

Submission to GTA Consultants (copied to Daryl Ninham RTA) Bondi Junction Sub-Regional Bike Plan Study

BIKEast offers the following comments as study inputs; from the general to the particular.

General Comments

Six Themes of proposed State Bike Plan

It is important that Study outputs fit with these themes to complement the plan and make comparisons possible and for consistency in policy and strategic approaches and actions.

The study brief's narrowness – cyclist-centric approach – will tend to continue the past failures to integrate modes of transport and road space use and streetscape design. This intrinsic weakness should be kept in mind in developing strategies for the Plan. Good amenity only happens if this wider context and needs are considered and respected.

Coordination and Cooperation – Plans & actions

An overarching problem adversely affecting policy and implementation for bicycling is the isolated 'silos' of responsibility within and between organisations and administrative levels. This results in duplication and also systemic failures in implementation of initiatives for cycling. This area will always be difficult to address, despite good intentions such as the Bike Plan's Theme **6 – Put cycling at the heart of what organisations do**. This intention will not happen unless commitments are made that drive coordination and cooperation (between silos!) with bicycling treated as a fundamental part of land-use and transport planning.

A good starting point is the State Plan and the Metropolitan Plan, where the role of bicycling is reasonably recognised. A new State Bike Plan with its Sub-regional Centre Plans, and a commitment to it at the State level (if forthcoming) will help fill a policy and strategic void.

This void is clearly illustrated by the lack of attention given to the bicycling mode in the 2007 released Sub-Regional and City Centre land-use plans (Department of Planning) and the abandonment in 2007 of the (albeit dated) *Action for Bikes – Bike Plan 2010*, by the RTA/Minister for Roads.

Regarding the former, correspondence to the Director of Planning (DoP) and Executive Director, Metropolitan Planning, is attached, as some of the medium to long-term strategic initiatives and infrastructure ideas submitted will aid Theme **4 – Plan cyclable suburbs** (which should read *Plan cyclable cities and suburbs*, as Sydney is a City of cities).

Waverley Council's recent Sustainable Transport Action Plan, the Traffic and PAMP strategies and studies undertaken for Bondi Junction, must also inform the study.

Constraints to cycling

The major outstanding constraints to cycling are:

- **Bike route – riding – discontinuities:**
BIKEast and BNSW has long contended that the RTA needs to take full responsibility for initiatives along and across roads and intersections for Highways and Main Roads for which it is primarily responsible. The main evidence for this is that major discontinuities along bicycle routes almost always occurs at these places. Space along these routes and vehicle time through intersections is controlled by the RTA and nothing can happen unless initiatives accord with and are at least partly funded by and made a priority for the RTA.
The City of Sydney's Oct '08 submission to Infrastructure Australia "*Inner Sydney Strategic Cycle Network*", identifies key routes, including leading to and around Bondi Junction, and that document should be referred to.
- **Poor riding environments:**
Many bicycling facilities are still being developed that do not provide riding comfort, nor a relatively safe environment for riding (i.e. inconsistent with good practice and the NSW Bicycle Guidelines).

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- Motorist and rider perceptions:

What is seen and in the minds of drivers and riders, matters.

Lack of motorist awareness of cyclists, their needs and rights on sharing the road and rider perceptions, including their lack of experience and comfort riding in mixed traffic conditions are inter-related problems that are not well addressed and makes riding less safe and attractive to novice riders.

Road rules and appropriate behaviour needs to be promoted to make for safe and comfortable sharing of road-space and public places (streets, footpaths and cycleways)

- Making for liveable streets, places and spaces:

Our city's major roads and even many of our neighbourhood streets, are being designed as 'sewers-for-cars', rather than as nice places to be shared for safe access and use by all.

While recognising a hierarchy of transport use of roads, attention to all user's needs is very important even where traffic flow needs are of a high priority. Safety and space-use measures that primarily caters for motor vehicle travel and parking and that neglects pedestrians and cyclists and their need for shade and safe access along and across high-traffic roads, are totally misplaced.

