

Yarranabbe Park Masterplan¹ Draft as exhibited, dated May 2011

Background & context

BIKEast is concerned that the current draft Masterplan for Yarranabbe Park (the Park), Darling Point, omits measures for improving facilities for bicycle riding to and within the park for recreational or other purposes. Making every park accessible and attractive as possible for bicycling is an imperative for any re-planning of a park. This is for personal health, welfare and access, as well as environmental, reasons.

BIKEast proposes some important additions to the Masterplan. This is to ensure that the Park is attractive to all potential users, including bike riders. Such facilities would also cater for ride-on-scooter use by persons with disabilities.

BIKEast wants to ensure that access to the Park fits the long-term aspirations for a Sydney Harbour Foreshore Cycleway – Circular Quay to Watsons Bay – for access to all the peninsulas and bays between.

Woollahra's Bicycle Strategy 2009²

BIKEast sees Yarranabbe Park as an important destination and place for achieving the benefits and overcoming some barriers to wider community participation in bike riding. That is consistent with the WMC Bicycle Strategy intentions (2.6 Benefits and Barriers, pages 9 & 10).

The Park is flat and along a low-traffic street and readily links up with cycling facilities already provided in Rushcutters Bay Park and beyond New South Head to Paddington. The Park is potentially ideal for bike riding: parents to take children to learn to ride; and for youth to independently and for other visitors, to pursue recreation and park use and gain harbour views and access to the water-front.

Key elements of the Bicycle Strategy relevant to the up-grading of Yarranabbe Park, are (quote Executive Summary, page 1):

- ***Every Street a Cycling Street – promoting and facilitating cycling on all local roads with minimum new construction; and***
- ***Recreation routes for safe and family-friendly cycling in the vicinity of parks and reserves***

The Bicycle Strategy Bike Network map does not show a specific bicycle route connecting the above two mentioned parks or to and from the ridge of Darling Point. This is despite BIKEast's representations regarding the creation of a **Sydney Harbour Foreshore Cycleway** system that would have made those connections along New Beach Road (see Map and Appendix A, below).

Nevertheless, under the Council's policy "Every Street a Cycling Street" reasonable access should be achieved (quote 4.3.1 page 29, 1st para, 2nd sentence)

"Cycling on local roads with low traffic volumes should be encouraged through cycle-friendly road maintenance, local area traffic management (LATM) and reconstruction projects ..."

This is where mixed-traffic street environments may provide a reasonably safe and attractive level of amenity and provide for recreation routes on-road (also see 4.5.4 "Cycling Tourism and Recreation"). Whether the appropriate level of amenity is the case needs to be tested, as traffic speed along the Park's boundary is still of some concern to BIKEast, particularly south of Yarranabbe Road, despite LATM works recently completed (see Appendix A).

Yarranabbe Park Bicycle Facilities

Under the Bicycle Strategy (4.5 Recreational Routes, page 38) only the existing recreational cycling network was reviewed and included in the Bike Network. BIKEast understood, when briefed about recreational cycling, that any new Masterplan and Management Plan for WMC parks would include facilities and access for bicycling. That is what had happened when the new Plans for Rushcutters Bay Park, Trumper Park and the Gap Park were prepared. It was therefore unexpected and particularly

1 Appendix B – Map of Yarranabbe Park Masterplan map

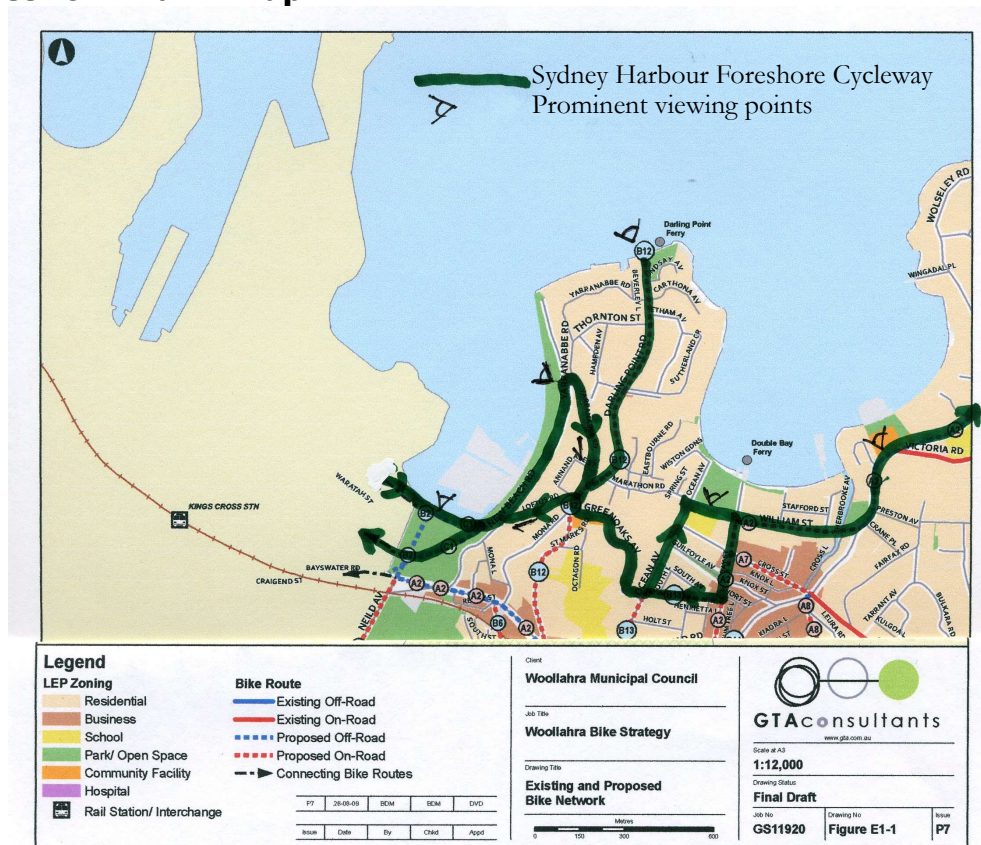
2 Adopted – Council Meeting of 16 November 2009

disappointing that this important aspect of future recreational access and use of the Yarranabbe Park seems to have been totally overlooked.

