
Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

Blackbutts Road, Frenchs Forest – Shared path

Impact level: Four

Consultation period: Tuesday 25 January to Friday 18 February 2022

Contents

1.	Summary.....	2
1.1.	Key outcomes	2
1.2.	How we engaged	3
1.3.	Who responded.....	3
2.	Background.....	4
3.	Engagement objectives	4
4.	Engagement approach	4
5.	Findings	5
	Appendix 1 Verbatim community and stakeholder responses	8

1. Summary

This report outlines the community and stakeholder engagement conducted as part of the proposal for a new shared path connection along Blackbutts Road, Frenchs Forest exhibited between 25 January and 18 February 2022.




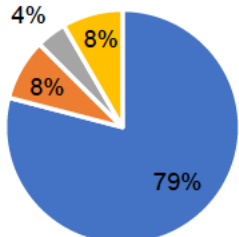
This shared path proposal has been identified as a valuable active travel connection between the local shopping, community and commercial facilities, Lionel Watts Reserve, Frenchs Forest Showground, as well playground, skateboarding and sporting facilities and local schools.

This proposal is grant dependant and can only commence if we successfully obtain funding under the Transport for NSW (TfNSW) Get NSW Active program. Community consultation was undertaken to understand the level of community support for the proposal and was required as part of the grant application process.


The feedback indicated a strong level of support for the proposed shared path upgrade, highlighting the anticipated benefits for all path users.

Respondents who were not supportive of the proposal felt that shared paths were generally unsafe, while others questioned the justification for a shared path at this location based on concerns that it would not be well used.




1.1. Key outcomes

 Total unique responses	22*	
 How responses were received	Comment form Written responses (email/letter)	Completions: 18 Number received: 4
 Online sentiment question: Should funding for this proposal be approved, do you support the shared path upgrade at Blackbutts Road, Frenchs Forest?	 Total responses = 24 <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Yes■ Yes with changes■ No■ Neutral	



* Not every respondent made a written comment in addition to answering the sentiment question.

 Feedback themes	Shared path network and expansion Safety of pedestrians Numbers of people that use shared paths	Landscape improvements Additional infrastructure Width of shared path
--	---	---

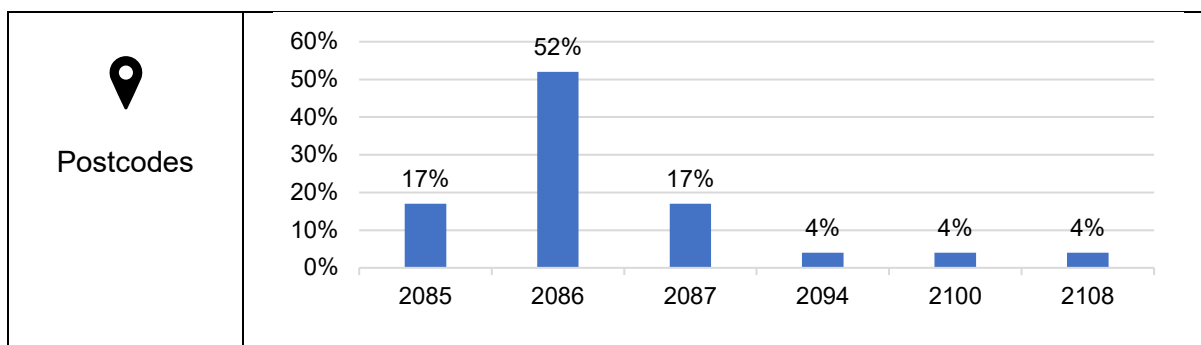
1.2. How we engaged

 Have Your Say: visitation stats	Visitors: 110	Visits: 117	Average time onsite: 2mins 40secs
 Print media and collateral	Letterbox drop: 2085 and 2086 Site signs: Yes		Distribution: 105 Number of signs: 2
 Electronic direct mail (EDM)	Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 2 editions Council Disability Newsletter: 1 edition		Distribution: 22,000 subscribers Distribution: 1286 subscribers

1.3. Who responded¹

 Gender	<div> <div>Male</div> <div>Female</div> <div>Other id.</div> </div> <div> <div>57%</div> <div>39%</div> <div>4%</div> </div>
 Age groups	<div> <div>26-50 yrs</div> <div>51-75 yrs</div> <div>76+ yrs</div> <div>N/A</div> </div> <div> <div>26%</div> <div>30%</div> <div>35%</div> <div>9%</div> </div>

¹ Demographic data was gathered by request only. The data represented only includes those respondents who provided this detail.



2. Background

In 2019 our Move – Northern Beaches Transport Strategy identified how we can encourage active travel to help break the reliance on cars as the main way we travel across our area.

Shared paths are one way we can achieve this while also providing opportunities for both transport and recreational benefits and promoting a healthy lifestyle through active travel.

We proposed an upgrade to the existing footpath to a 2.5m shared path on the northern side of Blackbutts Road between the existing raised pedestrian crossings near Pringle Avenue intersection and Glen Street, Frenchs Forest. This proposal is grant dependant and can only start if we successfully obtain funding under the TfNSW Get NSW Active program. We undertook community engagement to understand the level of community support for the proposal.

Feedback received accompanied our grant application to TfNSW. If successful, the funding will provide an active travel connection for pedestrians and bicycle riders to travel between the local shopping, community and commercial facilities, sport grounds, nearby schools, showgrounds and dog park facilities as well as other recreational facilities including the playground and skate park.

3. Engagement objectives

Community and stakeholder engagement aimed to:

- provide accessible information so community and stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way
- identify community and stakeholder concerns, local knowledge and values
- seek out and facilitate the involvement of those affected by or interested in a project.

4. Engagement approach

Community and stakeholder engagement for the Blackbutts Road, Frenchs Forest – Shared path proposal was conducted between Tuesday 25 January 2022 to Friday 18 February 2022.

The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's [Community Engagement Matrix](#) (2017).

A project page was established on our have your say platform with information provided in an accessible and easy to read format.

The project was primarily promoted through our regular email newsletter (EDM) channels.

Feedback was captured through an online comment form embedded onto the have your say project page. The form included a question that directly asked respondents for their level of support on the proposal.

An open-field comments box provided community members a space to explain or elaborate on their support, not support or neutral sentiment as well as any other feedback they wished to contribute.

Email and written comments were also invited.

5. Findings

The feedback collected during consultation indicated a strong level of support for the proposed shared path upgrade, highlighting the anticipated benefits for all path users.

Most of those that supported the shared path recognised the importance of the connection and suggested alternative locations and connection points. While acknowledging the benefit of the shared path, others felt a dedicated cycleway in the area that connected to St Ives would be beneficial. Alternatives for bus lane use/ timing were also raised.

