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Mr Paul French
Co-convenor
Brisbane CBD BUG
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Dear Mr French

Thank you for your email of 26 August 2014 about cycling safety issues at the intersection of the South East Bikeway and Lower River Terrace, Kangaroo Point. I apologise for the delay in responding. I appreciate you sharing your thoughts with me and will endeavour to respond to each of these matters accordingly.

Thank you also for your email of 15 September about cycling issues in Stanley Street, South Brisbane. I was deeply saddened to hear about the tragic loss of life in the recent cycling accident in Stanley Street and extend my sincerest sympathies to family, friends and loved ones. It would have been most distressing for all concerned and I certainly appreciate the effect of this tragedy on Brisbane's close-knit cycling community.

I can assure you Council remains committed to ensuring the safety of cyclists on our bikeway and road network. As you would appreciate, the accident is currently being investigated by the Queensland Police Service. Council will await the results of this investigation and work closely with key stakeholders, including Brisbane cycling groups, in relation to any recommendations that arise out of the Police investigation.

I note your request for copies of reports in relation to the safety improvement works that Council has undertaken on Annerley Road. I am advised that an independent consultant was commissioned by Council to undertake a road safety audit of Annerley Road. Council officers are currently reviewing the outcomes of the study and identifying potential future works for the corridor. Mr Lindsay Enright in Council's Transport Planning and Strategy branch (TPS) has advised me that he is happy to meet with you and go through the various matters covered in the report. Mr Enright can be contacted on 3403 5012 to arrange a suitable meeting time.

As you know, the South East Bikeway is owned and managed by the Queensland Government's Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR). However, Council is responsible for maintaining the entry and exit points that link to local roads and works closely with DTMR to ensure that safety continues to be maintained on this popular bikeway.

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I acknowledge your concerns about not being consulted in relation to recent safety improvement works where the bikeway links up with Lower River Terrace. Council's approach to any proposed works is to ensure the safest outcome is achieved for the benefit of the broader community. I understand that officers from TPS maintain regular contact with the CBD BUG on a range of cycling issues and I have asked that they continue to do so. I can assure you that your organisation's advocacy on cycling issues is important to me.

You may be interested to know that TPS plans to include information about proposed upgrades to Brisbane's cycling network on the Cycling Brisbane website in the near future. Importantly, the website will soon offer members the opportunity to help shape the future of cycling in Brisbane through surveys and feedback. If any CBD BUG members wish to take up this offer, I would encourage them to sign up via the website at www.cyclingbrisbane.com.au.

I appreciate your concerns for the safety of cyclists entering Lower River Terrace from the South East Bikeway and asked Mr Taelor Jorgensen from TPS to investigate this matter. Mr Jorgensen has confirmed that the mesh fence near the driveway of the Riviera apartments on Lower River Terrace was installed by Council in April 2014.

This fence is designed to discourage cyclists from taking a short cut at high speed across the grassed area and cycling over the driveway of the apartment complex, where there is limited visibility. I understand TPS undertook a review of this area in June and determined that safety could be enhanced by relocating the fencing further away from the edge of the bike path. Additional safety improvements undertaken at that time included the marking of a SLOW legend on the pavement and a high-visibility hazard marker to more clearly define the fencing.

I acknowledge your concerns that the fence may give motorists the impression they have right of way over cyclists. However, motorists should be well aware that, under the Queensland Road Rules, they are required to give way to all traffic, including cyclists and pedestrians, when entering or exiting driveways.

I was concerned to hear about the collision between a motorist and cyclist at this location in 2009. Mr Jorgensen tells me that a Give Way sign to reinforce the message to cyclists to slow down and give way to all traffic when leaving the bikeway was in place and clearly visible at the time of the accident. I am advised the inclusion of mesh fencing at the S-bend is specifically designed to prevent similar accidents from occurring at this location. While I appreciate your concerns that the fence has the potential to create a loss of momentum for cyclists riding at higher speeds, in the interests of safety, it is not proposed to remove the fence at this time.

I note your comments about cyclists choosing to use bikeways and footpaths to avoid motorists on the roadway. As you know, Council has invested significant funds into Brisbane's network of bikeways and shared pathways to encourage more people to take up cycling to ease congestion on our roads and create healthy and active lifestyles. Council works with a range of stakeholders to improve cycling networks across the city. This helps us take steps to maintain safety on our roadway, bikeways and shared pathways.

