



Representing the community's interests in bicycle riding
in Sydney's eastern suburbs



29 August 2011

Tony Reed,
General Manager, Waverley Council
Bondi Road, Bondi Junction

Mark Worthington
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Dear Mr Reed,

I am writing on behalf of BIKEast to provide comment on Council's draft Transport Plan of June 2011 (the Plan). The following submission includes general comments on the Plan (Section 1) and detailed comments on the Key Focus Areas (Section 2).

The Waverley Bike Plan (the Bike Plan) was approved by the Council in 1999 and implementation of the recommendations has proceeded slowly during the past decade. BIKEast has been in consultation with Council staff throughout this period. While there have been some significant improvements in the provision of bicycle infrastructure through implementation of the Plan, BIKEast has been disappointed by the slow progress and lack of strategic integration with other road maintenance and urban infrastructure projects initiated by Council, other statutory authorities and private developers (refer to Appendix B in our submission for examples).

BIKEast believe that the adoption of the Plan will provide Council with an opportunity to review and update the Bike Plan, and (hopefully) to reinvigorate the process of improving the facilities for cyclists in the Waverley LGA. We fully support this initiative of the Transport Plan.

I draw your attention to the fact that Randwick City Council approved an updated Bike Plan in December 2008, and that Woollahra Municipal Council has recently completed a strategic review and update of its 1999 Bike Plan.

Council may also be aware of the current program of works underway in the City of Sydney LGA which is proceeding under a framework established by the *Cycle Strategy and Action Plan 2007-2017* and the *Sustainable Sydney 2030 Plan*. The Strategy establishes a target of increasing the number of bicycle trips made, as a percentage of total trips, to 5% by 2011, and to 10% by 2016. Achieving the City of Sydney's targets requires continuity between key bicycle routes linking the City with surrounding LGAs and cooperation with other adjoining councils in developing similar linkages to key employment and activity nodes in the eastern suburbs.

I look forward to an opportunity to further discuss these issues with you and your officers.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Worthington
President, BIKEast



Submission on the draft Waverley Transport Plan

29 August 2011

1 General Comments

It is laudable that in putting together its *Waverley Together 2 Community Strategic Plan*, Waverley Council has consulted extensively with its residents and major stakeholders including BIKEast. The Plan's introduction indicates the current draft has been developed to address the key transport issues arising out of the Community Strategic Plan. However, BIKEast is concerned that little evidence is provided as a context and justification for the numerous actions within the current draft of the Transport Plan.

A transport plan is not usually a set of aspirations of individual or group desires, but an evidence-based blueprint and planning tool for Council in its ongoing operations. Plan making is an important process for ensuring that the outcomes the community desires can be achieved through a series of well-coordinated and structured Council actions. Unless such plans are based on careful study and research, the plan could be called into question or even summarily dismissed by internal and external critics.

For example, in the early section which articulates the Plan's vision, 'a reduction in car use' is mentioned. While some may believe that this is a worthy and necessary goal of any urban transport plan, there are large sections of the community who do not believe that this is a worthwhile or achievable goal. They do not see their driving as a problem, so why should it concern Council? The Council needs to provide factual evidence to support its views, demonstrating a clear community benefit derived from a particular course of action.

Without the evidence and arguments providing a solid and convincing case for a reduction in car use, it is difficult for Council to undertake many of the actions articulated in the current draft Plan. BIKEast members and other cyclists understand this all too well; as the congestion on the Waverley road network directly impacts their daily travel by bicycle, and threatens their well-being.

We acknowledge that it is an immensely frustrating undertaking for any NSW local government to seriously tackle major transportation issues within their local government boundaries when effective control of critical infrastructure and services is maintained by external agencies such as the RTA, STA et al. However, BIKEast strongly believes that Council has very powerful and influential means at their disposal for bringing about substantial changes in transport within Waverley and surrounding areas through community leadership, passionate and positive advocacy and effective community education and engagement.

