Josh Murray
Secretary
Transport for NSW
231 Elizabeth Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

10th August 2024

Email: Secretary@transport.nsw.gov.au

Green Square traffic signals

Dear Josh,

Bicycle NSW has been contacted by Members who are very frustrated by the long wait times at intersections within the Green Square precinct.

Both Zetland Avenue and Geddes Avenue are attractive, tree-lined boulevards with wide footpaths and high-quality cycleways. The City of Sydney has laid out a 'green carpet' with a clear invitation to ride.

Unfortunately, at the intersections with Paul Street and Portman Street, travel by car is prioritized. The roadways are widened to accommodate turn lanes. People walking must cross wide expanses of asphalt. Multiple traffic signals give very little green time for anyone outside a car.

The mode share for active and public transport at Green Square has exceeded Transport for NSW expectations. However, it is incredibly hard to use the active transport infrastructure effectively. This is in contradiction of the promise to put people first at Green Square. And it makes no sense when there is so little vehicle traffic in the precinct.

Bicycle NSW's article Green Square Signal Fail Active Transport draws attention to the issues and sets out some solutions.

The simple solution is to adjust the lights to be 'default green' for pedestrians and bike riders, turning red as a vehicle approaches. Research shows this maximises pedestrian flow and safety while having almost no impact on vehicle flow.

A longer-term solution would be to remove the traffic signals and rebuild the entire space as a raised intersection which vehicles negotiate very slowly. Zebra crossings would reinforce the pedestrian priority and reduce pedestrian delay to zero.

Changes to the intersections must happen before the new 600-pupil primary school opens next year. The school will lead to even more vulnerable residents using the footpaths and cycleways.

It is essential to achieve a very high level of service for active transport in a dense and walkable suburb to ensure that walking or cycling is the preferred mode for most trips. Our colleagues at WalkSydney have compiled some excellent research that demonstrates how traffic lights reduce the number of places and public transport stops that residents can walk to within an acceptable time. If traffic lights increase walking times from a person's home by 30%, their walkable area, or walkshed, is reduced by about 41%. And it is more tempting to drive.

Bicycle NSW joins community stakeholders in calling for an urgent review of the Drying Square Green intersections. The future function must align with the raft of City of Sydney and Transport for NSW strategies striving to prioritise people and reduce the decades' long domination of the car in our urban environments.

It is time to revisit the transport planning for the precinct and redesign the intersections for a low-car future. **As a first step, we ask Transport for NSW to improve the signal timing to minimise pedestrian and cyclist delay.**

If Transport for NSW does not find it necessary to reconfigure these traffic signals, please justify why not.

It is important to note that the groundbreaking Road User Space Allocation Policy has been updated following a review. The new version provides Transport for NSW with a **stronger mandate** to find a better balance between movement and place, with priority given to people walking, cycling and using public transport. Road user space decisions must be documented, providing evidence and reasons, and the outcomes assessed against strategic intent. Projects must aim for an overall reduction of the mode share of private motor vehicle trips within built-up areas.

Bicycle NSW looks forward to learning the outcome from the review.

There are, of course, countless signalised intersections which need to be adjusted to better meet the needs of pedestrians and bike riders. A particular focus should be exasperating waits on key cycling routes, such as Union Street in Pyrmont.

We hope that Transport for NSW can rapidly establish proactive processes for reviewing traffic signals. A possible model comes from London. Significant resources are allocated to reviewing the optimal phasing of every light, every 5 years. The Timing Review Programme (TRP) adjusts 1200, or 20%, of the city's traffic signals annually. Time savings for pedestrians and bus passengers are the key metric used to determine success. A systematic approach like this would be a game-changer for NSW.

Yours sincerely,

Peter McLean

Chief Executive Officer
Bicycle NSW

cc	The Hon. Jo Haylen MP	Minister for Transport	via website
	Clover Moore	Lord Mayor, City of Sydney	cmoore@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au
	The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP	Member for Heffron	heffron@parliament.nsw.gov.au
	Anna Bradley	Dep. Secretary, Cities and Active Transport	anna.bradley@transport.nsw.gov.au

Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group in NSW for over 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.

(02) 9704 0800 | info@bicyclensw.org.au | www.bicyclensw.org.au
Gadigal Country, Level 9, 66 Goulburn St, Sydney NSW 2000
ABN 26 511 801 801