



Sarah Bickford <sarah.bickford@bicyclensw.org.au>

Bicycle NSW feedback - Open Space and Recreation Strategy

1 message

Sarah Bickford <sarah.bickford@bicyclensw.org.au>

16 January 2025 at 17:44

To: "council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au" <council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au>

Cc: Max White <Max.White@northsydney.nsw.gov.au>, "mayor@northsydney.nsw.gov.au" <mayor@northsydney.nsw.gov.au>, "cr.Shannon.Welch@northsydney.nsw.gov.au" <cr.Shannon.Welch@northsydney.nsw.gov.au>

Dear North Sydney Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 8 strategies that articulate the priorities for North Sydney over the next ten years.

Bicycle NSW has made a detailed submission on the Integrated Transport Strategy. <https://bicyclensw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/250113-Integrated-Transport-Strategy-submission.pdf>

We have not written a formal letter about the **Open Space and Recreation Strategy** (the 'OSR Strategy'). However, please note the feedback in this email in your consultation report.

Bicycle NSW supports the key strategic directions, measurable objectives, projects and initiatives that will achieve the vision of 'an active community with space for everyone to exercise and enjoy the outdoors'. We are excited by the long list of open space projects that North Sydney Council aspires to complete by 2035.

However, we strongly align with the concerns clearly communicated by Bicycle Use Group Bike North in its submission (attached) about **the complete absence of cycling as either a mode of transport or a recreational activity** in the OSR Strategy.

Recommendations

- **Ensure that recreational riding is considered with every new and upgraded open space**

Open spaces play a key role in providing spaces for people to ride. They are particularly important for children learning to ride, and less experienced riders who need to gain confidence away from traffic. Where possible, paths should be wide enough to be shared use, or a separate path provided for cycling. An additional action under Strategic Direction 3 is needed.

We agree with Bike North that St Leonards Park would be a great location for a kids' cycling track. St Leonards Park is well positioned, close to a number of existing and proposed separated bike paths, both east and west of the Warringah Freeway. It is a far more accessible location than the track at Brightmore Reserve which is only suitable for the very local residents or by using a car.

- **Align the Strategy with the North Sydney Bike Plan**

Many parks and open spaces in North Sydney sit on important cycling connections. These must be clearly discussed in the OSR Strategy to ensure that planning for Council's open spaces uses every opportunity to improve and develop the cycling network.

In particular, St Leonards Park is bisected by a key regional bike route and desperately needs an improved facility to ensure safe and comfortable conditions for both bike riders and pedestrians. The numbers of cyclists using the park will undoubtedly increase when the new ramp to the Harbour Bridge Cycleway is complete, and the existing path is wholly inadequate. Providing a wide, smooth path, good lighting, and a paved connection to the Ridge St Cycleway should be an action in the OSR Strategy.

It may be possible to build a path along the east side of the oval once the motorway upgrade compound is removed. This is an identified opportunity (#4) in the North Sydney Active Transport Network Review (please refer to our 2023 submission for commentary on this connection <https://bicyclensw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/230710-Warringah-Freeway-Upgrade-ATNR-submission.pdf>). If this is something North Sydney Council hopes to pursue, it must be embedded in the OSR Strategy.

- **Focus on access and parking for bicycles**

Cycling is a sustainable way to access any open space or recreational facility, particularly for distances that are too far to walk comfortably. This needs to be encouraged and supported to reduce the community's high car dependency. The OSR Strategy should clearly discuss how a perceived lack of car parking is best addressed by active transport. Walking and cycling are far more spatially efficient and cheaper to provide than car infrastructure. Of course, this requires both safe routes to the open space or recreational facility and well located and secure bike parking. Both access and parking for bikes should be central to the OSR Strategy.

- **Explore opportunities to create more open space by prioritising active transport**

An innovative way to deliver additional space is through the re-allocation of road space for separated bike paths, landscaping and green space. Traffic calmed streets with minimal through traffic can become spaces for play and recreation. There is a fantastic example of this approach in the North Sydney LGA:



A modal filter at Ellalong Road in Cremorne, NSW is part of a long regional cycleway linking the Spit Bridge with North Sydney. The street has been closed at one end with an attractive green space. A dedicated bicycle path provides access to the next street. There is no through traffic. And it's safe enough for a game of street cricket! (Image: Bicycle NSW)

Given the scarcity of open space in North Sydney, the rapidly growing population and huge amount of public space currently allocated to inefficient private motor vehicle storage, road space allocation should sit at the heart of the OSR Strategy. Although Action 1.15 refers to a 'play street' program to facilitate temporary closure of local streets, permanent changes should be on Council's radar.

The OSR could include an action for the Open Space team to collaborate closely with the Integrated Transport team, and targets to increase the amount of public land currently used for motor vehicle storage that is freed up for open space and recreation.

Thank you for allowing us to submit a late submission, accommodating long periods of leave for our small team.

We look forward to working with North Sydney Council to develop and deliver active transport initiatives over the life of the OSR and IT strategies.

Many kind regards,




Sarah Bickford
Bike Planner

Bicycle NSW

Gadigal Country
Level 9, 66 Goulburn St, Sydney NSW 2000
M: 0431 961 520 W: bicyclensw.org.au

JOIN OUR FAMILY

Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group in NSW for over forty-eight years, and has more than 35 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.

 **250112 Bike North - Open Space Strategy.pdf**
285K