



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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

Re: Intersection of South East Bikeway and Lower River Terrace, Kangaroo Point

This letter is conveying the Brisbane CBD BUG's concerns regarding the intersection of the South East Bikeway (SEB) and Lower River Tce, Kangaroo Point. We request that Council make no further alterations at this site without first consulting with SEB users, and particularly the CBD BUG and other relevant cyclist advocacy groups. The reason for this letter is that the CBD BUG understands Council may be considering further options for this intersection.

The alignment of the steep ramp of the SEB and its close proximity to the driveway of the Riviera apartments at 50 Lower River Tce has created the potential for conflict between cyclists and motorists for many years. The CBD BUG understands the SEB is the second busiest bikeway in Brisbane, with about 1,000 bicycle riders using it every day.

The CBD BUG's studying of cyclist behaviour at this location indicates that approximately 90% of city-bound cyclists descending this path exit the SEB by riding diagonally across the driveway of these apartments to then enter Lower River Tce. They then either use the Queensland Maritime Museum driveway or Little Dock St to re-enter the bikeway. Only about 10% of cyclists continue along the bikeway by riding straight across Lower River Tce - because this route poses a greater risk due to the larger number of motor vehicles typically approaching from their right along Lower River Tce, in comparison to the relatively few vehicles entering/departing the Riviera apartments. Additionally, the S-bend in place on bikeway on the river side of Lower River Tce is an irritating slow point for cyclists in taking away their momentum and providing no safety benefit.

Similarly, to keep their momentum for negotiating the steep ascent confronting out-bound SEB riders approximately 90% also choose to ride along Lower River Tce and re-enter the SEB by riding via the Riviera apartments' driveway.

Bikeway users were shocked and outraged in early April 2014 when, without any forewarning, BCC installed a fence across the footpath. This was clearly intended to obstruct their use of the footpath and direct them away from the driveway of the Riviera apartments. A photograph of this fence is provided with this letter for your reference (Attachment 1).

From the perspective of cyclists this fence achieved little other than the replacement of the relatively minor, intermittent hazard - vehicles entering/exiting the Riverside apartments, with a more significant and permanent risk - collision with the fence. The location of this fence immediately adjacent to the edge of the bikeway's concrete surface did not provide the desired 0.5 metres of clearance to avoid a cyclist snagging their handlebars. Furthermore, even though this fence has since been shortened and its end set back from the edge of the SEB it still poses as a potential hindrance to motorists exiting the Riviera apartments seeing cyclists as they descend the SEB ramp.

The installation of this fence is viewed as a disturbing precedent as this is the first instance known to the CBD BUG of a lateral fence being installed on a footpath in Brisbane - to give motorists priority use of the footpath ahead of cyclists. Many people riding bikes are already forced to use bikeways and footpaths due to the danger posed to them from motorists.

The CBD BUG is aware of only one serious crash at this site, which involved a city-bound cyclist during late 2009. It should be noted that in this instance the motorist was apparently either entering the Riviera apartments property or using its driveway to make three-point turn. A photograph taken immediately after this crash accompanies this letter (Attachment 2). The CBD BUG would point out that the fence installed at this location by BCC during April 2014 would not have prevented this type of crash. In fact, it would have made it more likely as it reduces the manoeuvring space for bike riders for avoiding such crash.

You will also see from this photo that at the time of this crash the Riviera apartments' driveway had a paved surface. This driveway has recently been resurfaced with a bitumen-looking substance. Apart from its very close proximity to the SEB this driveway's surface is held by the CBD BUG to be a contributing factor to the problems between cyclists and motorists - as there is no footpath to remind motorists that this driveway is not simply an extension of the road.

To address this issue CBD BUG proposes the following solutions.

