

BIKEast survey of Woollahra candidates for the 4 December 2021 NSW Local Government Elections

Full name and party affiliation →

Merrill Halkerston Witt, Residents First candidate, Vaucluse Ward

Lucinda Regan Residents First Woollahra

↓ Questions to candidates

People living in or visiting your area face significant challenges that deter them from riding bikes to get around - including children and women. What steps will you take to improve cycling infrastructure in your area so that people of all ages and abilities would feel safe riding their bikes to get around?

I think the Council needs to look at installing more cycleways on the roads off New South Head Road between Double Bay and Rose Bay. I have a friend who accompanies his children on bike to school each day in Rose Bay. He takes the back roads paralleling New South Head Road and thinks a cycleway along these roads would be a better solution than installing one of the footpath between Double Bay and Rose Bay. The Rose Bay promenade is very popular with carers from Beresford House walking the nursing home patients in wheelchairs. I worry they'll be hit by a bike as they cross over the road onto the promenade.

I am supportive of bike infrastructure in our area and of separated cycleways - space is always the issue here and sympathetic design needs to be considered along with pedestrian requirements.

Transport is the largest source of Australian carbon dioxide emissions (25%). Physical inactivity is the 4th leading cause of deaths in Australia. What role do you think cycling can play in tackling the urgent climate and health crises we face?

Obviously, it can play an important role, but the Government and Council are encouraging everyone to use "active" transport solutions so they can endlessly increase density. People are not willing to give up their cars when the public transport options in our area are so woeful. The topography of our area also makes bike riding tricky - too many steep hills and the lanes of our major roads (ie New South Head Road and Old South Head Road) are unusually narrow.

I think cycling is to be encouraged as a way to minimise our carbon emissions and also to decrease congestion on our roads. It is important to make it safe to do so.

Will you support measures, such as lowering speeds on residential and village shopping streets, and installing safe, separated bike paths to create a safer and more liveable environment for residents and visitors who want to ride bikes to get around the eastern suburbs?

Yes. In areas that are relatively flat, encouraging bike riding makes sense.

Yes, provided there is sympathetic design

Will you vote in Council to support the completion of the Woollahra Council project to install a shared bicycle/pedestrian path along New South Head Road between Double Bay and Rose Bay?

The problem with the current design is that the cycleway is being constructed on the footpath instead of the road. I've spoken to several serious cyclists and they say they won't use it because they don't think it will be safe for bicyclists or pedestrians. I think the Council needs to look at an on-road solution and perhaps a way to divert bike traffic off New South Head Road and on to the quieter side streets.

Yes I have voted in support

Will you vote in Council to support the construction of a safe and separated cycleway linking Rose Bay Wharf/shops to the proposed Waverley Council cycleway along Curlewis St to Bondi Beach?

Yes, but I would need to see the proposed design. Overall, I think it's a good idea. I grew up in the area and used to ride my bike along O'Sullivan Road from Rose Bay to Bondi Beach all the time. Of course, back then the roads were a lot quieter!

Yes, I have supported this provided a sympathetic design can be worked out

With the completion of the separated cycleway through Bondi Junction late next year, it will be possible for people of all ages to cycle safely to the Junction and Bellevue Hill from the Sydney CBD. Will you support BIKEast's proposal for Council, together with NSW Government support, to develop a separated cycleway along Victoria/Birriga Road to extend this important active transport connection?

I would need to see a proposed design. I'm not exactly sure how you could make cycling safe on Birriga Road? It's very steep and densely populated. Lots of cars going in and out of driveways.

Yes provided a sympathetic and appropriate design for the typography can be managed

Do you support taking actions to implement the NSW Government policies on walking and cycling in the Woollahra LGA and, if you are elected, how will you or the group you represent support these policies? (Provide examples of projects and programs you will actively support)

I think encouraging cycling is a good idea but our governments have made a mess of our roads with their conflicting policies. At the federal level, it's incentivised everyone to buy big SUVs through generous tax concessions. As a consequence, our roads have become a lot more dangerous than they were when I was growing up. At the state level, the Government has encouraged way too much density, which has led to traffic congestion, dangerous driving and generally roads that are not safe for bikes. In our area, it's also been reluctant to invest in good public transport solutions. The bus service in Vaucluse, for example, is worse today than it was in 1994 when I first moved into the area. In short, giving up cars for bikes is not a viable option.

