

Submission: Bourke St, Mascot – Cycleway Proposal

Background & context

BIKEast is the bicycle user group (BUG) representing the interests of bicycle users in Sydney's eastern suburbs. This opportunity to comment is much appreciated.

BIKEast strongly supports the early development of a cycleway along Bourke St, Mascot. It is a critical missing link between the completed Bourke Rd bi-directional cycleway (within the City of Sydney LGA) and the Coward Street shared path facility. It is important to subsequently make the connection through to the Kingsford Smith Airport domestic terminal. Notably these are both very important links under the Inner Sydney Regional Bicycle Network, for early implementation.

There are concerns about the standard of the cycleway proposed and the indicated treatment of the crossing of Gardeners Road and Coward Street. BIKEast seeks urgent clarification. Basically, the standards to be adopted for this cycleway must reasonably match that established by the bi-directional cycleway completed in the City of Sydney Council's area with which it connects.

Inner Sydney Regional Bike Plan

The *Inner Sydney Regional Bike Plan Implementation Strategy*, (ISRBPIS) endorsed by SSROC (of which the City of Botany Bay is a member), indicates that Bourke Road, Mascot, is to be a separated bi-directional cycleway. (Page 60 of that report by AECOM (City of Sydney Council April 2010); also see the attached cross-sectional diagram, below.) BIKEast believes that this is the appropriate facility to be designed and built for Bourke Street. That option, if located on the station side of Bourke Street, would require only minimal adaptation of the existing traffic-light controls at each of the major intersections (see below).

The current proposal

The proposal, as indicated on the diagram received by BIKEast (Local Traffic Attachment map, dated 21 October 2010 Revision A), seems to indicate a one-way pair of on-street cycleways that transition to off-street at the sets of traffic lights at each end. Subject to addressing concerns about the standard of the cycleway and its passage past the station taxi/car passenger drop-off area, that part of the proposal may be acceptable, but is not consistent with the ISRBPIS.

However, also shown, north-bound cyclists will be required to make a 'three-way' crossing at each of the two traffic-light controlled intersections, using the existing pedestrian crossings. That is unacceptable. It fails to provide convenient and appropriate crossing, will tend to force cyclists to cross and mix with other vehicle traffic. This is unsafe and will totally deter the 'naive' cyclists; which is the rider type the provision of cycleways is intended to attract and cater for.

It is further noted that the proposed one-way pair each side would connect with two-way facilities at either end. This in itself causes inconsistencies and adds unnecessary and undesirable crossing requirements at the connection points at either end.

Traffic light controlled crossings

If an acceptable one-way pair cycleway is to be provided with the northbound cycleway provided along the western side of Bourke Street, then a forth traffic-light controlled pedestrian and rideable crossing will need to be designed and developed across both the Coward Street and Gardeners Road intersections. This would be a significant change to the existing controls and very costly. This is even though for the bi-directional cycleway the existing pedestrian crossings would need to be modified with lamps provided to allow riding the crossings. Moreover, such modifications are fully justifiable because both Gardeners Rd and Coward St serve as bicycle routes in the east-west directions, as well.

Cycleway standards and issues

Clearly, a bi-directional cycleway along the eastern side is the preferred option. However, the issues that will need to be addressed in the design of the one-way on & off-street cycleway pair, (some apply to the bi-directional facility, as well), will be:

- Require a minimum 1.6m cycleway width with 0.2m raised concrete kerb/isle separating the cycleway from road traffic (Note: Traffic volumes are well in excess of 5,000vpd (ave.) and with a heavy commercial vehicle component. Where kerb-side stopping or parking is permitted, the separation kerb will need to be much wider);
- Mid-block, provide a section of the cycleway to be widened to at least 2.2m to permit cyclists to pass and also cue before the pedestrian crossing outside the station;
- Give special attention to avoiding the potential 'car-dooring' problems outside the station (both sides), where the taxis/car passenger drop-off section should be separated from the cycleway by bollards, signage and clear on and off-road markings to alert pedestrians, cyclists and motorists; (Note: To accommodate the widening and space to sufficiently separate passengers alighting and bicycles passing, it is suggested that some of the current space set aside in the mid-block central landscaped area may need to be sacrificed and the roadway re-done.)
- Provide wide kerb-ramps should be provided without lips in the stormwater-drainage gutter in the transition from between on-road to off-road;
- Some modification to landscaping is likely to be required in the off-road shared path sections to adequately accommodate pedestrians and bike riders, allowing for separation and including the provision of an S4 continuous separation line; (Note: This applies in the transitional segments, particularly in the north-bound approach to Gardeners Road where the north-bound traffic lane is often congested with 10- 15 vehicles cued. That off-road segment will need to commence mid-block between Church Avenue and Gardeners Rd and may require both the removal of the recently planted gum trees and the construction of a retaining wall to support the off-road part of the cycleway.)
- A preliminary design review for the Bourke Road bicycle facility south of Coward Street to the domestic airport terminal should be undertaken to establish whether the continuation of the paired cycleway is actually possible and appropriate, or whether a one sided bi-directional cycleway (as proposed under the ISRBPIS) is indeed a better option for future development, as BIKEast suspects.

Bicycle parking facilities

Concurrently, with the finalisation of the cycleway design, its funding and implementation, the provision of at least 4 inverted 'U' rail casual bike parking rings and secure covered bike parking near the station entry, should also be considered and determined.

Conclusion

Clearly, any bicycle facility that involves mixed traffic conditions, shoulder lanes and three-way use of pedestrian crossing is not a cycleway and is unacceptable. The ISRBPIS calls for a bi-directional cycleway, which BIKEast believes is appropriate and that is what should be designed and implemented.



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8 July 2011

Treatments Proposed in Marrickville

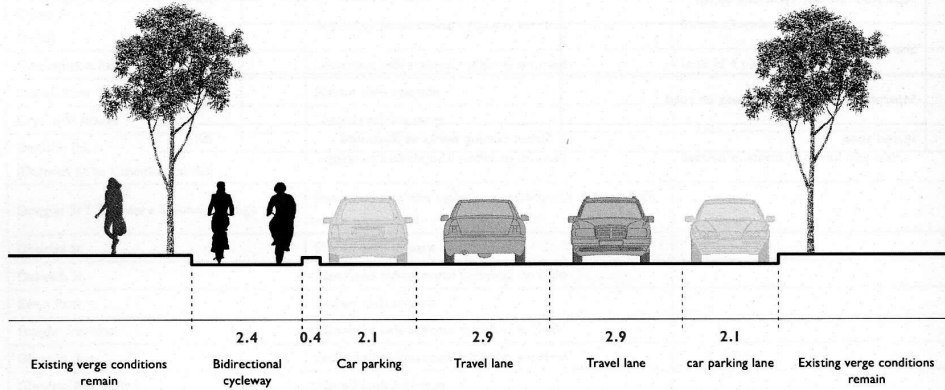
Scale 1:100

All measurements in metres

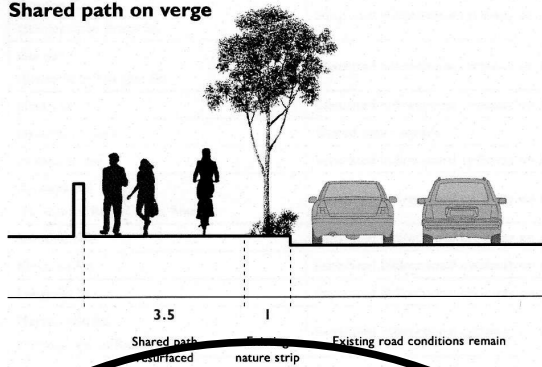
All treatments maintain existing kerb alignments

Separated bidirectional cycleway on road
(12.8m minimum kerb to kerb)

Two-way separated bi-directional cycleway is the preferred option



Shared path on verge



Bi-directional cycleway – on-road and shared path combination alternative to two separated one-way cycleways proposed for Bourke Street, Mascot.

Separated cycle lane / shared path combination