1. To raise the awareness of motorists about the presence of the footpath and its users - markings matching the Lower River Terrace concrete footpath's colour and pattern should be added laterally across this driveway - to make the alignment of the footpath continuous across this driveway.
2. The white "Give Way" surface markings on the Riviera apartments' driveway that follow the edge of where the concrete footpath would lie if it was continuous (refer Attachment 3) need to be set back along the front property boundary of the Riviera apartments'. This line has been placed too far forward - so that even those motorists exiting these apartments who do take care with regard to the presence of footpath users are not likely to stop before entering the footpath.
3. BCC to engage with the Department of Transport and Main Roads to deliver an education program for the Riviera apartments residents – about their need as motorists to give way to footpath users and all other road users when they are driving into or out of this premises, as required under s74 and s75 of the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Road Rules) Regulation 2009*. The issues at this site are not dissimilar to those that previously occurred frequently along Wynnum Road (Canning Bridge to Galloways Hill) between residents and cyclists riding on the footpath. However, the level of reported incidents has decreased following an education campaign, which included residents being informed of the relevant road rules.

4. BCC to focus on delivering a long term, permanent solution to the issues at this location and avoid further “band aid” solutions that mainly act as impediments to cyclists. To this end the CDB BUG suggests the SEB’s junction with Lower River Tce is realigned so it is a greater distance from the driveway of the Riviera apartments. This would clearly require some major earthworks and should also involve reducing the gradient of the ramp, which would in turn also reduce the speed of cyclists through this location.

Finally, BCC also needs to be aware that the risks to cyclists at this location have increased significantly following the recent realignment of Graham St. During the morning and evening peak travel periods there are now large numbers of rat-running motorists travelling between Leopard St and Graham St via Ellis St, Lower River Tce and Dock St - to avoid some six to seven sets of traffic lights along Stanley St and Vulture St. Accordingly, we request that BCC performs a traffic study to assess this more recently arising problem, and ensures it is appropriately addressed as part of any immediate and longer term improvements to Lower River Tce.

The CDB BUG has studied this rat-running activity and it appears to principally be people travelling for school drop-offs and pick-ups at Somerville House. Importantly, it is suggested this rat-running will increase when the new Lady Cilento Children’s Hospital opens later during 2014. Sadly, this rat-running is occurring despite the recent additional of an extra traffic lane along Stanley St, noted by the CBD BUG to have made Stanley St even more cyclist-hostile.

Apart from the motorists who flagrantly ignore the Leopard St signage installed to preclude right turns into Ellis St during the morning peak period, some motorists have also been observed driving along Leopard St towards Vulture St to travel just past the Ellis St intersection, and then perform a three-point-turn using a driveway, which then enables them to head back along Leopard St and legally turn left into Ellis St. This is also dangerous and legally questionable driving in light of the continuous centre line marking along Leopard St where motorists are making these turns.

Queensland Police has been requested to perform enforcement action to deter motorists from making these manoeuvres so they can rat-run along Lower River Tce towards Vulture St. However, it is anticipated this enforcement will only ever be intermittent and therefore limited in its affect. Furthermore, motorist rat-running from Vulture St to Leopard St via Lower River Tce will not be affected by this enforcement.

Accordingly, as a low cost solution for BCC to reduce the risk rat-running motorists pose to people riding bicycles across / along Lower River Tce, the CBD BUG calls for the speed limit along Dock St and Lower River Tce in both directions between Vulture St and the Captain Cook Bridge to be reduced to 30km/h.

The reduction of the speed limit for this distance of approximately 425 metres will serve two objectives. It will provide a disincentive for motorists to use this route instead of Stanley St, and will reduce the risk posed to vulnerable road users by motorists who persist in rat-running via Lower River Tce. Reducing the speed limit in this manner will result in extra travel time for motorists to cover this distance of less than 21 seconds. This marginal extra travel time is insignificant when compared to the health and potential life costs of a cyclist injured or killed as a result of a crash with a motorist.

In closing, it is essential that to avoid further loss of cyclist amenity and / or safety that no further changes occur at the intersection of the SEB and Lower River Terrace without BCC undertaking meaningful consultation with bicycle user groups such as the CBD BUG.

I look forward to your response on these issues.