An example of an issue where Council could have a direct and beneficial impact on transport in Waverley is congestion, said to cost the Sydney metro region around \$9 billion per year (BTRE 2007). Simply put, congestion is the saturation of the transport network: too many vehicles using a finite resource. Infrastructure solutions, such as widening roads, are very expensive, very disruptive and do not last for very long before congestion reasserts itself once more.



Most drivers in traffic see the problem as outside their control or influence. This adds to an attitude of hopelessness towards governments and any limited policy attempts to fix the situation. Yet most motorists, when presented with a recurring situation where urban congestion vanishes for short periods of time, e.g. school holidays, are greatly surprised to learn that the overall difference in the level of traffic is only of the order of 3 to 11%. A relatively small reduction in traffic causes a greatly recognisable benefit on the whole network.

In Waverley, with one of the most densely settled urban areas in Australia, the option of increasing road space to accommodate more traffic is not only hugely expensive but cost-prohibitive and politically impossible. To have a noticeable and beneficial reduction in current levels of road congestion we need to convince drivers to use more sustainable means of travel. A reduction in congestion will make conditions on the road more bearable and will free space for walking, cycling and public transport services.

Council can and should use its influence and make every effort to set the tone in the community to inspire such changes. This can be done by leading by example, public education and active engagement with key community stakeholder groups, external government agencies, the business community and local residents.

A transport plan is a necessary process for coordinating the many actions and strategies needed to meet the dual objectives of reducing overall traffic congestion while improving the level of service for walking, cycling and public transport.

Plans are important documents for all areas of Council and should inform its many areas of operation. In the past some areas of Council have effectively implemented the current Bike Plan, while other sections of Council have ignored it (see Appendix A). Whatever actions Council ultimately adopts as part of its ten year transport plan, we sincerely hope that its implementation will be enthusiastically taken up and adopted by all areas of Council.

2 Detailed Comments on Key Focus Areas

2.1 Bondi Junction

BIKEast supports the establishment of a Bondi Junction Transport Working Group and would welcome Council's invitation to participate as an active member of this group.

BIKEast believes that a practicable plan for improved transport circulation to/from and around Bondi Junction is essential to improving accessibility for sustainable modes. We strongly believe that high quality access for walking, cycling and public transport is essential to the on-going success of this key commercial, retail and residential area. Any plan to improve access should principally address the movement and circulation of people, not vehicles, and provide practicable short, medium and long term solutions.

We believe that the current undesirable situation is largely due to the saturation of some parts of the street network by motor vehicles, and the blighting of others; which seem to have been designed as if the primary purpose of the street was to provide for the movement of motorised traffic, and not for a broad spectrum of human activity.



Bondi Junction is an important trip generator due to its function as a regional transport, business and shopping centre. It is also at the hub of a number of important transport corridors. A five percent shift to cycling as the major feeder mode to the railway station for trips of 2km or less would greatly reduce current levels of road congestion by reducing the number of private motor vehicles and bus passengers. This would reduce bus loading congestion and service availability to people living more than 2km from the station.

BIKEast understand that a study in 2009 by the RTA of regional of bicycle network opportunities centred on Bondi Junction identified a number of possible initiatives designed to improve the current poor performance of Bondi Junction station to attract substantial feeder trips by bicycle. We encourage Council to work with the RTA and the NSW Government agencies to develop the Bondi Junction railway station as a major attractor and facilitator of bicycle trips to feed the Eastern Suburbs Railway Line.

For both to/from and through access, the key issue for cyclists is the lack of direct and dedicated (separated) routes east-west and north-south through Bondi Junction. As cyclists are more likely than other vehicular modes to stop for shopping or refreshment purposes, it is essential that these through-route connections be made via the central business core. Grafton Street was proposed in the 1999 Bike Plan as a bypass route (functioning similar to Syd Einfield Drive for motor vehicles) but this route has proved unpopular and unviable due to its relative isolation and its steeper grades due to its location off the main ridge line.

