



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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My dear Lord Mayor

The Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) is concerned about existing and reinstated deflection rails (known colloquially as “banana bars”) in the Brisbane City Council area. Our members and other people who ride bikes frequently complain of their dangerous nature and inappropriate use.

Deflection rails are found in the “Brisbane Standard Drawings” series (document 5001).¹

The Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads has a written policy recommending against their use. Their policy in Technical Note 132² states “Access control devices such as bollards and deflection rails are a safety hazard to path users and limit path capacity. When in doubt leave access control devices out.” Instead BCC has appeared to place banana bars in any location where they are in any doubt.

People who ride bikes in Brisbane universally detest them³ and far better and safer designs are available.

The Moreton Bay Regional Council has advised that they are actively removing these from their pathways.⁴

The only people who appear to like them are BCC planners and engineers who seem oblivious to methods used elsewhere. The usage and reinstatement is so entrenched that the persistence with this policy is seemingly driven by a lack of awareness of the alternatives or the personal preferences of Council officers.

“Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides”⁵ suggested “Path Terminal Treatments” as follows.

¹ <http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/planning-building/planning-guidelines-tools/planning-guidelines/standard-drawings>

² <http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/~media/busind/techstdpubs/Technical%20notes/TN132.pdf>

³ For example “Banana bars: danger in the name of safety”

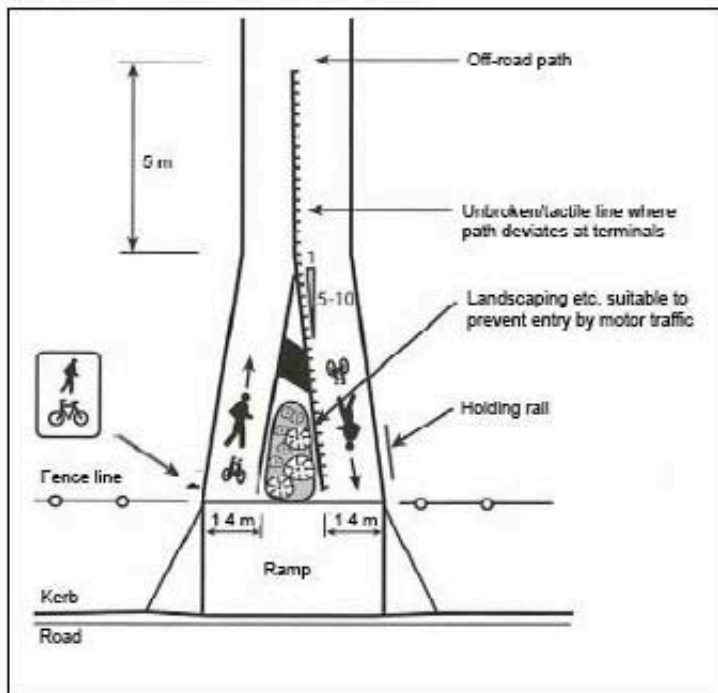
<https://transtri2.wordpress.com/2013/12/28/city-bikeways-loop/>; the “What is the point of banana bars” thread at <http://www.brisbanecyclist.com/forum/topics/what-is-the-point-of-banana-bars>; the Dutch blogger Mark Wagenbuur at

<https://bicycledutch.wordpress.com/2013/11/14/cycling-in-brisbane/> and BQ’s opposition at <http://www.bikeqld.org.au/pipermail/bikeqld/2009-July/006520.html>

⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BrisbaneNorthBUG/permalink/498118160336469/>

⁵ <https://www.onlinepublications.austroads.com.au/items/AP-G88-14>

Figure 7.16: Separate entry and exit terminal



Source: Austroads (2009) Figure 10.1, based on VicRoads (2005)

Figure 7.17: Example of a bollard treatment



Source: Austroads (2009) Figure 10.3, and Roads and Traffic Authority NSW (2005).

Good ideas always travel whereas the idea of deflection rails hasn't. It has been seen in a few places in Australia and Napier in New Zealand, and that's all as far as the BUG is aware.

