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Hi Dick,

## **LANE COVE BIKE PLAN STUDY**

This study will be the first major revision for the Lane Cove municipality since the original bike plan (Regional BikePlan Study produced by Chris Stapleton) in 1982. That study was restricted to identifying a network of bike routes almost exclusively using existing streets. The North Shore Bicycle Group considers that this new study needs to promote to the community the importance of cycling and its role in addressing issues such as peak oil and the resulting major fuel price rises, climate change, air quality, congestion, health and obesity, .

The Cycling Promotion Fund's recently released report quantifies these benefits:  
“Preliminary results from a study undertaken on behalf the Department of Health and Ageing found cyclists saved more than \$82 million in public health costs, almost \$64 million in traffic congestion-related costs and \$9 million in greenhouse gas-related costs.”

Cycling can reduce other costs on NSW (and Australian) residents and taxpayers, such as:

1. the \$427 million allocated to bus children to/from school in 2003/2004. (Despite an internet search, NSBG is unable to identify more recent allocations, but they are likely to be significantly higher.)
2. massive subsidies to the motor vehicle industry revealed by the Industry Commission's last June.

In early June, Dr Chris Rissel and Carolyn New (NSW Health) released their analysis of 2001 and 2006 data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics Census. In the inner suburban areas, cycling to work shows a continuing significant upturn.

In the morning peak hour (7.15-- 8.15am ) on Ride2Work Day last October, close to 800 cyclists used the Sydney Harbour Bridge cycleway despite appalling cycling conditions through North Sydney . (The Lane Cove Tunnel Project's recently opened SUP --shared user path -- finishes just 3km from the northern end of the SHB cycleway.)

### **LATEST DEVELOPMENT**

The new SUP along Epping Road / Longueville Rd is heavily used by cyclists. This major transport corridor previously did not even have a footpath for half its length through to the Lane Cove River . Willoughby Council's bike counts last June show a noticeable spike in

usage along the Gore Hill section as a result of the opening of the access under the Pacific Highway midway through the counts.

## **CRUCIAL IMPROVEMENTS**

### **1. Lane Cove Shopping Centre**

The shopping centre is on a ridge which Longueville Rd follows from the Pacific Highway ridgeline to Longueville and Northwood, while Burns Bay Rd follows another ridgeline from the shopping centre towards Hunters Hill .

Away from these ridgelines the terrain can be steep, although the existing signposted bike routes generally follow remarkably reasonable grades.

Consideration needs to be given to upgrading the bike access to the shopping centre from all directions.

**North:** make access to Epping Rd / Longueville Rd much more cycle friendly.

**South:** improve cycling conditions, including better surfaces and bypasses of humps on Longueville Rd.

**Southeast:** the existing backstreet signposted bike route linking North Sydney , Wollstonecraft, Greenwich and central Lane Cove involves a long steady climb along Phoenix St to the shopping centre. The narrow section past Pottery Green and through council's carpark is unattractive for cyclists. An alternative facility should follow the existing shared path along the southern side of Pottery Green, then a new shared path across its western embankment to link directly to the entrance of Lane Cove Leisure Centre, which generates much car-parking demand. This new shared path should also extend to the shopping centre, crossing Little St about 10 to 20m south of the driveway to Pottery Green, and proceeding across the embankment to the western footpath of Little St. The existing footpath should be upgraded to a constant grade from the NE pedestrian entrance to the unit block through to Little Lane.

Note that cyclists should not be encouraged to use the existing path between Central Ave and the southwest part of Pottery Green, due to the speeds attainable on that descent.

**West:** improve Burns Bay Rd , particularly by extending the asphalt sheeting over the original concrete surface towards the kerb to create a smooth cycle lane.