A greater effort is needed to apply good urban design principles, slow traffic in areas of high pedestrian and cyclist activity (existing and potential) and to create a comfortable environment for all road-users and adjacent land-users and owners.

For centres this means giving special overall design attention to all of the available road space and creating 'gateways' and landscaped avenues, slowing motor vehicle movements and possibly, sacrificing some car parking spaces to better cater for other road space needs.

Many of the RTA's traffic related 'warrants' stand in the way of change, as currently narrowly interpreted by Traffic Engineers, with a focus solely on their perceptions of safety and ignorance of other urban amenity needs that need to be met along the public road-space.

General Recommendations:

1. Bike Plan Theme 4 should read: *Plan cyclable cities and suburbs*
2. Consider the provisions of the State, Metropolitan and draft (Sydney) East Sub-Region Plans regarding bicycling. This is important for coordination and to avoid duplication.
3. Peruse BIKEast's submissions to the Department of Planning for information on initiatives and bicycle infrastructure projects, many of which affect Bondi Junction
4. Establish clear lines of responsibility for planning, funding and implementation, including priorities for strategic initiatives and actions under the Sub-regional Plan.
5. The RTA must take full responsibility in areas where it has the primary role/power – i.e. Road rules and public awareness of these, safe access and routes along and across highways and main roads for pedestrians & cyclists.
6. Identify key gateways and the centre's access routes, places and spaces to totally re-design for more equitable access and for pedestrians and cyclists' safety and comfort, with a higher environmental amenity, particularly for adjoining users and uses, provided.
7. RTA's traffic related "warrants" need to be applied flexibly to satisfy overall outcomes.

Specific additional comments and recommendations – see Table, below.

Submitted for further consideration.



Adrian Boss
Woollahra Coordinator – BIKEast
8 March 2009.

Table: Specific Additional Comments
 These comments are not in any priority order.

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Issues</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Photos</i>
2 3 & 4	<p>Poor gateways to BJ</p> <p>Infrastructure inadequate and unsafe (not any where near standard)</p> <p>All gateways, except Oxford Street west of BJ, and Brisbane Street (where lighting is not adequate), have a very poor urban streetscape, amenity and design</p>	<p>The main gateways are:</p> <p>Waverley Street from east; Bronte Road from south-east; Brisbane Street from south & south west; Oxford Street from west; Governor Street from north; and Old South Head Road from north-east</p> <p>Access along Oxford Street between Adelaide and Bronte Streets and from Ebly Street to Spring Street along Bronte Road, need special consideration</p>	<p>Short-term action: Improve pavements; provide painted shoulder lanes up-hill and mixed traffic down-hill (Governor is an example); or shared path (Waverley Street up-hill to Botany and thence on-road) and basic signage and street-side bike parking.</p> <p>Long-term action: Undertake a redesign of these gateways; providing new lighting, landscaping and higher standard of access and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists; provide paired bicycle road (based on CoS scheme for 12.8 m roadways)</p>	
2 & 4	<p>Riding through BJ Mall</p> <p>Provide tenable safe routes around the BJ Mall</p>	<p>Road rules do not permit riding through Malls. BIKEast strongly opposes a ban on riding through the BJ Mall until safe and usable alternatives are available</p> <p>Ride through is increasing significantly.</p> <p>Spring Street is one-way west for its eastern part</p> <p>Grafton Street and Ebely Street do not provide comfortable grades and relatively high traffic, but could be used more if re-designed</p>	<p>Short-term action: Provide painted contra-flow lane, as part of a temporary paired cycle road along all of Spring Street; sign Mall to permit cyclists by exception, until long-term solutions are in place</p> <p>Long-term action: Undertake an urban streetscape design for the eastern half of Spring Street, providing new lighting, landscaping and higher standard of facility for pedestrians and cyclists. Consider a 10 km/h Shared zone and angle parking to slow traffic and off-set loss of parking along Bronte Road</p>	