In relation to the surface treatment on the driveway at the entrance to the Riviera apartment complex, I can advise that this is a privately-owned driveway, rather than Council-owned. Mr Jorgensen has inspected the driveway and observed that, while painted black, it is made of concrete, not asphalt, and meets required safety standards for a driveway of this nature.

I understand that, at the request of the Riviera Body Corporate, Council painted a Give Way control along the driveway to reinforce the message to motorists of the need to give way to pedestrians and cyclists when entering and exiting the driveway. Further, I am advised the Give Way control is positioned so that motorists have a clear view of cyclists entering Lower River Terrace from the bikeway.

To further address your concerns, TPS has written to the Body Corporate asking them to remind residents of the need to give way to pedestrians and cyclists in the driveway. I have asked TPS to continue to work with the Body Corporate to ensure that safety is maintained in the driveway.

With regard to the gradient of the bikeway ramp leading to Lower River Terrace, this section of the South East Bikeway is managed by DTMR. Therefore, I have written to the Honourable Scott Emerson MP, Minister for Transport and Main Roads, asking him to consider your concerns and provide a direct response to you.

I appreciate the impact of recent changes to Graham Street and note your comment that motorists are using Leopard and Graham Streets, via Ellis Street, Lower River Terrace and Dock Street, as a short cut to avoid the lights on Stanley and Vulture Streets, and to access Somerville House during busy school pick-up and drop-off periods.

Mr Jorgensen tells me that Council has installed traffic calming measures in Ellis Street to discourage motorists from using the street as a rat run and that turning restrictions are in place in Leopard and Ellis Streets to prevent motorists from using these streets as a short cut in peak traffic times between 7am and 9am, Monday to Friday.

I am advised that any further restrictions in this area would create access issues for local residents. You may appreciate that Council needs to carefully consider the impact of any traffic changes on local residents. Therefore, it is not proposed to introduce further traffic restrictions at this time. However, Council is prepared to reconsider this matter in the future.

I appreciate your request for a traffic survey to be undertaken in this area and note your concerns about an increase in traffic volumes on Lower River Terrace. Mr Jorgensen conducted an assessment of recent traffic volume data from Lower River Terrace, which found that there has been a slight decrease in traffic movements out of Dock Street since Graham Street was added to the intersection.

However, I am also mindful that traffic volumes may be impacted by the opening of the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, even with the additional traffic lane on Stanley Street. Therefore, I have asked TPS to continue to monitor the traffic volumes on Lower River Terrace and to carry out further traffic management works, if required.

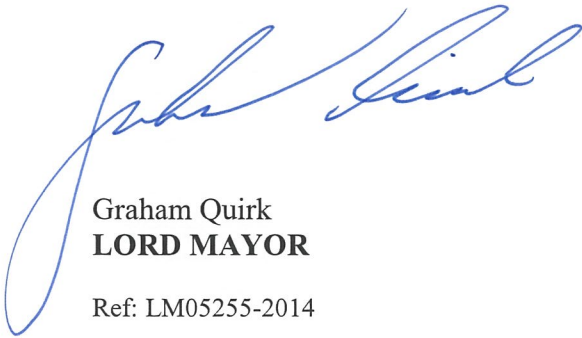
While it is not proposed to lower the speed limit to 30km/h on Lower River Terrace, I asked TPS to investigate the current speed of motorists on the road to determine if there is an issue. TPS has therefore arranged for a traffic survey to be undertaken to provide Council with clear and accurate data on the speed and volume of traffic along Lower River Terrace between the Captain Cook Bridge and Stanley Street. Depending on the data in the survey, Council can then consider any additional changes along Lower River Terrace.

I was concerned to hear that some motorists are disobeying the right turn restrictions at the intersection of Ellis and Leopard Streets, and performing illegal U-turns across the continuous centreline of Leopard Street. I note your comments that police enforcement has been requested at this intersection.

I have taken the liberty of also writing to the Queensland Police Commissioner, Mr Ian Stewart, on your behalf, asking him to consider this matter and provide a direct response to you. Should you continue to observe this occurring, I encourage you to contact the Police directly on 131 444 so that appropriate action can be taken.

Thank you for contacting me.

Yours sincerely



Graham Quirk
LORD MAYOR
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