

The Hon. John Graham MLC
Minister for Roads
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

15th April 2024

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Dear Minister,

Re: Mount Ousley Interchange – removal of active transport facilities

Bicycle NSW, Illawarra Bicycle User Group and the local community have been blindsided by the sudden decision to remove an active transport bridge over old Mount Ousley Road from the \$390 million [Mount Ousley interchange project](#).

Mount Ousley Road and the M1 is a physical and psychological barrier to the movement of residents in the northern suburbs of Wollongong. Crossing the traffic sewer to access the major educational precinct on the south side – this includes the University of Wollongong, the TAFE campus, Wollongong High School and Keira High School – is very difficult without a car.

The intersection project has been in planning for decades, with land reserved. A key element has always been the north-south walking and cycling connection to finally allow connections by foot and bike from the north.

Plans from 2016 (Figure 1) clearly show the location of the bridge.



Figure 1: Plans released by RMS in June 2016 (Source: [RMS](#))

Fulton Hogan was awarded a design and construct contract in January 2024. The local state and federal members [announced this milestone](#). The revised plan (Figure 2) still showed the active transport bridge as a core component.

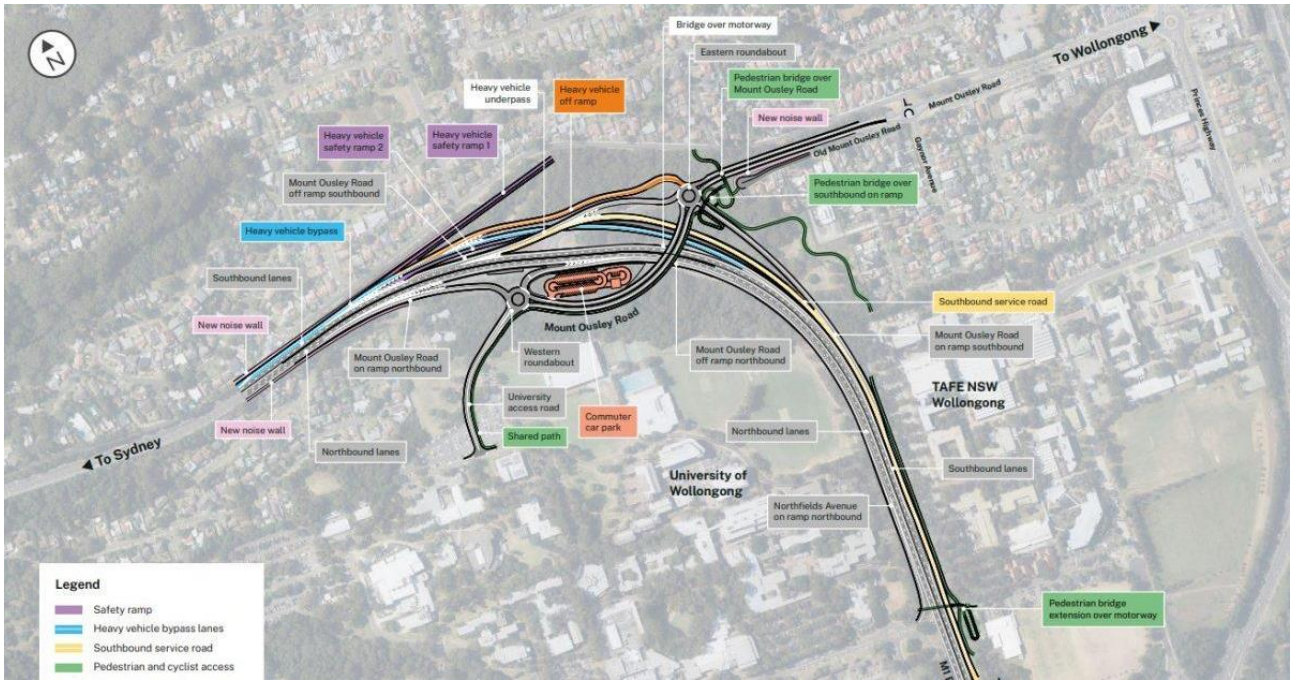


Figure 2: Plan showed to the community in early 2024. (Source: [TfNSW](#))

However, the [community was informed](#) in February that the project team was making “refinements to the scope and design to achieve a value for money solution which delivers core project objectives”. The removal of the pedestrian bridge was [announced in March 2024](#).