Their proliferation in Brisbane is clear evidence of a great disconnect between BCC planners, designers and engineers and the people who actually have to use the infrastructure.

A BUG discussion on the Facebook page produced a list of banana bars members would like to see removed.⁶

- Riverstage – the BUG requested removal of these bars on 28 August 2014.



These banana bars should be removed for the following reasons.

- They create a pinch point and increase the potential for crashes between path users.
 - The risk to cyclists from these bars is evident from virtually all their paint having been scratched off their horizontal sections due to numerous impacts by cyclists.
 - In being located on a curve the sight lines for cyclists approaching these bars are restricted.
 - There is no need for these bars to be in place as a “slow down” device. According to the Shared Paths and Bicycle Path Termination Treatments (Page 16 of TMR TRUM Note Under Development 9 July 2013) data analysis has shown that the average speed of cyclists on shared path facilities at peak times approximates a reasonable design speed for individual locations.
 - There is a barrier to vehicles entering this path at its Edward St termination. If a barrier is required at the Goodwill Bridge termination of this path – it should be at that site and not mid-path.
- It is suggested that at the time these banana bars were installed the volume of people riding bikes along this path was significantly lower than that now evident. Accordingly, these bars are no longer appropriate to this location.

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<https://www.facebook.com/cbdebug/photos/a.133593256676724.12821.113054362063947/823644861004890/?type=1>

- Yeronga – two pairs at Stevens Street / Paragon Street – also see Appendix. These need to be removed plus the dangerous lip on the kerb on the north side needs fixing – see pictures. This infrastructure is now completely inadequate for the volume and speed of bicycle traffic that traverses this area as both commuter and recreational (“River Loop”) traffic.



- St Lucia – on the Esplanade footpath (see Appendix) and on the footpath opposite the entrance to St Peter's College on Lambert Road (in photo). Both just add conflict between path users for no good reason.



- Macquarie Street near University of Queensland. There is a project⁷ to remove the dangerous bars (pictured) near the creek, although it envisages replacing this pair with two other pairs. Another solution should be chosen. The BUG would also like to see the two pairs closer to the University east of this location removed as well. There is the single set of “banana” bars at the corner of Keith St and Macquarie St about 150 m further east from the Macquarie Street project, and another set some 200 m further east of that set where that bikeway meets Sir William Macgregor Drive (see Appendix). Given that these two locations service virtually identical volumes of bicycle traffic we request that they are given similar treatment and be replaced with more appropriate high volume bike path entrance treatments.



⁷ <http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/traffic-transport/roads-infrastructure-bikeways/bikeway-pathway-projects/macquarie-street-bikeway-safety-improvements-project>

Two spots on SE Freeway bikeway

- Junction Street. This street can get pretty busy at times but the presence of banana bars prevents cyclists from crossing the road and entering the Bikeway quickly.



- Between O'Keefe Street and Fern Street. Cyclists travelling towards Fern Street often ride to the left of the two bars which defeats their purpose.



- Yorks Hollow on the Normanby Pedestrian Cycle Path, near the west end of Gilchrist Avenue. These have been reinstated after recent Legacy Way works.