2.2 Bondi Junction to Bondi Beach link

While the current draft transport plan recognises that it is desirable for Waverley Council to encourage non car-based travel between Bondi Beach and Bondi Junction, it does not address the current lack of a safe and effective cycle route between these two centres. Council's current Bike Plan established a route along the only available street corridor (other than the car-dominated Bondi and Old South Head Roads) via Martins Avenue, Bondi. This route has been only partially implemented and is only accessible in a westbound direction in mixed traffic conditions while eastbound cyclists are directed to share a substandard width (<900mm) shared path. This narrow street also functions as a westbound rat-run for cars making uphill cycling highly stressful and fraught with difficulty and danger.

BIKEast supports the proposal endorsed by Penkivil Precinct Committee for closure of Martins Avenue between Ocean Street North and Simpson Street as a critical measure to improve cyclist and pedestrian safety and to ensure the viability of bicycle travel between the Beach and the Junction.

2.3 Land use and car parking generation

BIKEast supports the draft Plan's various proposals to reduce the amount of parking availability in the Bondi Junction and Bondi Beach areas. In line with other major cities, such as Sydney, Copenhagen and New York, we recommend that Council adopt as policy a reduction of on-street parking availability in the BJ area of 3% per annum.



2.4 Public transport

Bikeast supports proposals in the draft transport plan for a strategic transport corridor along Bondi Road, with the proviso that access to this popular strip shopping centre by bicycle be greatly improved by better local connections to parallel bicycle routes (Birriga Rd, Martins Ave route and Birrell St).

BIKEast supports the expansion of car share vehicles, as it has been shown that one car share vehicle can remove between 8 and 12 private vehicles from the streets.

2.5 Schools and childcare centres

BIKEast believes that there are substantial improvements which can be made to the health and welfare of our children if active travel becomes the predominant way children travel to school in Waverley. The world leaders in effecting the necessary changes to bring about a major shift in school travel are in Europe where school travel plans are routinely used to engage the entire school community and local councils in this important task.

By encouraging schools within the LGA to undertake voluntary travel plans, Council can work with the school communities to bring about real and lasting change. Council should consider lobbying the NSW Government to mandate such plans for schools, as is the case in the UK (Refer to the Sustrans UK brochure provided in Appendix B).

2.6 Bike network and facilities

BIKEast supports all the initiatives proposed by the draft transport plan. We particularly urge Council in its proposed early revision and update of the Waverley Bike plan to ensure that this Plan is developed inline with the City of Sydney's Inner Sydney Bike Network Plan and also the Randwick and Woollahra Bike plans.

There is currently an upsurge of cycle use in the eastern parts of Sydney with a substantial growth in commuter cycling through the Bondi Junction business centre to the Sydney CBD. This increase in cycling is occurring on streets which do not currently provide a very high level of cycling infrastructure. BIKEast has concerns that this positive trend could be greatly hampered by the lack of facilities and the harshness of the heavily trafficked road environment.

In order to sustain this important trend in critical areas of the developing cycle network BIKEast urges Council to prioritise the following initiatives in the short term (<5yrs):

- the completion of a safe and rideable cycle route between Bondi Beach and Bondi Junction via Martins Avenue and connecting streets;
- the development of a separated cycleway (similar to Bourke Street, Surry Hills) on Oxford Street between Newland Street and the Centennial Park gates at Ocean Street; and,
- support for the advancement of an RTA funded high quality off-road cycleway along the southern edge of Oxford Street between Ocean Street and Queen Street, Woollahra as investigated by Randwick Council in recent years.