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2 3 & 4	Grafton Street is not safe for cyclists as implemented	<p>Since the establishment of Westfields, this bike route needs re-design</p> <p>Mixed traffic use east of Newland St is totally unacceptable, although footpath is underutilised</p> <p>Mixed traffic use up-hill from Newlands is not perceptively safe</p>	<p>Short-term action: Provide two-way shared path use of northern footpath east of Newland St and up and down Grafton under the Sid Einfeld Drive to meet existing marking Provide shoulder lane up Grafton west of Newland Street; mixed traffic use downhill as presently, with transition to shared path 15m west of intersection</p> <p>Longer-term: Provide separated bicycle road</p>	
2 & 3	Traffic lights for bikes	<p>Access across many traffic light controlled crossing is either unsafe or extremely inconvenient, or both</p> <p>Opportunities exist under existing signal timing, to provide for cyclists</p>	<p>Short to Medium-term: Provide for bike crossing at face of Sid Einfeld Drive at start of Old South Head Road, for east-bound access to shared path</p> <p>Longer-term: Provide for riding through all lights at approaches to BJ, including for paired bicycle roads.</p>	
2 & 5	Bus-way beside Westfields	Bicycle access along Oxford Street is not currently permitted. This is an important access route and shopping and community services destination	<p>Short-term action: Sign to permit cyclists by exception; provide more bike parking facilities</p>	

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4	Transport Interchange: Unsafe and inadequate pedestrian and cyclist access and amenity	This interchange is without peer – the worst designed in Australia from the point of view of pedestrian and cyclist access! There is no clear direct pedestrian linkage to either the Westfield Centre or the Mall Bike parking facilities are woeful in and around the Interchange	Short-term: Replace and relocate the current bike lockers to a visible closer place to a Grafton Street crossing, with more short-term bike parking, some under cover. Longer-term: As part of Council's proposed future upgrade of the Mall and creation of an urban open space, between the Mall & Spring Street, fully re-design access to the Interchange and redevelop the area between the laneway and the Interchange. Provide a bicycle garage and maintenance facility in any major redevelopment	
1, to 6, inclusive	Centennial Park – Access through gates and along its boundary Proper connection to Moore Park Road and Oxford Street west of CP, is important for commuting and park access	Access into and through the park is constrained by the nature of the heritage gates and narrowness at key locations adjacent to Oxford Street. Careful planning between the three Councils, the RTA and Sydney Buses, will enable these to be overcome. Sufficient road space is available. Centennial Parklands nearest BJ is within the Randwick City Council LGA and it has agreed to convene a meeting to plan a cycleway/path along the northern edge of CP A problem for CP, is people carrying bikes on cars and parking in the Park.	Provide separated on and part-off road bicycle facilities along CPs northern boundary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two-way along the the southern boundary, within Randwick LGA • one-way east along the northern edge of Oxford Street within Woollahra LGA • with CP, provide better access and egress through the gates for cyclists 	

