. There is no time to waste.

4. Upgrade the back street cycleway route from the Rozelle Parklands to Moodie Street via Gordon Street

As discussed, the cycling facilities provided to meet condition E58 are substandard. The route is indirect, steep and convoluted. We do not recognise this as regional route, and it is definitely not feasible as a section of the Drummoyne-The Bays strategic cycleway corridor. It is at best a local access route.

Despite this, the Inner West Bicycle Coalition has suggested numerous improvements to intersections, signage, road markings, parking spaces and kerb alignments to help bike riders safely navigate to Iron Cove.

Bicycle NSW asks Inner West Council to work very closely with the bike advocates to develop an action plan for the Westconnex team.

5. Build continuous, comfortable and compliant shared paths on both sides of Victoria Road

Bicycle NSW will continue to advocate for the long overdue transformation of Victoria Road in line with the [Rozelle Town Centre Masterplan](#). The separated cycleway proposed for Victoria Road as part of these plans would deliver a viable and much-needed section of the Drummoyne-The Bays strategic cycleway corridor.

However, in **the short term** it is essential to deliver proper shared paths on both sides of the road with improved side street crossings - even if it means reducing space for vehicles. Obstructions such as poles, signs and bus stops need to be relocated so the path is clear.

A pedestrian and cycle crossing of Victoria Road at the signalised intersection with Roberts Street will help restore connectivity lost when the overpass bridge was removed.

Although these shared paths adjacent to 6 lanes of congested traffic will remain unattractive, noisy and polluted, the Rozelle Parklands to Moodie Street E58 route is not a realistic alternative to Victoria Road for commuter cyclists. It is essential to make the shared paths adequate while the debate about the future of Victoria Road rumbles on.

Again, consult closely with the Inner West Bicycle Coalition to draw up a defects list and advocate that Transport for NSW funds and constructs the missing paths and crossings.

6. Improve the connection from the Rozelle Parklands to Whites Creek

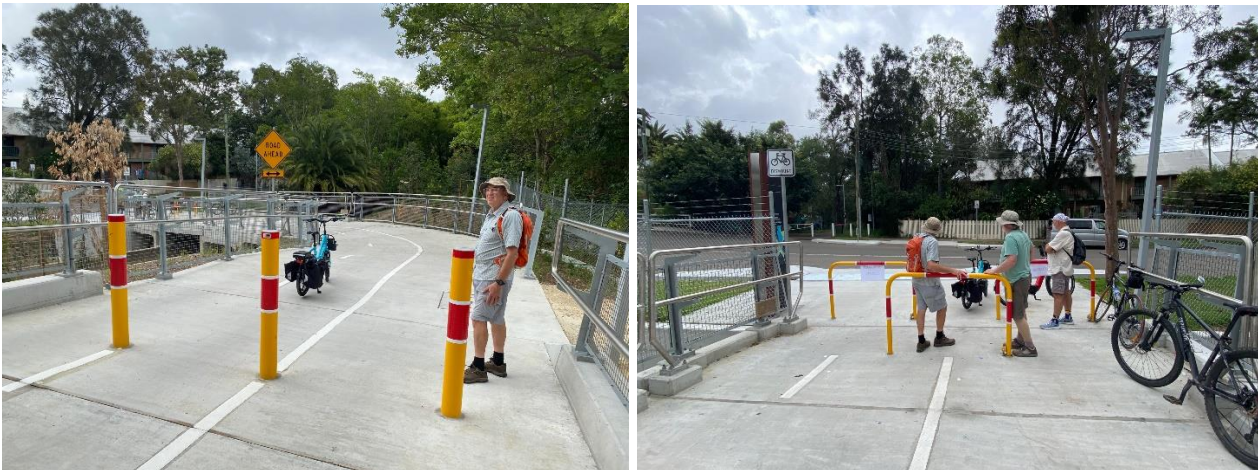


Figure 7: The bollards near the bottom of the new bridge to Brenan St are closely followed by a series of U-rails. An overkill! (Image: Bicycle NSW)

The new active transport bridge to Brenan Street is very high-quality (if somewhat over-engineered!). However, at the bottom of the southern 'pig tail' ramp, a row of bollards is quickly followed by a series of U-rails. These rails make access to the Parklands very difficult for less able riders or those using cargo bikes and carrying children. They appear to be entirely unnecessary.

There is no pedestrian crossing of Brenan Street and the kerb ramp at the entrance to the Whites Creek path has a lip that creates a hazard to bike riders.

The u-rails should be removed and a raised pedestrian and bicycle crossing installed on Brenan Street to create safe and comfortable access to Whites Creek.

Employ temporary, tactical interventions in the short term

The project to redesign Lilyfield Road, introducing raised crossings, bicycle infrastructure, reconfigured intersections, new landscaping and lower speed limits, is complex. It will take time to work through the normal processes of stakeholder engagement, funding applications, detailed design and planning approvals. The transformation of Victoria Road is mired in political wrangling and bureaucracy.

However, there must be no delay in improving access across the area before the Parklands reopen in a few weeks. Inner West Council and TfNSW can use temporary materials to create the most essential crossings now. Examples of treatments are shown in the photos.



Figure 8: Temporary crossings in [Kansas](#) and [Montana](#). The kerb extensions are made with plastic posts and thick coir rope.



Figure 9: Painted kerb extensions make streets safer by shortening the crossing distance for pedestrians and improving visibility for turning cars (Image: [Brian David Platt](#)). This smooth, wide and well-angled temporary ramp (right) could be replicated at Rozelle while a long-term solution for the heritage kerbstones is developed (Image: Bicycle NSW, from the Warringah Freeway Upgrade project)

In Conclusion

We look forward to the realization of a safer and more connected Rozelle Parklands.

One final point! Off-leash dog areas can be dangerous for bike riders. Although off-leash areas are not currently proposed at the Parklands, the community will be keen to identify places for dogs to play. Council must designate dog off-leash area well away from shared cycleways, reducing the risk of conflict.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with Bicycle NSW if we can assist further at this stage

Yours sincerely,

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