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Appendix A. BIKEast Letter to GM - June 2007



4 June 2007

Kim Anson
General Manager,
WAVERLEY COUNCIL
Bondi Road, Bondi Junction

Mark Worthington
5 Gowrie Ave,
Bondi Junction, NSW 2022

Dear Ms Anson,

BIKEast strongly supports Council's objectives for transport and local access as stated in the 2007-2011 Strategic Plan that: *Waverley should be a place where traffic congestion is reduced and access and safety are improved, especially because people walk, cycle and use public transport much more, but also because they use cars and parking spaces more efficiently.* Waverley Council through its 1999 Bike Plan and Transport Policy seeks to effect improvements in the short and long term to make cycling, walking and public transport viable transport options for Waverley residents and BIKEast also supports these important initiatives.

One of the objectives of any plan or planning process is that Council can work more efficiently by introducing sustainable transport improvements into the street system as part of regular maintenance programs and street upgrades. For example if footpath and streetscape improvements are being carried out then new street furniture and bicycle parking racks can be installed as part of the project.

When streets and roads are being repaved, bicycle lanes and markings can also be fitted as part of this work. And when intersections are being realigned and improved, planned bicycle routes can be included as a matter of course.

There are a many recent examples where this is not being done in Waverley and we believe this calls into question Council's commitment to the improvement of cycling conditions and the welfare of bicycle riders in the community. A commitment to developing cycling should not only be about the amount of money spent or the quantity of works Council explicitly undertakes to implement its bikeplan. It should be about how well cycling is integrated into council's day to day processes and how Waverley can become a truly bicycle friendly place. By working to a more integrated planning approach Council can achieve greater efficiencies to drive its precious residents' and ratepayers' dollars further.

The list below catalogues some recent 'missed opportunities' and careless overlooking of bicycle provision. NB. This list is not complete and serves only illustrate problems in the way Waverley Council currently operates.

- **Footpath upgrades in shopping precincts:** Extensive footpath upgrades were recently carried out in Macpherson Street, Bronte, Hall Street, Bondi and Oxford Street West, Bondi Junction. Despite a number of requests to Council by BIKEast to include bicycle parking in all new street upgrades of business areas only a few racks have been installed in one of the three locations.
- **Paul Street Pedestrian Crossing:** The new signalised pedestrian crossing was installed on Bondi Road near the crossing of Paul Street. Paul Street is an important north-south bikeplan route. The crossing was installed without cycling access and the one way closure of Paul Street has effectively degraded current cycle use of this route. Neither BIKEast nor the Waverley Bikeplan was consulted when this project was undertaken.
- **Street resheeting:** During a periodic meeting with Council officers BIKEast requested details of Council's annual street resheeting program. Of the twenty streets listed for resurfacing and replacement linemarking works, nine were Waverley Bikeplan routes. At our next meeting with Council officers when this issue was raised we were informed that the works had been carried out and

it was too late to include bicycle facilities such as line marking and pavement logos (a basic and inexpensive treatment).

- **Grafton Street:** When street works were carried out in Grafton Street between Adelaide Street and Grosvenor Streets in association with the opening of the Westfield Centre, marked bicycle lanes and an off-road shared path along the northern side of the street (which were installed by Woollahra council when it controlled this street) were removed and have not since been reinstated.
- **Marine Drive:** Following the upgrade of the Coastal Walkway along Pacific Avenue and Tamarama Marine Drive requests to Council staff, to add bicycle pavement logos to this fast moving roadway to highlight its status as a north-south bicycle route, were ignored. Furthermore, Bronte Marine Drive was made into a one way street further degrading the usefulness of this bicycle route and reducing the amenity and safety of bicycle users in the area.
- **Oxford Street West:** During the design phase of street works along Oxford Street between Newland St and York Road bicycle shoulder line marking was recommended to be installed following resheeting. Bicycle lanes were not subsequently installed. This bicycle route carries significant volumes of bicycle commuter traffic particularly in the morning and afternoon peaks. Despite use by buses and other commercial vehicles similar 12.8m wide streets elsewhere in Sydney have been fitted with bicycle lanes to the benefit of all road users.
- **Campbell Parade Upgrade:** Late in 2006 BIKEast provided council with technical comments and recommendations on a proposed upgrade of Campbell Parade, Bondi Beach. It was clear from the drawings provided, that the project consultants had not been given copies of the Waverley Bikeplan Stage 2 works at that time out for tender.
- Similarly the concept diagrams for other projects (Six Ways Upgrade at Cox Avenue and Hall Street) and the Bondi Basin Masterplan did not show routes and works proposed in the Waverley Bikeplan or the Stage 2 Bikeplan works program.