Some concerns were raised regarding user safety and pedestrian / cyclist conflict, noting a wider path might be needed.. Suggestions were also put forward for improved pedestrian crossing infrastructure, reduced road speed limit on Blackbutts Road and speed limiting cyclists on shared paths.

The issue of education programs was raised, noting “bike riders have very little education or none at all, on how to share a path, to ride amongst pedestrians, to ride on roads safely and how to cross the different crossings on roads”.

Some comments reflected the need for connections in this area as well as benefits from other locations and connections.

Pedestrian safety improvements were also raised with some feedback suggesting improved pedestrian crossing near Malbara Crescent.

Comments in relation to bicycle traffic touched on speed issues, dedicated cycleways and alternative bus lane usage.

Respondents who were not supportive of the proposal felt that shared paths were generally unsafe, whilst others questioned the justification for a shared path at this location based on concerns that it would not be well used by cyclists.

Table 1: Key issues raised

Theme	Issues, change requests and other considerations raised	Council's response
Shared path network expansion	Comments in support of the shared path noted the importance and suggested alternative routes and connection points.	We have identified future shared paths to be constructed in Lockwood Avenue, Blackbutts Road towards Davidson, Glen Street, Pringle Avenue and Haigh Avenue. When funding becomes available, we will be able to proceed with construction, although this may take several years.
Safety	<p>Concern was raised that shared paths are dangerous or uncomfortable for pedestrians due to potential conflicts with bike riders.</p> <p>Some feedback indicated the width should be increased.</p> <p>Other feedback suggested a separate cycleway in the area, noting while the proposed upgrade was good, more was needed.</p>	<p>Shared path user conflict is a concern that is often raised. Transport for NSW Centre for Road Safety released a discussion paper on shared paths in 2015.</p> <p>The concluding remarks, based on evidence, stated that shared paths represent a relatively low safety risk. It is important that the shared path is designed to be as safe as possible with adequate width.</p> <p>This shared path will provide a safe cycling and pedestrian option.</p>
	Once respondent suggested improved pedestrian safety through the construction of a pedestrian crossing near Malbara Crescent, Frenchs Forest.	Council's Traffic Team will undertake further investigation regarding a request for a new pedestrian crossing near Malbara Crescent, Frenchs Forest.
	Strong concern was raised relating to cyclists' speeding and not adhering to rules.	Transport for NSW Centre for Road Safety released a discussion paper on shared paths in 2015, this included research regarding speed limits on shared paths. They found that based on the available evidence, speeding does not appear to be a key issue on shared paths because generally both cyclists and pedestrians understand that a practical cycling speed is appropriate for the environment.
	One respondent suggested a reduction in the speed limit on Blackbutts Road to 40kmh.	The speed limit on Blackbutts road is under the authority of Transport for NSW. Feedback in relation to speed in this area has been provided to them for investigation.

Landscape improvements	One comment reflected the need for landscape improvements in the pocket of trees bounded by Blackbutts Road and the playing fields. Feedback also noted there are many dead and fallen trees together with logs and organic refuse in the area.	<p>Council's Parks Landscape Design team will be involved in the modifications to the existing garden landscaping to the section near the Glen Street pedestrian crossing.</p> <p>All other landscaping works are currently out of scope for this project, however the feedback has been forwarded to our Parks team to investigate and action.</p>
Design of the shared path	Feedback reflected that the proposed shared path width was not wide enough, nor did it meet the Austroads recommended width for shared paths/	<p>We refer to the TfNSW Cycle Design Toolbox when planning cycling networks and acknowledge that wider shared paths of up to 4m wider provide more room for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>A 2.5m shared path in Blackbutts Road, will provide a functional width considering space needed for utilities, however we will review the width of the shared path when we develop the detailed design.</p>

Appendix 1 Verbatim community and stakeholder responses*

Number	Comment
1	This is an obvious extension to the shared path that stops at Pringle Rd. It should be built and then extended to the schools, Mimosa and Davidson so that students can ride to school.
2	Is there any evidence that cyclists use shared paths? - most seem to use the road anyway. Wouldn't a bike lane be better?
3	More cycle lanes and shared paths please
4	Will complement the fairly recent construction of a shared path along a section of Blackbutts Rd.
5	It is essential to prioritise the construction of safe and connected infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists. I support the application for NSW Government funding for Northern Beaches active transport infrastructure, look forward to detailed designs.
6	Addition to my previous comments I would like to hope that some landscape improvements could be done in the pocket of trees bounded by Blackbutts Rd and the playing fields. There are many dead and near dead trees, fallen trees, logs and organic refuse.
7	Great idea and needs to be done in more local streets
8	Not really sure what this link is connecting but still good for children on bikes.
9	great idea, we need proper footpaths and bike lanes
10	I think this project is a wonderful idea for safety as well as for ease of movement. Currently I am a single walker often on this stretch of pathway and 99% of the times I have to pass by other active people in pairs it is me stepping off the pavement.
11	Bike riders sharing paths can be dangerous to pedestrians. The addition of bike riders on paths adds another level re pedestrian safety. I personally have had an experience with riders that do not follow the rules.
12	Cycling around Belrose is dangerous. There is a need for a lot more safe cycleways to be constructed in the area. The proposed shared path is only a small upgrade a lot more is needed.
13	Badly needed, but also another crosswalk at Malbara Crescent over to the entrance to Lionel Watts fields and the playground. This is a very busy pedestrian area. Also the speed limit on Blackbutts should be reduced to at least 40km/h in this area.
14	As a recreational bicyclist at weekends (Belrose, Frenchs Forest & Davidson), I would like to have a bicycle track along Forestway to Mona Vale Road to connect with the bicycle lanes to St Ives.
15	excellent idea but please also add an additional pedestrian crossing near Malbara Crescent as this is a major crossing point for the playground and sports fields.
16	Excellent idea!
17	The pathway is a good idea but there should be speed limits for bicycles.
18	Austroroads Part 6A Table 5.3 sets out widths for shared paths. For a regional path the desirable minimum width is 3m. The table does set a minimum of 2.5m, which may suit much of Blackbutts Rd. However, it will not be wide enough as the path approaches Glen St. A wider path in this area is needed to cater for increased current, latent and future demand compared to the eastern section of the path. To cater for the high levels of use the path should be at least 3m west from the refuge near Athol St. The 'refuge' should be converted to a marked zebra crossing to make it comfortable convenient and safer for people living south of Blackbutts Rd to walk ride and scoot to the shopping centre.
19	<p>Having read the plans for more shared bike paths on the Northern Beaches, I wish to comment and share my concerns in regards to this.</p> <p>Firstly , I am all for bike paths, and am a bike rider myself, but the bike paths have to be amply wide enough if they are to be shared with pedestrians. Pedestrians are at risk of collision and injury if paths are not sufficiently wide.</p>

*Personal details and inappropriate language have been redacted where possible. Spelling and grammatical errors have been amended only where misinterpretation or offence may be caused.