Yours faithfully

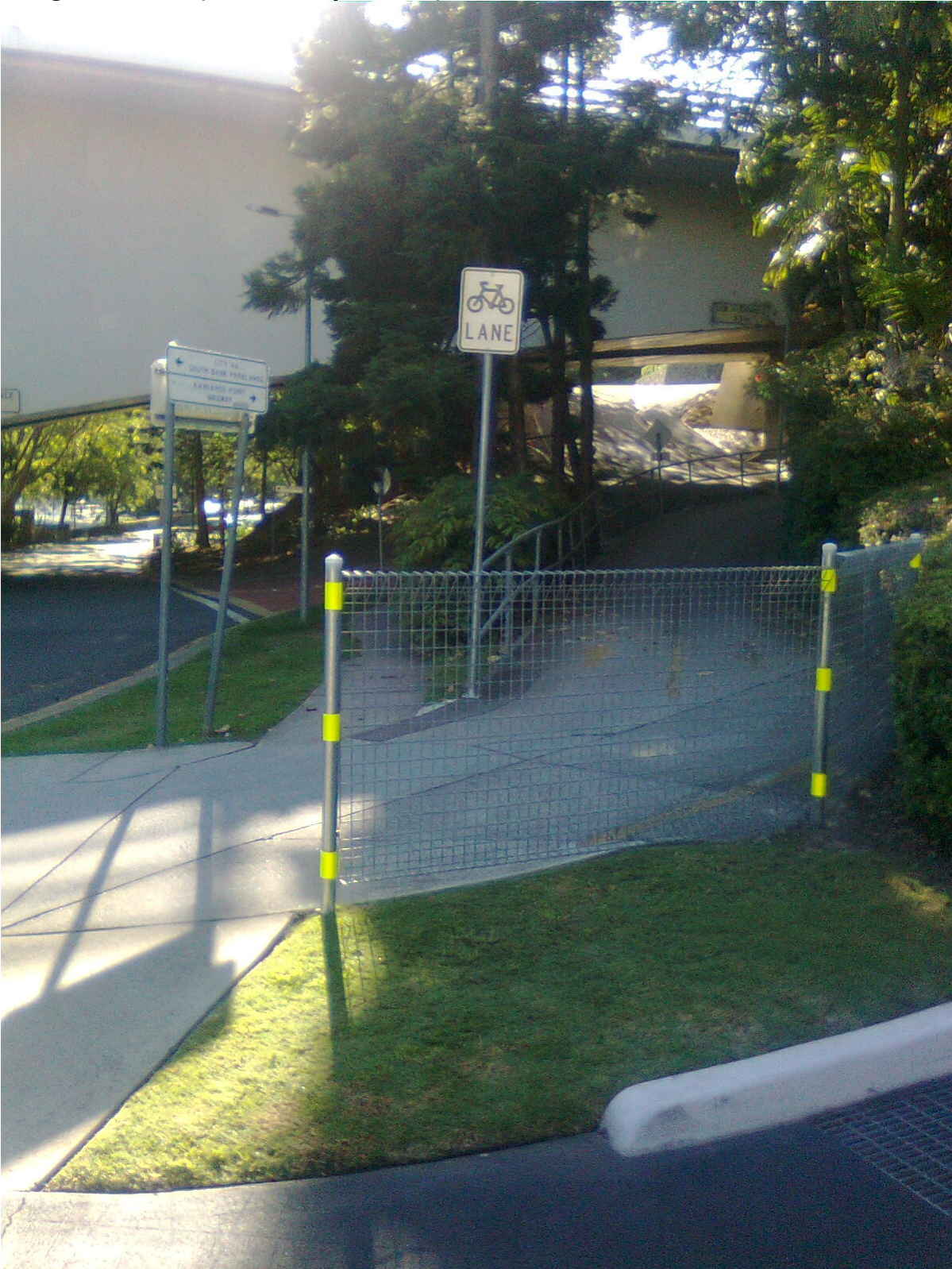


Paul French
Co-convenor
Brisbane CBD BUG
26 August 2014

Cc: Cr Helen Abrahams (The Gabba Ward)
EaSt BUG
Bicycle Queensland

Attachment 1

BCC- installed fence at junction of South East Bikeway and Lower River Tce, Kangaroo Point (taken 12 April 2014)



Attachment 2

Aftermath of cyclist/motorist crash at Riviera apartment's driveway, Lower River Tce, Kangaroo Point (taken 10 Dec 2009)



Attachment 3

“Give way” line along edge of concrete footpath in front of Riviera apartment, Lower River Tce, Kangaroo Point (taken 21 August 2014)

