

Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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The Right Hon Lord Mayor of Brisbane
Councillor Graham Quirk
GPO Box 2287
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Dear Lord Mayor

I refer to your November 2013 announcement that the Kangaroo Point pedestrian / cyclist bridge will be wholly funded by Brisbane City Council and constructed within the next five years.

As you are aware the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) is a grass roots volunteer organisation of more than 700 members, representing the interests of the very large number of Brisbane residents who ride bicycles to, from and within the Brisbane CBD. The CBD BUG actively seeks policy decisions at all levels of government that support cycling. In particular, the CBD BUG seeks improved infrastructure, end-of-trip facilities, integration of cycling with other transport modes and a cyclist-friendly regulatory environment.

The CBD BUG has a clear interest in the proposed new bridge meeting the needs of cyclists and would like to be included in the consultation process for the proposed crossing.

From a conceptual perspective the CBD BUG is very supportive of this bridge project as it would greatly increase connectivity for people walking and riding bikes between the eastern suburbs and the Brisbane CBD: thereby reducing residents' current over-dependence on private motor vehicles for transport.

While the nearby Story Bridge is an iconic Brisbane landmark it can also pose as a barrier to active transport and, another more person-friendly crossing of the river at Kangaroo Point has been desirable for a very long time. At the same time the Captain Cook Bridge, which is a similar distance up-river from the likely location of the proposed new bridge is a patent demonstration of a lack of foresight by a previous government as it has no provision for people walking or riding bikes.

The CBD BUG has examined the bridge concept proposal by Richard Kirk architects as made available on the BCC website. It is understood from this information that the bridge deck would be only four metres wide. The CBD BUG suggests that with the potential for over 10,000 pedestrian and cyclist movements per day, this narrow bridge deck width would be insufficient and lead to conflicts and crashes between people riding bikes and people walking. Accordingly, the width of the decks of the Goodwill and Kurilpa Bridges should be used as a minimum.

Further to this issue, the physical separation of people on bikes and people walking on this new bridge would actually be the ideal approach. This suggestion is based on the CBD BUG's awareness of the many incidents and crashes that have occurred on the Goodwill Bridge, even after additional signage has been added to indicate that pedestrians should walk along the outside of the bridge while cyclists take the middle area.

Compounding the lack of separation between the different groups of Goodwill Bridge users are the posts set across the bridge at its two immediate ends. These appear to have been installed to prevent motor vehicles from being driven on to the bridge. However, their main outcome has been to heighten the hazard for bridge users as they are akin to requiring pedestrian and cyclists to share passage of turnstiles.

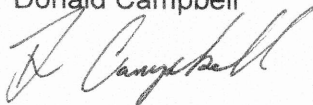
The CBD BUG posits that the need to exclude motor vehicles from the Kangaroo Point bridge should be achieved via installing bollards, street furniture/art, planter boxes and other similar physical installations. Such installations need to be set back around the outside perimeter of the bridge entry plazas that ought to be installed at both ends of the bridge.

The CBD BUG was very pleased to hear as part of your announcement that the bridge's design will be conservative in order to constrain costs. The experience of the CBD BUG in the design phase of the Kurilpa Bridge was that there was an undue focus on the form of this structure. This resulted in a budget overrun that then led to reduced functionality as costs were trimmed. A salient example of this outcome is the stairs that were to be placed at the Kurilpa Park end of the bridge were not delivered, meaning pedestrians have since been obligated to walking the much longer distance of the spiral ramp.

The CBD BUG looks forward to your response regarding this exciting piece of active transport infrastructure.

Sincerely

Donald Campbell



Brisbane CBD BUG co-convenor

03 April 2014