



**Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle Users Group
CBD BUG**

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The Honourable Rachel Nolan MP
Minister for Transport
GPO Box 2644
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Dear Minister

Integrating cycling and pedestrian infrastructure with other transport infrastructure

This letter calls on you to take action to change your department's current approach so that it integrates infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians with the new roads and public transport infrastructure in the pipeline for South East Queensland (SEQ).

One major reason for this letter is the lengthening list of busway projects that from the perspective of the Central Business District Bicycle Users Group (CBD BUG) have largely been of dubious worth in terms of the Government's fostering of cycling as a sustainable active transport mode. This view is based on the following summary of busway project outcomes for cyclists.

| Project | Outcomes for cyclists |
|--|--|
| South East Busway | Bikeway commenced as part of SE Busway second section has remained half completed and unusable since second busway section opened in April 2001 |
| Northern Busway | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction phase - zero provision for cyclists during construction severely impacted on people cycling between the CBD and the northern suburbs • Final design - flawed in how it has left cyclists and pedestrians to cross Gilchrist Avenue at the connection with Inner Northern Busway, for want of approximately 100m of bike path that would provide the connection to the new RBWH Cycle Centre that is only a stones throw away |
| Boggo Road Busway | Cyclist flyover at Ipswich Rd only included after major lobbying effort and requiring additional funding from State Cycling Unit budget |
| Eastern Busway - Stones Corner to Main Ave | Plans released to date indicate busway will add to the indirectness of an already indirect bikeway |

The CBD BUG's view on the lack of integration between busway infrastructure and active transport has now been supported by the Auditor-General's report *Transport network management and urban congestion in South East Queensland*. In this report the Auditor-General commented that improvement is needed to "include 'active transport' options with all integrated transport options in the planning processes" (page 47).

However, a major concern for the CBD BUG is the Translink Transport Authority (TTA) response to this conclusion, which indicated a continuation of the TTA's one-dimensional solutions, through which it will continue to build public transport infrastructure without the full incorporation of active transport options, such as the bike paths that should also form part of busway projects. The CBD BUG's view is that this approach is driven by the agency's prevailing "silo mentality", and will only yield further missed opportunities. The CBD BUG rejects this approach as it is too narrowly focused, and suggests that if it is allowed to persist the use of active transport options such as cycling and walking in Queensland will continue to be lower than the targets in government policies.

With this as background the CBD BUG is concerned about two upcoming bus infrastructure projects that require full integration of cycling / walking components. The first of these are the bus lanes that are apparently being considered for Adelaide Street in Brisbane's Central Business District (CBD) that will potentially result in sections of Adelaide Street becoming one-way.

As a means to reducing Brisbane's urban congestion the CBD BUG strongly supports the approach of taking road space away from cars for the purpose of improving public transport. However, the CBD BUG is concerned that converting sections of Adelaide Street to one way will negatively impact on cycling, as Adelaide Street is a principal cycling route in the CBD. Accordingly, this letter requests that you ensure as Minister that planning of bus lanes for Adelaide Street, and other Brisbane CBD streets, does not negatively affect cyclists or cycling.

Adelaide Street needs to be preserved as a principal cycling route in Brisbane's CBD for the following reasons.

- Its flat gradient, restricted traffic flows, wide shoulders, proximity to the King George Square Cycle Centre and Bicycle Awareness Zone (BAZ) markings make it one of the safest, and unsurprisingly, most popular streets in the Brisbane CBD for cyclists.
- Adelaide Street's role as a principal cycling route in the Brisbane CBD has already been recognised through it being linked with the Bicentennial Bikeway by cyclist traffic lanterns at its intersection with North Quay.
- With the Brisbane City Council (BCC) soon to be introducing an additional 2,000 bikes to Brisbane's streets via its bike hire scheme, it makes no sense to start restricting cyclist movements within the CBD.

It is also understood that after bus lanes are installed in Adelaide Street, other traffic using this street would have to turn into Creek Street. This would be a highly undesirable result for cyclists as Creek Street has a very steep gradient that many cyclists could not negotiate, and even those that could, would then be at risk because of their slow speed relative to that of motor vehicles, and Creek Street's narrow traffic lanes. Furthermore, this would then also oblige cyclists to use Ann Street to head towards the river, which is unacceptable because this street still has a 60km/h speed limit and carries large volumes of high speed traffic, including many heavy vehicles. Accordingly, the CBD BUG's position is that retaining Adelaide Street as a thoroughfare for cyclists after bus lanes are installed is essential.

To achieve this outcome one option is for the bus lane planning phase to be structured around enabling cyclists to ride in the bus lanes, which is permitted under S154 of the

Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Road Rules) Regulation 1999 (Qld).

Another option is install a contra-flow lane for cyclists. Contra-flow bike lanes have long been common overseas in countries that have fostered cycling as every day transport, and the CBD BUG sees the installation of this type of infrastructure as critical to increasing Brisbane's woefully low level of trips being made by bike. With many Brisbane CBD streets already being one-way the CBD BUG sees this type of infrastructure as highly warranted so that cyclists can more easily travel through the CBD.

The second bus infrastructure project that requires integration of cycling / walking components is the Brisbane Cross River Bus Access project, indicated in the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program 2009-2026 as having construction start some time between 2013-14 and 2025-26.

The CBD BUG's position is that all new cross river infrastructure projects must allow utilisation by cyclists and pedestrians. The costs of not taking this approach in the past for the Captain Cook Bridge, Merivale (rail) Bridge and the first Gateway Bridge are still being experienced today and will be for many years to come. Given the costs of adding utilisation by cyclists and pedestrians to these types of projects are marginal, while the benefits are massive, there can be little argument against this position.

A further issue of concern to the CBD BUG is the State Government's failure to date to guarantee preservation of part of the land held for the now abandoned Northern Transportation Corridor (NTC) on Brisbane's northern side, to enable construction of a cycling 'freeway' from Kedron Brook to the Brisbane CBD. In May 2008 the State Government announced the sell off of this land, because it was regarded as surplus to needs as the Airport Link and Northern Busway are going in different corridors.

The NTC provides the only alignment to allow a bikeway to start at Kedron Brook and proceed without interruption to the CBD. If this land is sold the opportunity to address the abysmal lack of cycling infrastructure on Brisbane's north side will be lost forever. The CBD BUG wrote to the Premier in mid-2008 to request that this property not all be sold, and to suggest instead that a portion be set aside to enable construction of a cycling freeway to the northern suburbs (replicating the V1 bikeway on Brisbane's south side). Cyclists are still waiting for an announcement on the retention of this land the delay is raising concerns the State Government cannot see it is jeopardising Brisbane's future by not committing to this keeping the required property.

In closing, the CBD BUG supports the construction of new public transport infrastructure, but is firmly of the view that it should enhance cycling rather than occur at its expense. Past failures by the Queensland Government to appropriately integrate cycling and walking as active transport modes with other transport infrastructure means the net gain to the community from these initiatives has been less than what should have been achieved. This has commonly meant cyclists and pedestrians are subsequently locked out for years into the future until facilities are eventually retrofitted at unnecessary cost to the taxpayer.

I look forward to your response on these issues.

Yours faithfully



Paul French

Co-convenor

Brisbane CBD BUG

8 September 2009