Number	Comment
	<p>Secondly, and most importantly, bike riders need education on how to ride on these paths and how to cross roads on pedestrian zebra crossings and at pedestrian traffic lights at road crossings. Who is going to educate them? How can this be done? Signs on poles are a waste of time and money as bike riders do not look up at them and they are not getting the messages. The signs, like "Dismount to cross" or "Get off Your Bike" and "Speed 10 kms" have to be painted on the actual paths so riders can see them.</p> <p>Car drivers have to pass a licence test and obey rules and most adhere to the road rules and know those rules that concern being near bike riders.</p> <p>But, unfortunately, bike riders have very little education or none at all, on how to share a path, to ride amongst pedestrians, to ride on roads safely and how to cross the different crossings on roads. They do not have to pass a test for a licence to ride a bike.</p> <p>Many bike riders show they believe there are no rules for them by flying erratically off footpaths onto roads to cross a zebra crossing without giving car drivers any warning as to what are their intentions. This happens often at Boy Charlton Pool, Manly, zebra crossing, at the Queenscliff Beach zebra crossing and at the North Steyne Surf Club zebra crossing. The Queenscliff Beach crossing is a shocker for bike riders coming straight from out of the lagoon park onto Cameron Avenue, cutting across from the avenue to shortcut across the Bridge Road crossing, without warning or dismounting, instead of riding under the bridge to the beachfront path.</p> <p>My main concern, Michelle, is that no one is educating the bike riders and there are no consequences for them doing the wrong thing. Even the Narrabeen Lakes shared bike path around the lake is fraught with danger on the weekends due to crowds. If the bike riders rode the path in one direction only it would be far, far safer for all concerned. Have some thoughts on making such a circular track one way for bikes and any similar future circular paths.</p> <p>So please consider painted signs on path surfaces, for educating to dismount at zebra crossings, to give car drivers a fair go at stopping. To also indicate speed signs on the path surface, as more people have electric bikes and are upon pedestrians before they know it. To paint a bell symbol to educate to ring a bell before approaching pedestrian groups on paths. All this may help.</p> <p>If Northern Beaches Council is to have more shared bike paths rather than bike only paths, more so than ever, very serious plans need to be implemented in the education of bike riders in our community, for the safety of all path users.</p>
20	Council should consider having all dedicated bus lanes available during all daylight hours dedicated to cyclists, buses, taxis and motorcyclists. This situation currently limited to periods in the morning and afternoon on weekdays should be extended so that these lanes are available for cycle transport.
21	<p>I support all forms of transport as an alternative to cars. I am an avid cyclist. Cycle routes should be kept away from pedestrians as cycles present a danger. At the very least a speed limit should be imposed where segregation is absolutely impossible.</p> <p>Spend some of the money earmarked for the outdated Beaches Link Tunnel on improving mass transport, light rail, buses that actually stop at bus stops, and dedicated cycle ways. (I appreciate the funding probably comes from a different publicly funded purse).</p>
22	Bicycle NSW submission

*Respondents who did not provide written comment have been excluded from the above list. Any sentiment responses have been included in the sentiment graph within this report.

Northern Beaches Council
PO Box 82 Manly
NSW 1655

14th February 2022

Dear Northern Beaches Council,

RE: TfNSW Active Transport Funding proposals

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the pedestrian and cycling infrastructure proposed for Council's application to Transport for NSW for funding under the 2022 Active Transport Grant.

Bicycle NSW has been the peak bicycle advocacy group now in NSW for over forty-five years, and has over 30 affiliated local Bicycle User Groups. Our mission is to '*make NSW better for all bicycle riders*', and we support improvements to facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. We advocate for new cycling routes that incorporate dedicated paths within both green corridors and the road environment, to provide connections to jobs, schools and services for daily transport and recreation trips. Bike riding provides a healthy, congestion-reducing, low-carbon form of travel that is quiet, efficient and attractive for all ages with the correct infrastructure design.

Bicycle NSW supports all ten projects highlighted by Northern Beaches Council for inclusion in the application. 8 of are currently open for community feedback and are described briefly overleaf. Two more, shared user paths along Rosebery Street in Balgowlah and Pittwater Road in Brookvale, have already been endorsed by the community.

As the new Minister for Infrastructure, Cities and Active Transport, Rob Stokes MP, set out in a recent speechⁱ, smaller projects that stitch the suburbs together and enable people of all ages and abilities to get around without a car are much more sustainable than megaprojects. He stressed that the NSW Government will now focus on completing missing links in the active transport network. Such smaller projects have big benefits, and not only for reducing pollution and congestion. Active mobility improves public health, activates high streets, helps build social connections and addresses inequality.

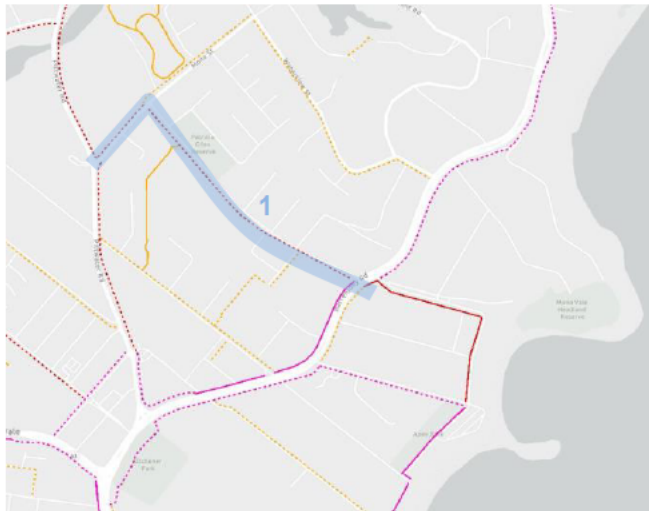
We applaud Northern Beaches Council's efforts to roll-out the cycling network developed for the Northern Beaches Bike Plan 2020ⁱⁱ. The proposed Safe Cycling Network includes a three-tier route hierarchy that matches the Transport for NSW cycling network hierarchy and aligns with the Principal Bicycle Network routes. The three levels consist of regional, district and local routes.

The Northern Beaches Bike Plan 2020 sets out the directions and actions required to help the community choose cycling as a transport option, create a safer cycling environment and meet the targets established in Move 2038 - Northern Beaches Transport Strategyⁱⁱⁱ to double the active travel trips and strive for a 30% reduction in journeys by cars. Cycling is already popular on the Northern Beaches - 40% of residents used a bicycle in the past 12 months compared to the state average of 25% - and **Council is showing its commitment to growing cycling.**

The 8 new projects to be included in the application:


1. Bassett Street, Mona Vale

An important Tier 2 District Route that will connect Pittwater High School, Winnererremy Bay and the local employment areas to the B-Line bus stop and the fantastic off-road cycle path that follows the coast south from Mona Vale.