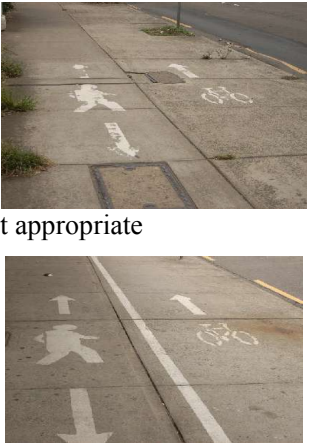
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3 & 5	Public Liability Risks Collaboration difficulties arise for Local Councils and Community Groups with any cycling event, including BNSW/BIKEast led rides	Most bike riders are uninsured (with the exception of BNSW members). Unlike Europe, which requires this with every bike sold, and the obligation on owners to renew every year. Council's Risk Officers find risk promoting rides as unacceptable. If not addressed, this will inhibit promotion and future participation	This issue needs inter-governmental consideration and must be resolved as common law action is an unacceptable process and with unacceptable monetary risks for all concerned/affected Establish a 'global' cover for all bikes and users	
1 & 6	Correlation of land use, urban design and transport plans' strategies, policies and actions does not occur sufficiently.	There is insufficient collaboration and cooperation up and down and across areas of responsibilities in these planning and administrative areas. The so called 'silos' effect applies, which results in overall poor outcomes, particularly in amenity terms. The RTA and DoP worked well together in development of planning guidelines for Walking and Cycling, but there is no follow-up and dovetailed action	For a complex area such as a centre like Bondi Junction, there should be a higher level coordination mechanisms established and maintained that involves applying responsible local and State land use planner and transport planning expertise, over- sighted by a BJ Council Committee	
1 & 3	Maps Identification and selection of safe and comfortable ride routes	Council's publish good bike maps. These need wider promotion and distribution. Alternatives exist, including web based material. This stuff is currently poorly documented and inconsistent, although potentially highly accessible to future younger ride entrants	Identify more events and opportunities to promote maps and their use. Establish standard(s) for web based mapping and guidelines for identifying safe and useful routes	

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4 & 5	Future new and re-development: Identification of trip generators and attractors Requirement for on-site facilities	Regional and local plans do not require explicit or direct enough provisions The DoPs and RTA relevant guidelines provide adequate models, but these are not being applied	Up-date plans to require adequate on-site facilities for bicyclist (showers, lockers, secure parking)	
1 to 6	Local Councils' Bike Plan	Randwick and Woollahra Councils have or are undertaking, their reviews; Waverley Council needs to do likewise ASAP Waverley's Plan dates from the 1990's and was adopted in 2000. Presently, the plan is being implemented purely on an opportunistic and non-transparent basis	These Bike Plans need to be fully considered and integrated into the BJ Sub-regional Plan Councils need to be consulted and recommendations made where their local plans may or should be improved. Waverley Council up-date its Bike Plan and identify and include clear strategic actions and priorities for implementation	
3	Overtaking across double centrelines – particularly along straights	In 40 and 50 km/h speed zoned areas Traffic Engineers are applying devices and markings to try and gain un-policed compliance. The double centre line sections of roads now often also used are abused and lead to un-safe situations, even where raised pavement markers are used	Provide a mid-block flat top raised humps and or crossing refuges to slow traffic, in appropriate locations and where there are pedestrian crossing desire lines/routes	

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3	<p>Road rule ignorance and confusion: Motorists and bicyclists alike are not familiar with Road rules, particularly those important for cyclists</p> <p>Confusion is caused by the manner in which pedestrian and cyclist are to use share paths and the inconsistent way logos are shown on some shared paths</p>	<p>Road rules need more active promotion</p> <p>Shared path use requires cyclists and pedestrians to keep left. Current marking along, for example, Old South Head Road shows cyclists one-way to ride right (wrongly).</p> <p>The NSW Bicycle Guidelines illustrate appropriate delineation (Fig 7.2 page 43) for a one-way off-road bicycle path.</p>	<p>Short to medium-term actions: Provide advice and some checks, even tests, at time of licence renewal and increase programs to raise younger peoples awareness, before they ride and drive (at schools!).</p> <p>Provide a separation line down the middle of the footpath to create the equivalent of a one-way off-road bicycle facility.</p>	 <p>Not appropriate</p> <p>Appropriate delineation, but lacking landscaping</p>
3	<p>Existing pedestrian crossing: Squeeze points for cyclists – inappropriate lane widths</p>	<p>The shoulder bicycle lane widths through many pedestrian crossings and flat top humps are often too narrow or for where mixed traffic lane of an undesirable width (being more than 3.3, but less than 4.2m)</p> <p>Photo example is at Bellevue Hill, with mixed traffic lane width of 3.45m, causing a squeeze point</p>	<p>Modify the position of the centre refuges keep cycle lanes to at least 1.4m wide, or in mixed traffic situations make the traffic lanes 3.2m wide each, to minimise pedestrian crossing distance.</p>	