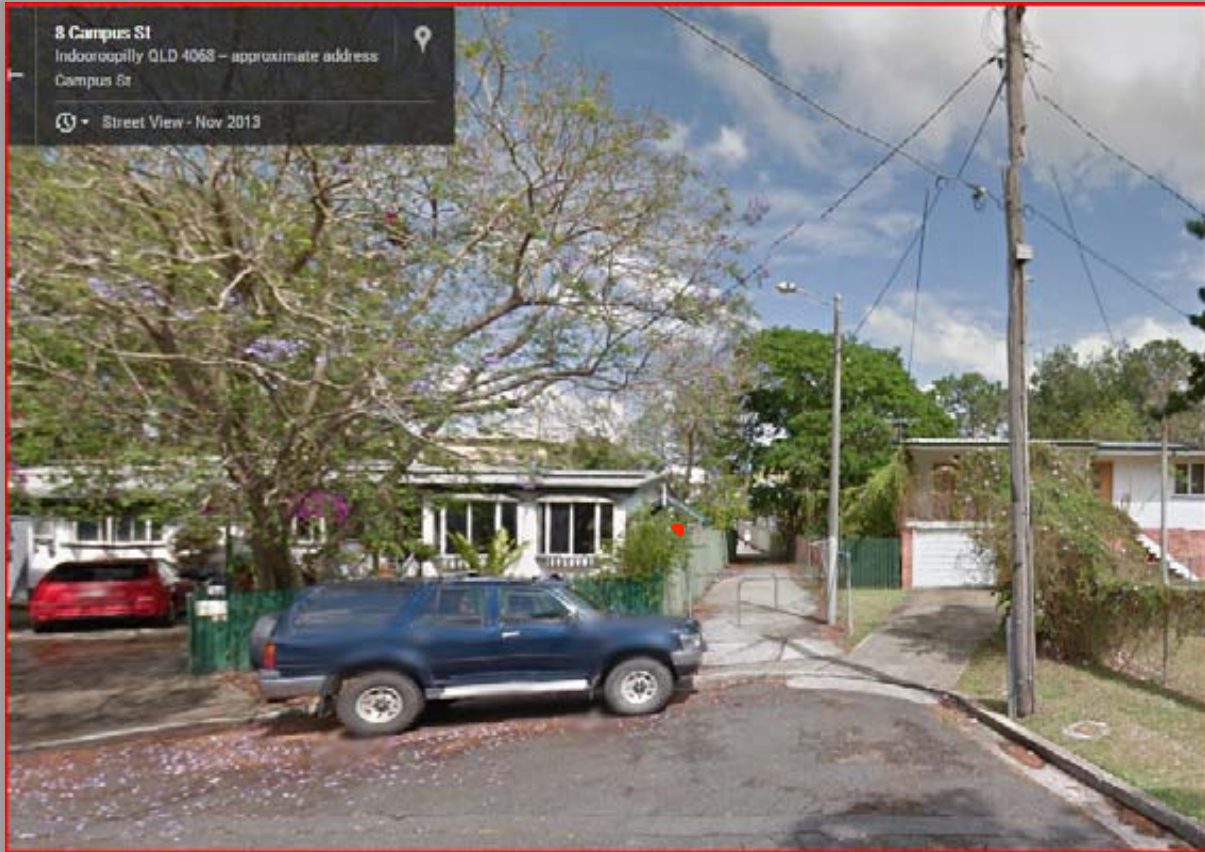
Further examples and different views (from Google Street View) of other inappropriate banana bars in the Council area are shown in the Appendix.

We look forward to your response concerning these matters and a change in BCC policy concerning the usage of deflection rails.