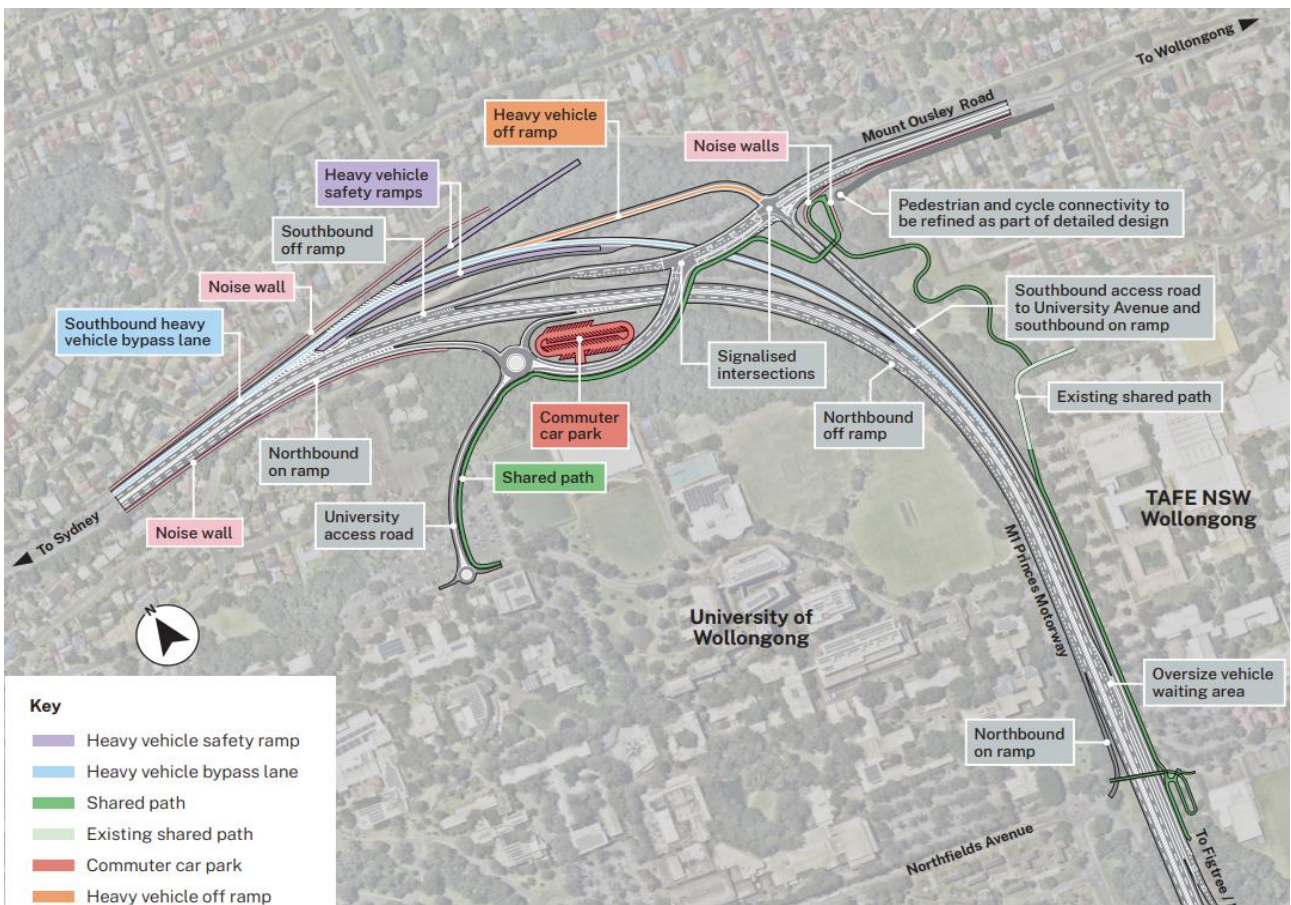


Figure 3: The latest plan for the Mount Ousley interchange with no north-south pedestrian connections (Source: [TfNSW](#))

The removal of such a critical link contravenes the NSW Government's own [Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy](#), released in February 2021, which states that "every transport project funded by Transport for NSW must include provision for walking and cycling within the core scope of the project". Walking and cycling components of a project must be incorporated from the outset and followed through to delivery and maintenance.

Enhanced at-grade cycle and pedestrian connections along and across Mount Ousley Road are promised as part of detailed design. But the road is being widened and will include a dedicated heavy vehicle lane. A multi-stage at-grade crossing is not a suitable solution in this location.

We must get this right. The interchange project offers a golden opportunity to connect residents of the northern suburbs to a key education and employment area and reduce car dependency. Without a safe crossing, the widened Mount Ousley Road will be a burden on our community for decades to come. The benefits of active transport connections are numerous as you know. Walking and cycling offer healthy, low-cost ways to get around, provide independence for children and the many members of the community who cannot drive, and reduce pressure on the road network.

[Recent analysis](#) shows Wollongong can expect a 21% increase in peak travel times and 13,000 more cars in the city centre by 2036 if the current rates of car use continue as population grows. It is beyond time to prioritise active and public transport in every infrastructure project to ensure that people have safe, attractive, direct and convenient alternatives to driving.

Bicycle NSW requests that you intervene in this project to reinstate the active transport bridge over Mount Ousley Road.

Yours sincerely,



Peter McLean
Chief Executive Officer

cc The Hon. Jo Haylen MP
Josh Murray
The Hon. Paul Scully MP
The Hon. Ryan Park MP
MP Anna Watson MP
Alison Byrnes MP
Anna Bradley
Project Team

Minister for Transport
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Minister for Planning, Member for Wollongong
Minister for Health, Member for Keira
Member for Shellharbour
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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.