BIKEast believes that each of these missed opportunities represents a loss to the community and the Council. With funds always in short supply Council should be working for greater integration, and to achieve cost savings, from pursuing a truly wholistic approach to achieving local transport and accessibility objectives.

Rather than seeing streets and roads just for one class of road user – cars and motorised vehicles – Waverley Council, like its neighbour Woollahra, should be actively demonstrating the value and benefits of an integrated and inclusive approach to council works programs in its day to day actions. For example, bicycle lanes along O’Sullivan and Victoria Roads in Bellevue Hill were recently installed as part of a local area traffic management schemes, not funded directly from Woollahra Bikeplan works.

These projects aside, BIKEast seeks Council’s written assurances that in future its staff will be better informed by the Waverley Bikeplan and Transport Policy and that Council will adopt an integrated and inclusive approach to its works program.

We believe the benefits to Council and the community in adopting this approach are substantial and are vital to the future of bicycle transportation in Waverley and Sydney’s East.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Worthington

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29 August 2011



Appendix B. Sustrans UK brochure

Developing a School Travel Plan

Information for parents and schools



Key Facts

- a good STP involves the whole school community
- STPs address not only travel but health, education and social issues too
- work on STPs can be incorporated into the curriculum and class activities
- STP working groups can get the plan off the ground and help it maintain momentum
- School Travel Advisors (or someone in a similar role at your local authority) can help create an STP.

Introduction

Schools create a School Travel Plan (STP) to show how they intend to make travel to and from their sites safer and more sustainable for pupils, parents and teachers. The STP document itself should then link in with the school's development or improvement plan. It is an important tool in reducing the number of pupils who travel to school by car, a figure which currently stands at 32%, according to the National Travel Survey (Department for Transport, 2009).

STPs are created in consultation with the whole school community. They are all very different, as each considers its local situation and current trends. In addition to safer travel, STPs are about improving health; broadening education; and combating social exclusion. They contribute towards making the local community greener and improving the quality of life for everyone.

Developing your School Travel Plan

To help get your STP off the ground, why not set up a dedicated working group? This small group might consist of the head teacher, parents and governors, local authority officers and, of course, some all-important pupils. The whole school will still need to be involved in many stages, especially in initial consultations; the most successful STPs are those that engage the whole school.

Here are some suggestions as to what your STP could cover. With pointers and prompts to help you navigate the process, this guide will help as you begin to think about, get support for, and implement your own STP. For some UK-wide examples, including plans from Special Educational Needs (SEN) and independent schools, please visit:

www.sustrans.org.uk/what-we-do/safe-routes-to-schools/resources

1 Describe your school

Include pupil numbers; school type and location; catchment area; plans for future expansion; and any other factors that might affect school travel.

TIP Try to demonstrate how the STP fits into the overall ethos of your school.

“

As young people make the journey to and from school each day, it is only natural that they are going to have some of the best ideas and suggestions.

”

2 Provide the evidence

Show evidence of your consultations concerning staff and pupils' current travel behaviour, and how they'd ideally like to be able to travel. Survey data should be presented in both figures and percentages, including the number of respondents or people surveyed. To get this information, pupils and parents could complete a questionnaire exploring the reasons for their travel choices, such as those available for download from the Toolkit section of our website (as above), or use www.viewfinder.infomapper.com

TIP A simple hands-up survey in assembly or during registration might give you the results you need.