Layers

- ▼ ☒ Safe Cycling Network Route Hierarchy
- ▼ ☒ Tier 1 - Regional Routes
 - Existing Network
 - Proposed Network
- ▼ ☒ Tier 2 - District Routes
 - Existing Network
 - Proposed Network
- ▼ ☒ Tier 3 - Local Connections
 - Existing Network
 - Proposed Network

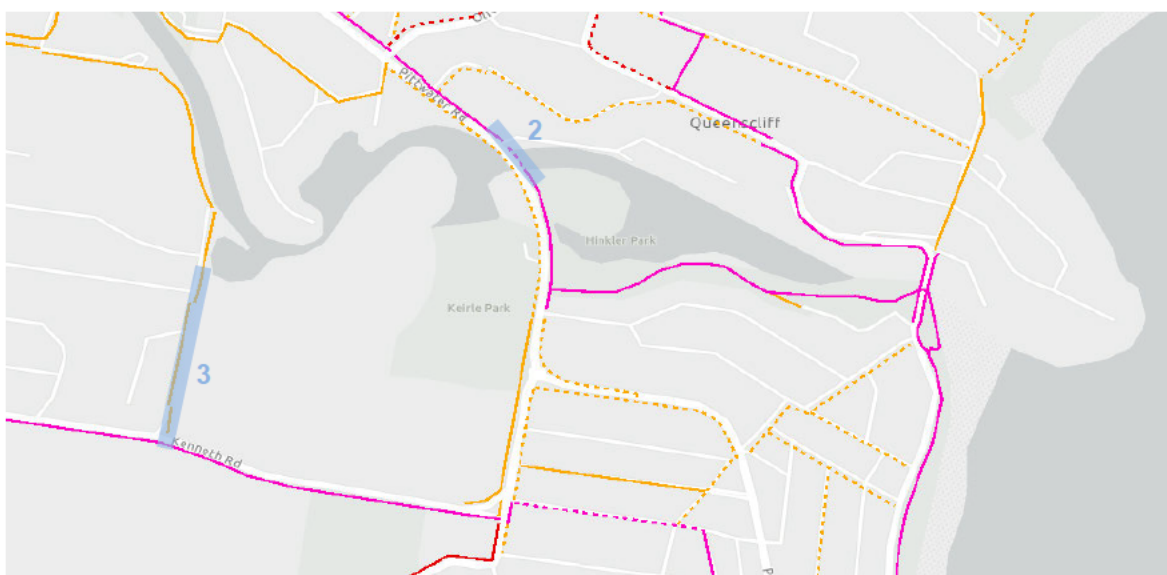
 Location of proposed shared user paths

2. Pittwater Road, Queenscliff

A new 3m wide pedestrian and cycle bridge will address the dangerous and uncomfortable conditions for people walking and riding on the existing bridge over Manly Lagoon. The narrow footpath is often crowded, pedestrians are very close to fast traffic and cyclists need to dismount. This can be a barrier to bike riding and is not appropriate for a Tier 1 Regional Route. There is very strong community support for improving access to Manly.

3. Addiscombe Road, Manly Vale

A new section of shared path in Addiscombe Road between the existing shared path along the lagoon with Kenneth Road. The project includes an upgrade of the existing pedestrian refuge in Kenneth Road to a combined raised pedestrian and bicycle rider crossing.

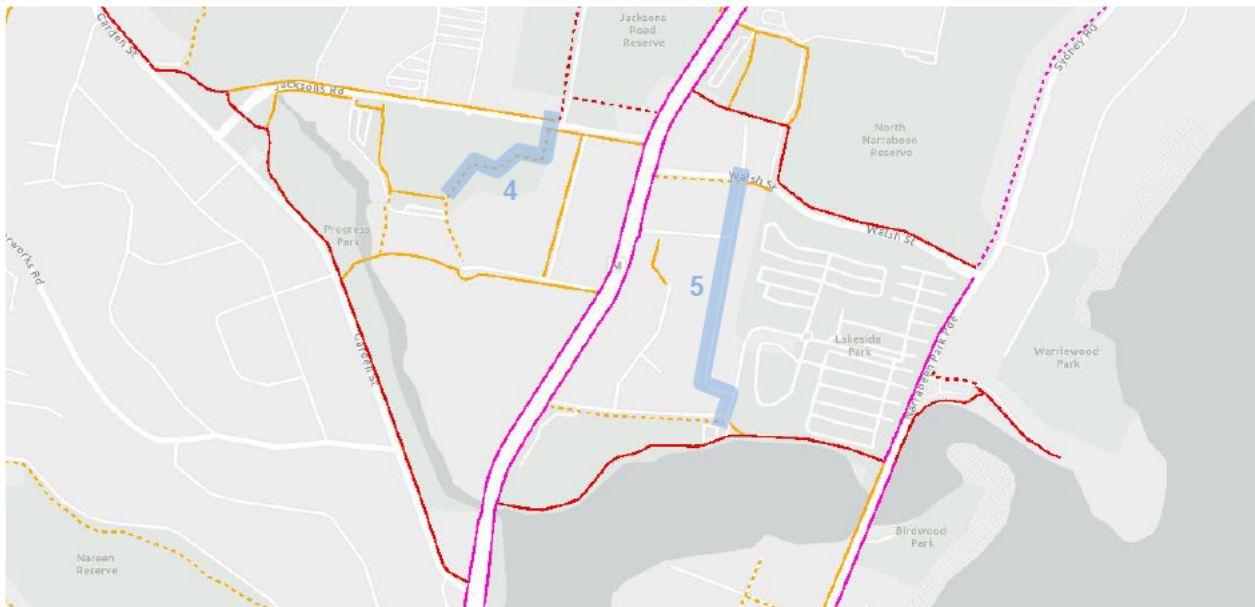


4. Jacksons Road, Warriewood

A shared path for pedestrians and bicycle riders through Warriewood Valley Sportsground which will provide active travel connections to the Narrabeen Education Precinct, sporting facilities, Warriewood B-Line, Warriewood Square and other key destinations.