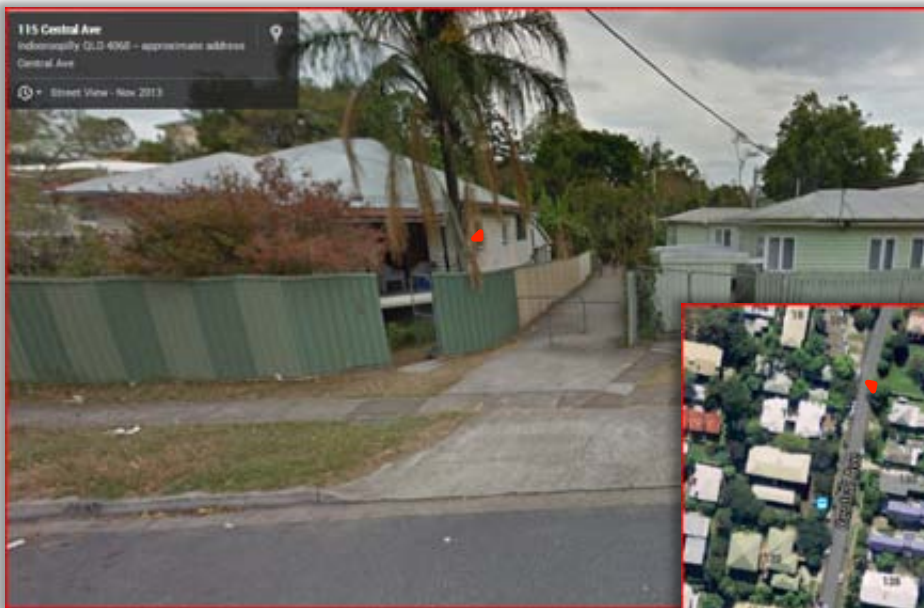
Regards

Dr Richard Bean
CBD BUG Co-convenor
11 June 2015

Appendix



□ Campus St,
Indooroopilly





▣ Park Rd,
Yeronga



▣ Fairfield Rd,
Yeronga





Moggill Rd,
Taringa





Heroes Ave,
Taringa



Josling St,
Taringa

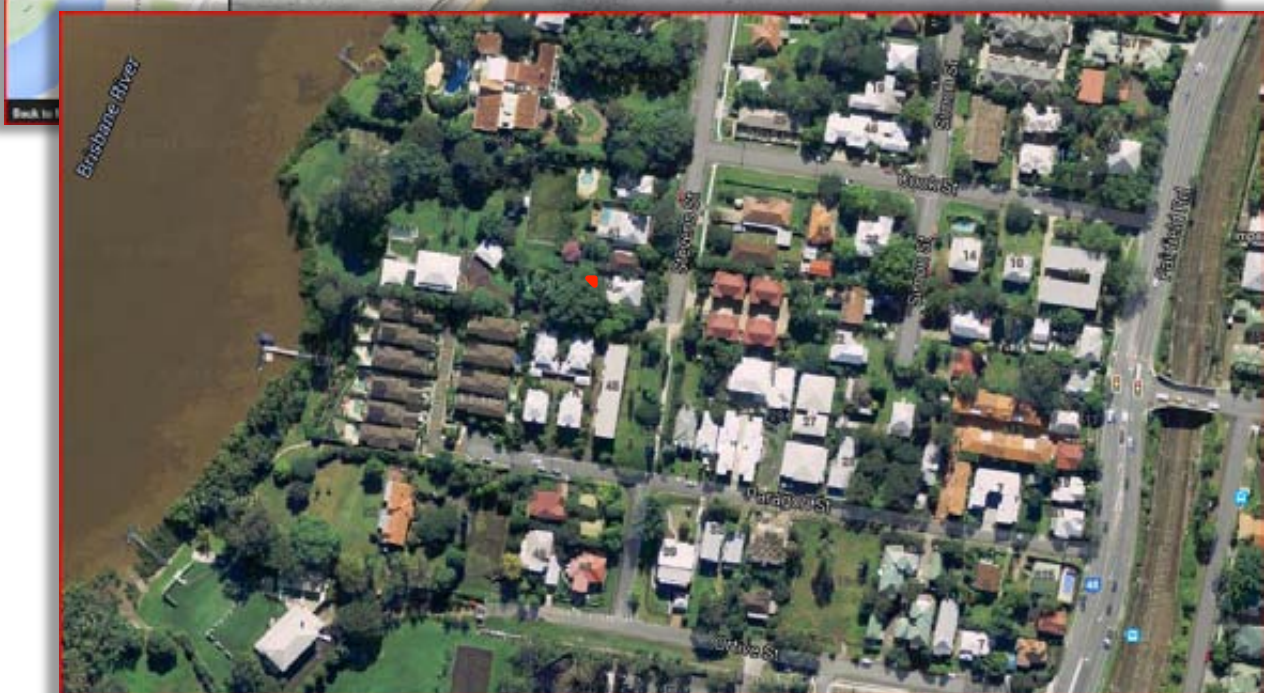




▪ Brisbane
Corso, Yeronga



Paragon St,
Yeronga





The Esplanade,
St Lucia



Macquarie St,
St Lucia



Walter Taylor Bridge,
Chelmer