The Master and Management Plans should be amended to incorporate the following bicycle facilities and arrangements for their maintenance:

- **Bicycle-path** – Preferably provide a separate cycleway along and through the park; or redesign the pathway along the eastern boundary to accommodate share-path use. The desired cycleway/path width is between a minimum of 3.0m up to 3.5m wide. Keep such a path well away from the foreshore promenade to minimise potential conflict with casual walkers;
- **Bike parking** – Provide either traditional inverted 'U' rail bike parking rail sets, or an alternative appropriate bike parking facility (sculpture!), at the southern and mid-sections of the Park close to the playground. Four parking spots at two locations should be adequate.
- **Pram ramps** – Widen the existing ramps near the Yarranabbe Road round-about and provide ramps at the southern and northern end of the Park for access to and across New Beach Road. This is necessary to minimise conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and motorists and ensure safe crossing of New Beach Rd and access into the Park and for children to ride along the footpaths.

Bike Network Plan – Map



Conclusion

It is recommended that the draft Masterplan and Management Plan be amended to cater for bicycling for the reasons and as outlined above.

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14 July 2010 (Final)

Appendix A - Yarranabbe Park Masterplan – Cycling/Traffic issues Access from Darling Point, Edgecliff & Paddington to harbour parks

Present position

Good bicycle access from Paddington to Rushcutters Bay Park has been established. Such access from Edgecliff along New South Head Road is both a regional and Woollahra Council's highest priority and it may therefore be assumed achieved in time to ultimately connect that area with Rushcutters Bay Park and linked to Yarranabbe Park. Darling Point is still relatively isolated for bike riders, although the local roads can be readily made attractive for bike riding as traffic levels are believed not to be very high.

New Beach Road has been the subject of recent LATM measures designed to calm traffic sufficiently to self-regulate max., speeds to accord with the 50km/h speed zoning (85percentile speed is at 50 or below).

The situation for cyclist access along New Beach Road to reach Yarranabbe Park from Rushcutters Bay Park and from Darling Point via local roads, needs to be more clearly established.

The additional local streets involved are: Darling Point Road along the Darling Point Ridge ridge; Loftus Road (one-way down hill); and Yarranabbe Road (one-way up-hill). These latter two roads connect to the two parks and along Darling Point Rd, with Mc Kell Park and to the Darling Point ferry wharf.

Under the WMC Bicycle Strategy Network, Darling Point Road is for on-road mixed-traffic use with treatment limited to painting bicycle logos at key points along the road (PS-2 logos) (see Route B12, Table 4 – Local Cycle Route Evaluation and Strategy).

The question is: are the speeds low enough along the above named local streets to be attractive for cycling; both safe and perceptively comfortable for 'naïve' riders to use in a mixed-traffic environment without further engineering intervention?

Making cycling more attractive in the future

General traffic engineering view is that if traffic levels are below 5000 vpd, then at 50km/h speeds reasonably safe road conditions apply for all users, including for mixed-traffic environment where motor vehicles drivers share the road space with bike riders.

In contrast, the Bicycle movement believes that at speeds above 40km/h, the mixed-traffic environment is still far too hostile for comfortable bike riding. It means that a very high proportion of potential cyclists are deterred from riding at all or along such streets. For example, most parents will not permit their children to ride in such conditions either together as a family, or allowing their youths with good riding skills from riding unsupervised to school or to parks for sport or recreation, as they should be able to.

To make roads more attractive for riding, traffic needs to be calmed to speeds of 40km/h, or lower. Otherwise, some separation of the bicycle from motor vehicles should be provided. This could be by permitting shared-path use of verge footpaths, or by providing at least some level of separation by appropriate marking or engineering interventions. Families should not have to travel by car to their local parks, but should be encouraged to ride or walk.

Most of these roads are part of the '*Sydney Harbour Foreshore Cycleway*' designed for regional visitors. The City of Sydney Council is currently implementing the cycleway connections from Elizabeth Bay/Kings Cross, to Rushcutters Bay Park (see Bike Network Plan – Map, above).

Recommendations

1. Establish under “Every Street a Cycling Street”, whether access to Rushcutter Bay and Yarranabbe Park and between these parks is safe and attractive for family-friendly riding - confirm volumes are below 5000 vpd average and there is good speed compliance;
2. If access is not adequate, as BIKEast contends, devise appropriate engineering treatments;
3. Provides directional signage linking the parks and identifying routes to adjoining areas; and
4. Agree to proceeding to examine the Bicycle Strategy network with the view to recognising the *Sydney Harbour Foreshore Cycleway* and ultimately providing for that iconic bicycle facility.

Appendix B - Yarranabbe Park Masterplan – Map