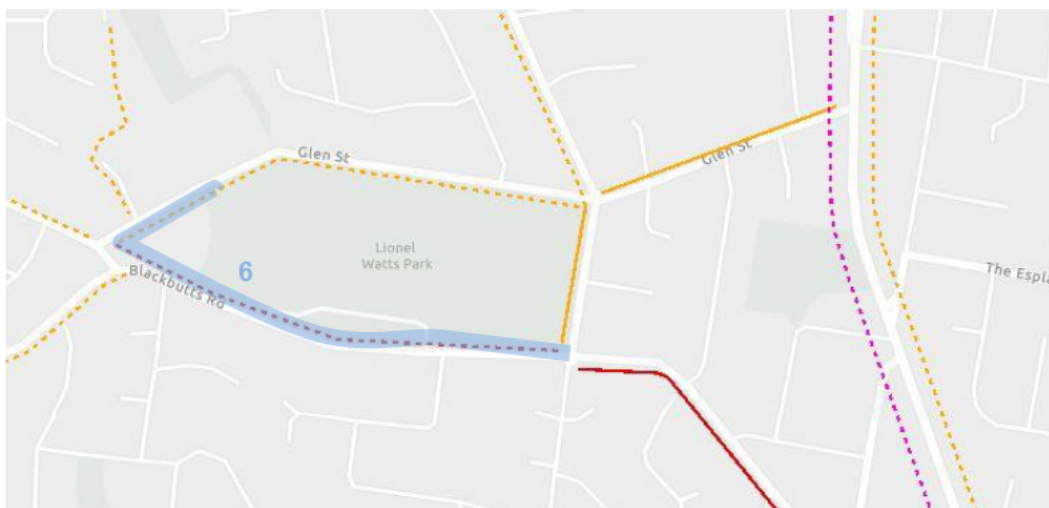
5. Collins Street, North Narrabeen

A missing link to join the existing shared paths along Walsh Street and Narrabeen Lagoon and provide a valuable connection to facilities such as Pittwater Rugby Park, Warriewood B-Line and recreational facilities around Narrabeen Lagoon.



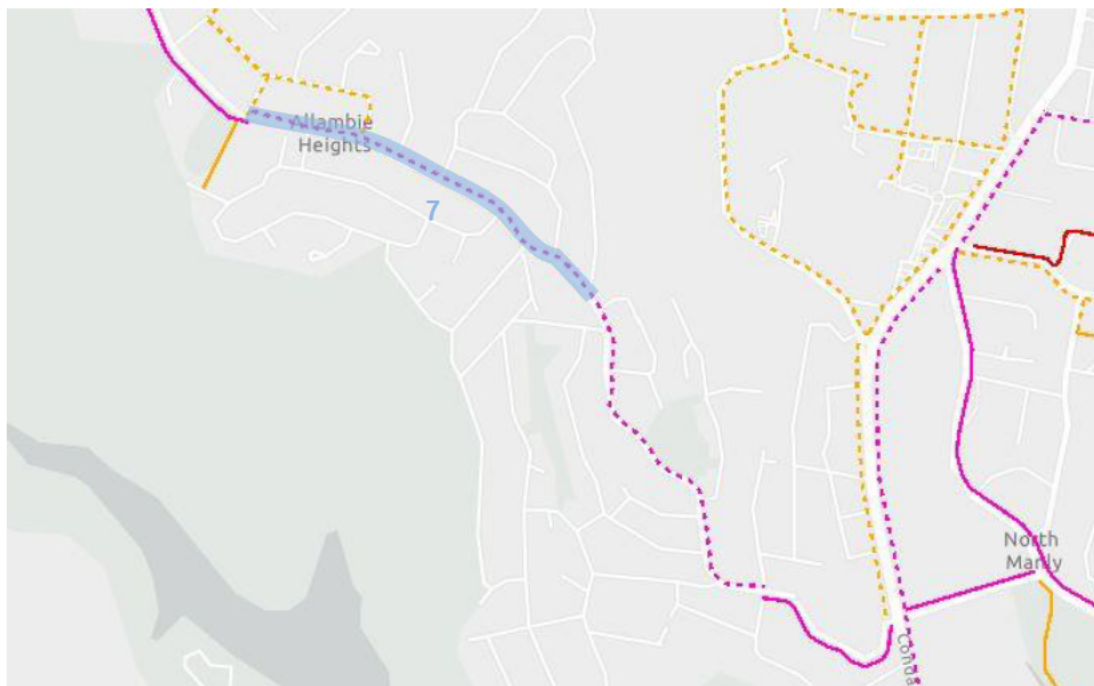
6. Blackbutts Road, Frenchs Forest

A new shared path on the northern side of Blackbutts Road between the existing raised pedestrian crossings at Pringle Avenue and Glen Street to enable easier walking and cycling to local shopping, community and commercial facilities, sport grounds and schools, and complete an important Tier 2 District Route that connect to the major employment hubs at the hospital and nearby industrial areas.



7. Allambie Road, Allambie Heights

A new shared path on the northern side of Allambie Road between Flers Street and Allenby Park Parade with intersection upgrades to include bike crossing facilities. The path will create a valuable active travel connection between the local shopping, community and commercial facilities, the oval and Allambie Heights Public School. It will be a positive step in the delivery of a continuous safe route along the full length of Allambie Road between North Manly and Frenchs Forest, a Tier 1 Regional Route.



8. Highview Avenue, Manly Vale

A new footpath (note this is not intended to be a shared user path) and a much-needed upgrade to public stairs to provide better access to Manly Vale B-Line, local retail and many other local facilities and destinations.

Recommendations:

We recognise that these projects have not yet been designed in detail and we look forward to commenting on the plans as they evolve in the near future. At this stage, we have some general recommendations for council staff and elected councilors to consider:

- **Propose on-road separated bi-directional cycle paths where appropriate**

Shared paths are no longer considered adequate for important sections of the cycling network. Problems with shared paths include conflict between people walking and cycling, which will get worse as population and active travel increase; the loss of verges, vegetation and, in some instances, mature trees; the uncomfortable pinch points caused by bus stops, power poles and retained trees and constant interruptions when crossing side streets where vehicles effectively have priority. Importantly, no attempt is made to change the dial on car use when bicycles are squeezed into pedestrian spaces. By leaving the road between the kerbs as the unchallenged domain of private cars, with wide vehicle lanes and ample parking, car travel is encouraged,

unsafe speeds are common and the modal shift needed to meet climate, health and liveability imperatives may not occur.

Segregated bi-directional paths have many benefits over shared paths:

- People riding bikes are separated from pedestrians and vehicles, reducing conflict.
- Street trees and green verges are not impacted.
- Narrowed vehicle lanes will slow traffic, reducing noise and improving safety for all road users.
- No additional asphalt is required, reducing issues with urban heat and stormwater.
- Sufficient space is created to enable a significant modal shift to active transport.
- New landscaping and important pedestrian safety features such as kerb extensions can be incorporated into the buffers and the parking lanes.
- The cycle paths can be prioritised over driveways and minor road intersections.
- Motorists exiting driveways have a better sightline to approaching cyclists, improving safety.