Yes, I have put on a Notice of Motion to look at better pedestrianisation and traffic calming measures for Rose Bay which I am continuing to follow up and I have supported similar initiatives in Paddington and Double Bay

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Susan Wynne - Liberal Party

Nicola Grieve, Tanya Excel, Rosie White, Woollahra Greens

↓ Questions to candidates

People living in or visiting your area face significant challenges that deter them from riding bikes to get around - including children and women. What steps will you take to improve cycling infrastructure in your area so that people of all ages and abilities would feel safe riding their bikes to get around?

Continue to support cycling paths and cycleways and lobby for funding to allow these to happen sooner rather than later.

The Greens recognise that what our neighbouring councils deliver so much more for cyclists; we want Woollahra to lift its game. We will reactivate the Bicycle Working Committee, do a full audit of cycle ways built and planned, work with the City of Sydney to leverage off their ambitious plans, Transport NSW, BikeEast, residents and staff to deliver safe separated cycleways.

Transport is the largest source of Australian carbon dioxide emissions (25%). Physical inactivity is the 4th leading cause of deaths in Australia. What role do you think cycling can play in tackling the urgent climate and health crises we face?

Any activity that does not involve automation will help reduce emissions. Cycling of course is part of this category.

Cycling removes cars off the road which reduces fossil fuel consumption and CO2 emissions at the same time. This is particularly beneficial for small trips to our village centres, which reduces congestion and frees up parking. Moreover, cycling improves people's health through exercise and plays a vital role in addressing both the climate and health crises.

Will you support measures, such as lowering speeds on residential and village shopping streets, and installing safe, separated bike paths to create a safer and more liveable environment for residents and visitors who want to ride bikes to get around the eastern suburbs?

Yes and I have already supported this and in fact moved a motion which looked at lowering speed limits to in some areas to 30km/h.

Yes. Many years ago the whole of Paddington was designated 40km/hour thanks to a Greens motion. This was done to slow car traffic and make it safer for residents and cyclists. Many Paddington lanes, as well as lanes and narrow streets in Cooper ward's heritage precincts lend themselves to cyclist-only traffic. Along with building separated cycleways, existing heritage street and lane layouts should be utilised to create a safer environment for cyclists.

Will you vote in Council to support the completion of the Woollahra Council project to install a shared bicycle/pedestrian path along New South Head Road between Double Bay and Rose Bay?

Yes this has already been supported to start in April 2022

Yes. To date the Greens on Council have consistently supported this project. The Greens will continue to push for Council to deliver a separated cycle way the whole length of New South Head Rd in conjunction with TransportNSW.

Will you vote in Council to support the construction of a safe and separated cycleway linking Rose Bay Wharf/shops to the proposed Waverley Council cycleway along Curlew St to Bondi Beach?

Yes if we have funding to complete this

Yes. The Greens support the safe separated cycleway along O'Sullivan Rd linking to Curlew St. This is a major missing link for commuters, school children and families going to the beach who all deserve to be able to cycle safely, especially on blind corners in the most dangerous stretch of O'Sullivan Rd.

With the completion of the separated cycleway through Bondi Junction late next year, it will be possible for people of all ages to cycle safely to the Junction and Bellevue Hill from the Sydney CBD. Will you support BIKEast's proposal for Council, together with NSW Government support, to develop a separated cycleway along Victoria/Birriga Road to extend this important active transport connection?

Yes if we have funding to complete this

Yes. This represents another missing link in Woollahra's network, limiting connectivity to cycling infrastructure in our neighbouring LGAs.

Do you support taking actions to implement the NSW Government policies on walking and cycling in the Woollahra LGA and, if you are elected, how will you or the group you represent support these policies? (Provide examples of projects and programs you will actively support)

I have always been a big supporter of active transport and will continue to be an advocate for this. Unfortunately I don't ride a bike after my sister was almost killed in a cycling accident however this makes me even more focused on cyclist safety.

The Greens will continue to support the delivery of safe separated cycleways and associated cycle infrastructure.
The Greens will continue to support Council's role in providing education for all road users about the rights and rightful place cyclists have on our road network. Only by educating our residents will we change the culture to respect cyclists and their safety.
The Greens want to see through the delivery of the Paddington Greenway – the most exciting proposal before Council in many years – representing opportunity to restore the much-loved pedestrian access across the Rushcutters Bay valley floor and the White City site.
The Greens want to improve pedestrian and cycling linkages throughout the heritage neighbourhoods of Paddington and the Cooper ward, including the prioritisation of repairs to footpaths and roadways.
The Greens believe that cycling and active transport is for everyone in our community. We continue to make this point on Council, reminding others that cycling is how our kids get to school, how many people pop to their local shops to pick up the milk, what many people do for recreation at the weekend.