3 Summarise the problems

Identify the key issues for pupils, parents, staff and governors. This section typically includes traffic problems at the school gates; reasons for not walking or cycling to school; and issues relating to start and finishing times and after-school activities. State how these problems were identified, for example at a parents' evening, during a workshop, or through the travel audit.

TIP Much information in this section will come straight from your initial consultations and surveys.





STPs are not written overnight. It will take a while and require commitment from a number of people, but will be time well spent.



Case Study

STPs don't have to be dry, wordy documents, they can be colourful and fun. In Aberdeenshire and Moray, STPs have been taken home on tea towels and table mats to share the message with the school's wider community. Similar projects could be funded by sponsorship from local businesses, or subsidised by selling such articles to parents and friends.



4 'SMART' targets

Your STP's objectives will come from the consultation. Each will describe how your school intends to achieve it. What will the school do to reduce car journeys by 20%? What will be done to improve road safety and by when? What schemes might triple the number of cyclists in a year? Develop some initiatives to help you meet your targets and deliver your objectives. Examples are cycle clubs with maintenance sessions; fitting secure storage for bikes (or for the bags of those who'd like to walk); or liaising with local bus companies to amend timetables to meet new demand from staff and pupils.

TIP

Set SMART targets for each objective, making them specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-related.

5 Plan of action

It is vital that you now create and follow an action plan in order to achieve your STP objectives. For each of the targets and initiatives you decide upon, consider recording the following:

- start and end dates for key tasks
- actions needed by other bodies (eg local authorities or the police)
- costs in time and money
- sources of funding.

TIP

Identify a lead person at your school to keep your STP progress on track.

6 Monitor and review

Having devoted valuable time to developing your STP, you'll want to ensure that work towards its targets is genuinely progressing. As things change, it may be that some original targets have been reached or surpassed early, or that some are no longer relevant. Consider:

- how and when changes will be monitored
- how any changes will be reported
- when and who will review the plan.

TIP

Keep your STP flexible, to make as positive a change as possible to your school's travel behaviour.



STP benefits

If you start with small steps, you'll be surprised at how much can be achieved through classroom work or other existing initiatives.

An STP will:

- demonstrate your school's commitment to environmental and community concerns
- promote school travel issues amongst parents, pupils and staff
- prove to school inspectors (though focused on school standards) that you take sustainable development education seriously, with projects that involve the wider school community
- help to secure funds for Safe Routes to Schools initiatives and projects such as bicycle parking or road safety improvements
- improve your school's chances of planning consent for further school development
- provide a framework for curriculum links on subjects as diverse as citizenship, geography and personal, social and health education
- contribute towards initiatives such as Healthy Schools and Eco Schools.

Involve the pupils

Pupil participation is vital in the development of a successful STP, for it is primarily their travel behaviour that you are hoping to influence and change for the better with this plan. It is important that the pupils' views and opinions are sought and taken into account.

Pupil participation can extend to delivering projects and monitoring progress through the curriculum, school council or out-of-hours clubs. See our information sheet on 'Pupil Engagement and Participation in School Travel Plans' for more ideas.



Further information

Sustrans can give you contact details for your local authority's school travel advisor or coordinator. They will be able to give you advice, templates, contacts and support in your efforts to create and implement an effective STP. Visit the School Travel website www.sustrans.org.uk/schooltravel to find out:

- latest news and information on school travel issues
- specific information on each of the UK regions
- downloadable resources including other information sheets, case studies, curriculum materials and newsletters
- information on Links to Schools, a project funded by DfT and Cycling England to create traffic-free paths and on-highway interventions to make it easier for pupils to cycle and walk to school
- details about the Sustrans Bike It Project, a scheme working directly with schools to get more young people cycling.

Department for
Transport

About Sustrans

Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity, working on practical projects so that people can choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment. Sustrans works with schools and young people to enable many more children to walk and cycle safely to school and beyond.

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www.sustrans.org.uk School Travel info line: 0117 915 0100 Photography: ©Sustrans staff.

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