Bicycle NSW was very encouraged to learn that so many members of the community provided similar feedback to the community engagement^{iv} for the Oliver Street route in Freshwater, indicating increased understanding of the need for high quality cycling infrastructure. According to the best practice 'cycling segmentation' model, developed in Portland USA to identify the type and needs of existing and potential bike riders^v, separated cycle paths will allow 70% of local residents to consider journeys by bike (Figure 1). The area has some steep inclines but the increasing use of e-bikes and other micromobility devices will ensure that active transport options are accessible to all residents.

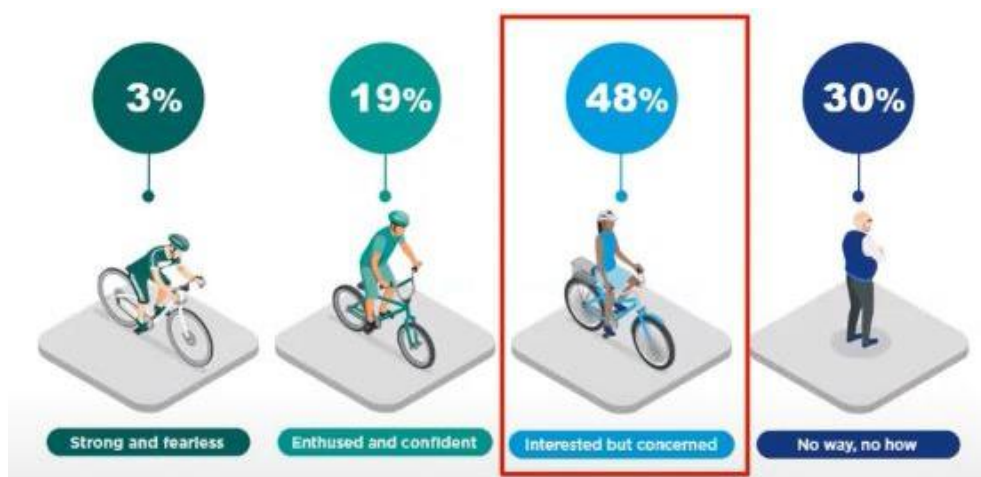


Figure 1:
Four general categories of comfort levels for cycling as transportation.
(Source: North Sydney Council)

The Bicycle NSW *Build it for Everyone* policy pillar^{vi} sets a standard that bicycle infrastructure should be fit for eight year old children or elders to ride on. Door zone bike lanes, bike stencils on the road and dangerous intersections will continue to deter the 48%^{vii} of people who are 'interested but concerned', from making the switch to bike riding.

There has never been a better time to build infrastructure for bike riding and active transport. The Minister for Infrastructure, Cities and Active Transport recently confirmed that the Principal Bike Network is a priority for the NSW Government. In early 2021, Transport for NSW published two policies that require State projects to prioritise road space for active transport:

- Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy CP21001^{viii}
- Road User Space Allocation Policy CP21000^{ix}

The policies establish a road user hierarchy that considers pedestrians first and private cars last, as shown in Figure 2.

Order of Road User Space Considerations



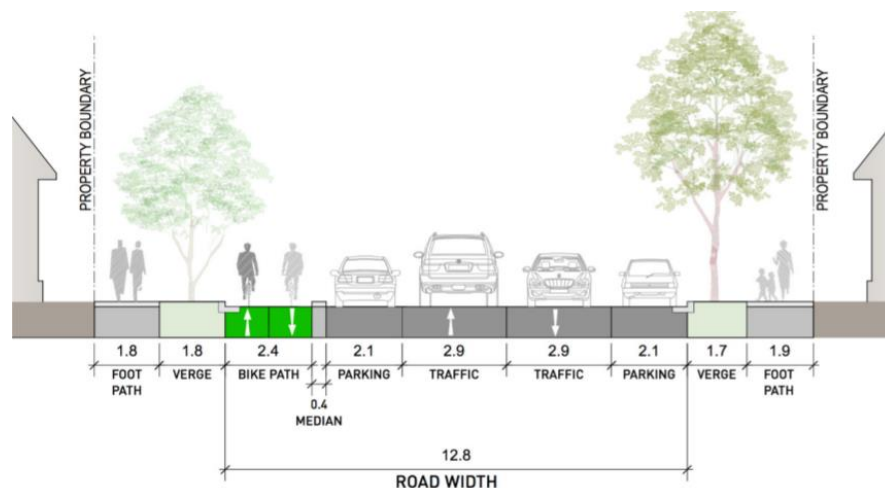
Figure 2:
Diagram expressing Transport for NSW's
road user priority.
(Source: Transport for NSW)

The reallocation of road space for active travel is clearly supported by Northern Beaches Councils strategies. Priority 21 of *Towards 2040 - Northern Beaches Local Strategic Planning Statement*⁸ aims to redesign existing streets to be more efficient, accommodating more people, goods and services in a limited space and creating safer and more attractive public realm. Reallocating road space to create separated bicycle paths will reduce conflict and make it easier to walk and cycle. *Move 2038 – Northern Beaches Transport Strategy* recognises that pedestrians and cyclists should be separated. The *Northern Beaches Bike Plan 2020* strives for separated cycle paths on regional and district routes.

We urge Northern Beaches Council to continue brave discussions with the community about reallocating road space from private cars to reflect the priorities set out in the Road User Space Allocation Policy and Council's own transport policies. In our recent meeting, the Hon. Rob Stokes MP, stated his preference for properly separated walking and cycling infrastructure. He expressed his strong belief that **the road-related environment is a public asset** that must be shared equitably between all road users. On-street parking is fundamentally the storage of private property in the public domain. It makes driving easier and generates car trips. Any inconvenience to car drivers created by reducing road space for driving and parking private vehicles will incentivise the mode-shift that Transport for NSW and Council seek, benefitting local residents with quieter streets, and less pollution, noise and through-traffic.

Please note that on-street parking does not always need to be removed to create a separated cycle path. As the new Transport for NSW Cycleway Design Toolbox^{xi} sets out, it is possible to fit a 2.4m bi-directional cycle path into a standard 12.8m road like Bassett Street, Allambie Road or Blackbutts Road without loss of vehicle lanes or parking. A typical section is shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Section showing a 2.4m bi-directional cycle lane in a typical residential street with parking on both sides and two travel lanes.
(Source: North Sydney Council)



Several Sydney councils are rolling out such infrastructure on similar key routes through residential areas. Parramatta Council created a separated bicycle path along Queens Road in Westmead (Figure 4). The lane is formed with simple concrete separators, avoiding modifications to the road surface and stormwater drainage. This is a time- and cost-effective solution that allows limited budgets to be concentrated on creating safer intersections. Parking was retained on both sides of the street.

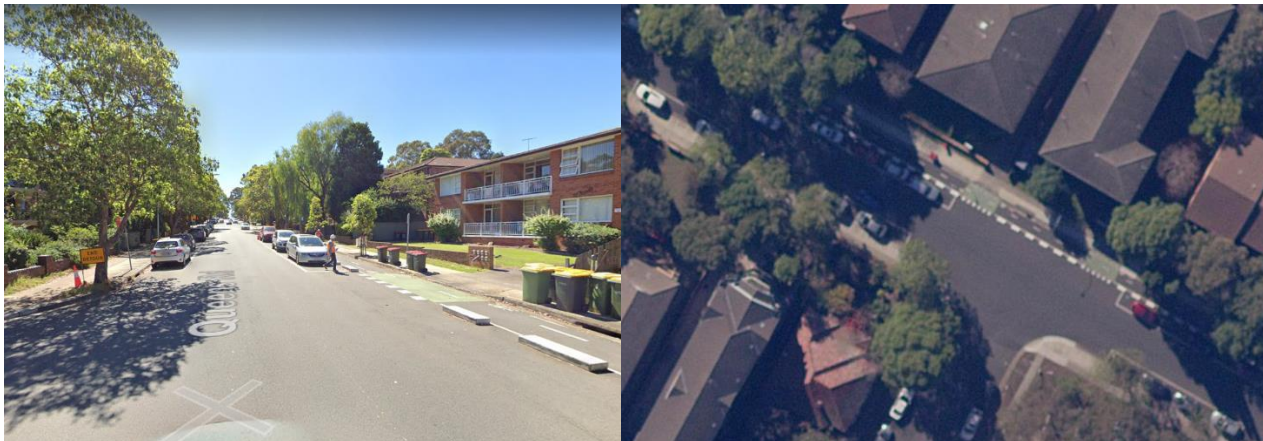


Figure 4: The separated on-road cycleway on Queens Road, Westmead (Source: GoogleMaps / SixMaps)

North Sydney Council is planning to extend the Young Street cycle path using 'timtam' concrete separators and Randwick Council is constructing a similar path along Doncaster Ave in Kensington. Images showing the proposed paths are in Figure 5.



Figure 5: New bi-directional bicycle paths within the existing road – Young Street, Neutral Bay (left) and Doncaster Avenue, Kensington (Source: North Sydney Council / Randwick Council)

Bicycle NSW suggests that Northern Beaches Council uses pop-up methods to trial the separated cycle path. Moveable lane barriers can be installed quickly to create stretches of protected path (Figure 6) and demonstrate how unfamiliar cycle infrastructure fits into the street. Ridership can be observed over several months using electronic counters to monitor use, and any issues with parking and buses can be resolved before permanent infrastructure is constructed. If sufficient patronage is demonstrated and parking is not problematic, Council will have a mandate to retain the paths. City of Sydney, City of Parramatta and Transport for NSW demonstrated the demand for safe cycling using the pop-up bicycle paths established as a COVID-19 response. The paths will now be made permanent.



Figure 6: Pop-up infrastructure in Sydney (Source: Bicycle NSW / Randwick Today)

- **Ensure shared paths have adequate width for future needs**

Walking and cycling on the Northern Beaches continues to grow in popularity. The density of walkers will increase when new housing and retail is delivered as proposed. An upswing in travel by bikes has occurred recently due to COVID-19 responses, the expansion of the active travel network, individual reactions to climate change, a surge in online delivery services and the growing popularity of e-bikes. In addition, State policies to address climate change and urban liveability will add to pressures on councils to secure a much bigger modal share for walking and cycling.

It is important to **future-proof the cycle network** by allowing for increased demand at the outset. Shared paths should be wide enough for overtaking and must accommodate a range of mobility options such as cargo bikes and disability scooters. **A minimum width of 3m** should be achieved at all times with extra width considered where volumes of people walking and cycling may be high^{xii} (see Figure 7). It is important that faster cyclists can overtake and that pedestrian comfort is never compromised. In busy areas, or on steeper sections, paths should be wide enough to provide separate space for pedestrians.

Bicycle NSW recommends referring to the new Cycleway Design Toolbox^{xiii} and the 2017 Austroads Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides (AP-G88-17) to ensure that the paths are constructed to current best practice.

Figure 7: Suggested shared user path widths (Source: Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 6A: Paths for Walking and Cycling AGRD06A-17)

	Suggested path width (m)		
	Local access path	Regional path ⁽³⁾	Recreational path
Desirable minimum width	2.5	3.0	3.5
Minimum width – typical maximum	2.0 ⁽¹⁾ – 3.0 ⁽²⁾	2.5 ⁽¹⁾ – 4.0 ⁽²⁾	3.0 ⁽¹⁾ – 4.0 ⁽²⁾

1. A lesser width should only be adopted where cyclist volumes and operational speeds will remain low.
2. A greater width may be required where the numbers of cyclists and pedestrians are very high or there is a high probability of conflict between users (e.g. people walking dogs, in-line skaters etc.).
3. May be part of a principal bicycle network in some jurisdictions.

- **Reduce speed limits to 30km/h on local streets**

Residential streets form a critical part of any active travel network, connecting homes to key shared paths and cycle paths. 30 km/h speed limit reduce the need for separate bicycle infrastructure on local residential roads. 30 km/h has been shown as an optimal speed limit to allow people driving and cycling to share the road safely^{xiv} and is becoming a standard speed limit in many parts of the world. All single lane roads in Spain have been under a 30km/h limit since May 2021 and 30% of UK residents live in 20mph areas^{xv}.

The Western Australian Department of Transport has rolled out several 'bicycle boulevards' using residential streets as part of its Safe Active Streets programme^{xvi}. In addition to a 30 km/h speed limit, a range of physical interventions support slower speeds and reduce traffic volumes and rat running. Parts of the Northern Beaches network would benefit from a similar treatment if separated or shared paths cannot be achieved.

Lower speed limits are an important building block for Vision Zero, an approach to road safety that was launched in Sweden in 1994 with the simple premise that no loss of life is acceptable. The Vision Zero approach has been highly successful and has spread to many other countries. The key policies include prioritizing low urban speed limits, pedestrian zones, physical separation between bicycle and car traffic, data-based traffic enforcement and behaviour-change education^{xvii}.

- **Ensure that new cycle infrastructure is inclusive**

All types of bikes should be accommodated by the cycling infrastructure, including cargo bikes and tricycles. Again, the width of the paths is critical and it is important to consider turning radii, dropped kerbs, ramps and the design of modal filters to ensure that non-standard bikes not excluded from the network. Cargo bikes will increasingly be used for deliveries and have huge potential to play a key role in a sustainable transport system. Non-standard bikes such as hand-cycles, recumbents and wheelchair bikes offer disabled people independent mobility but are a rare sight on urban streets due to barriers caused by poor urban design. Any measures enabling cycling by disabled people will support a growth in cycling by novice cyclists, children and older people, and improve conditions for those using mobility scooters^{xviii}.

- **Prioritise pedestrians and cyclists at all intersections**

Traffic light phasing and sensors must favour active modes to encourage more people to walk and cycle. In line with the Road User Space Allocation Policy and other State and local strategies, small delays to vehicle traffic should never prevent the delivery of safer, more efficient and more attractive active transport infrastructure. Raised crossings at unsignalised intersections will slow cars and improve safety. Bicycle paths must continue across the raised crossings so people riding bikes are not required to dismount.

- **Maintain a focus on the important details of the cycle network**

The detailed design of cycle routes, adequate end of trip facilities, clear wayfinding and grass roots education are critical to encourage the uptake of cycling and reduce dependence on private vehicles.

It is essential to ensure that popular daily destinations such as town centres and schools are easy to reach by bicycle for all residents of all ages and abilities. In particular, safe connections with all education facilities along the routes must be incorporated. Cycling infrastructure needs to be safe and continuous to increase the mode share of cycling and reduce congestion associated with school journeys. Without proper separation

from vehicles and safe intersections, parents will still feel driving their children to school and activities is the only way to keep them safe from being hit by cars.

Integration of the routes with bus stops is essential to ensure easy access by bike and foot. All public transport journeys start and finish with a walk or cycle. Providing high-quality, safe conditions for active travel to bus routes will break down the first/last mile barrier which can inhibit take-up of public transport.

Parking and other end of trip facilities should be provided at journey end locations to further support riders and encourage participation. Future iterations of the Northern Beaches DCP must ensure that sufficient cycling parking is provided in future developments, including facilities for charging e-bikes.

Wayfinding supports visitors by clearly articulating and communicating the most efficient and safest route. Signage style for wayfinding should be consistent throughout the LGA and reflect the diversity of the community. Figure 8 shows a great example from the UK!



Figure 8: Fabulous graphics by advocacy group Walk Ride Bath that celebrate the diversity of people cycling (Source: Wheel for Wellbeing)

Finally, education, information and events to promote walking and bike riding as a form of transport are an important part of any plan to increase participation in active travel.

Conclusion:

Bicycle NSW is excited to know that Northern Beaches Council has so many important active transport projects in the pipeline. The pop-up lane in Dee Why is fantastic and we hope Council will be emboldened to experiment more much widely with cutting-edge bicycle infrastructure across the LGA. Safe infrastructure to support walking and cycling will benefit everyone in the community, reducing congestion, noise and pollution while improving public health and providing more equitable access to employment, businesses, services and public transport.

We look forward to working with Council to progress the delivery of the routes discussed in this submission. Please reach out to Bicycle NSW with any questions or help needed. If requested, we would be delighted to assist with advocating for new cycle paths through our connections with politicians, Transport for NSW and neighbouring metropolitan councils.

Yours faithfully,

Sarah Bickford

Bike Planner
Bicycle NSW

Peter McLean

Chief Executive Officer
Bicycle NSW

-
- ⁱ Stokes, Rob. 2022, Feb 10. Footpaths and cycleways are an act of democracy – ask Steph. Fifth Estate. <https://thefifthestate.com.au/urbanism/planning/footpaths-and-cycleways-are-an-act-of-democracy-ask-steph/>
- ⁱⁱ Northern Beaches Bike Plan. 2020, July. https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/download_file/3194/2346
- ⁱⁱⁱ Move – Northern Beaches Transport Strategy 2038. <https://files.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/policies-register/transport/transport-strategy/transportstrategy.pdf>
- ^{iv} Northern Beaches Council, 2021. Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report - shared path. https://hdp-au-prod-app-nthbch-yoursay-files.s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/9516/3607/7876/Curl_Curl_to_Freshwater_Shared_path_-_Community_Engagement_Report_FINAL.pdf
- ^{xvi} Roger Geller. (2009). Four types of cyclists. Portland Bureau of Transportation. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/264746>
- ^{vi} Bicycle NSW (2018) Our Policy, [online as at 24/2/2021] <https://bicyclensw.org.au/our-policy/>
- ^{vii} 70% of people when surveyed said they would ride more if they felt safe
NSW Government, Sydney's Cycling Future (2013) [Online as at 24/2/2021] <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/media/documents/2017/sydneys-cycling-future-web.pdf>
- ^{viii} NSW Government, Providing for Walking and Cycling in Transport Projects Policy CP21001, [Online as at 19/2/2021] www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2021/providing-for-walking-and-cycling-in-transport-projects-policy.pdf
- ^{ix} NSW Government, Road User Space Allocation Policy CP21000, [Online as at 19/2/2021] www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2021/road-user-space-allocation-policy.pdf
- ^x Northern Beaches LSPS - Towards 2040. 2020, April. <https://files.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/policies-register/planning-strategies/local-strategic-planning-statement-lsps/lsp-s-towards-2040.pdf>
- ^{xi} Cycleway Design Toolbox: designing for cycling and micromobility. Transport for NSW. <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2021/Cycleway-Design-Toolbox-Web.pdf>
- ^{xii} Austroads, 2021. Guide to Road Design Part 6A: Paths for Walking and Cycling AGRD06A-17. <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-design/agrd06a/design-criteria/width-of-paths/shared-paths>
- ^{xiii} Cycleway Design Toolbox: designing for cycling and micromobility. Transport for NSW. <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2021/Cycleway-Design-Toolbox-Web.pdf>
- ^{xiv} City of Yarra - 30km/h speed limit: pre-trial final report, 2017. <https://thanksfor30.com.au/sites/default/files/2018-08/City-of-Yarra-Pre-Trial-Report-Aug-2017-FINAL%5B1%5D.pdf>
- ^{xv} O'Sullivan, F. (2020, November). Why Europe is slowing down. Bloomberg CityLab. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-18/speed-limits-are-dropping-in-europe-and-the-u-k>
- ^{xvi} Western Australia Department of Transport. Safe Active Streets Programme. <https://www.transport.wa.gov.au/activetransport/safe-active-streets-program.asp>
- ^{xvii} Vision Zero Network. (2015, April 13). European Cities Lead the Way Toward Vision Zero. <https://visionzeronetwork.org/european-cities-lead-the-way-toward-vision-zero/>
- ^{xviii} Wheel for Wellbeing. 2020. A Guide to inclusive cycling. https://wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/FC_WfW-Inclusive-Guide_FINAL_V03.pdf

Document administration	
Version	4.0
Date	8 August 2022
Status	Final
Related Projects	Northern Beaches Bike Plan / Move Northern Beaches
Notes	Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.