### **2. Pacific Highway ..... dangers of 'S' lanes**

The highway follows the ridgeline along the council area's border. We understand bus lanes are proposed along this corridor, which will hopefully eliminate the four 'S' lanes in the municipality:

1. Hotham Pde: this currently incorporates a 'bike-safe' design.
2. Campbell St : the northbound kerbside lane tapers to nothing on the approach to this intersection, unnecessarily endangering cyclists due to the merge.
3. Westbourne St : similar to Campbell St , but with the added danger of a climb and a curve.
4. Albany St : similar to Campbell St .

### **3. The Peninsulas : Greenwich , Northwood, Longueville & Riverview**

While these four peninsulas have mostly reasonably graded access roads, a major problem is accessing the latter three from St Leonards / Wollstonecraft as the Gore Creek valley and Lane Cove Golf Course form a barrier to cycling. Cyclists using either route option from this region ( Pacific Highway or the signposted backstreet route via Ronald Ave ) require a massive detour via the Lane Cove Shopping Centre due to the extreme grade of Dorritt St . A cross-valley route is essential.

Options which should be considered are:

1. using the higher access to the golf course from River Rd , passing the clubhouse, crossing the fairway, then climbing to the rear of the Dingle Dell kindergarten and proceeding into Campbell Ave.
2. using the disused bowling club area on Longueville Rd , across the fairway, then proceeding east.

### **4. Connection to Hunters Hill**

The continuing lack of a cycle link to Hunters Hill is appalling. Local cyclists cannot legally ride to Hunters Hill High School unless they ride on the horrendous Burns Bay Road . In the southwesterly direction, a long, wide deceleration lane exists which should be reconfigured to provide a shared path between Fig Tree Bridge and Linley Point Reserve. A connection should be constructed to Burns Bay Reserve.

### **5. St Leonards Precinct**

The region in the vicinity of the railway station is particularly unpleasant for cycling but vital for accessibility. Any further modifications should be designed to enhance cyclist access and safety.

### **Underpass of the Pacific Highway**

Pedestrian and cyclist access under the Pacific Highway (western side) that was severed due to the Forum development should be restored thus allowing connection to Herbert St . This severance was totally inappropriate being designed to funnel pedestrians into the new development.

#### **One-way laneway immediately south of Pacific Highway**

This laneway between Lithgow St and Christie St is one-way eastbound with a very narrow footpath on its southern side, resulting in pedestrians almost invariably walking on the roadway. Compounding the dangers is the extremely poor forward visibility at the western end of the laneway.

The curvature of this corner should be tightened and visibility enhanced. The speed limit should be markedly reduced (possibly a shared zone) with legal two-way movements provided for cyclists this providing a link to the existing signposted bike routes to the west and east (Christie St & Nicholson St).

#### **Christie St contraflow facility**

A northbound contraflow (or similar) facility should also be provided on Christie St between the above laneway and the Pacific Highway .

### **FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES**

#### **1. Lane Cove Plaza**

The shopping centre including the Plaza is a major generator of traffic with its resultant congestion. The plaza is on the ridgeline, while the only legal alternative is via the cycling-unfriendly Rosenthal/Birdwood Avenues. In central and northern European countries, plazas always provide legal cycle access through the use of specially coloured paving. If council wants to really encourage cycling, such a treatment is essential for our Plaza.

#### **2. Railway corridor**

An SUP should be provided along the North Shore Railway corridor. Such an excellently graded facility would improve access and encourage residents to walk and cycle to their local station or, indeed, to more distant destinations.

### **COUNCIL'S PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

Councils' Planning documents should always include consideration of cycling as occurs with provision for motor vehicles, otherwise its policy will be a failure from a sustainability viewpoint. Disconcertingly, cycling is now hardly ever mentioned, if at all.

1. Council's planning section must be always looking for opportunities to enhance cycling (and walking) facilities:

1.1 The Woolworths development, where cycling, would at most, be an afterthought.

1.2 The Australand development in Duntroon Ave missed the opportunity to construct a pedestrian (shared use) bridge over the railway line. Such a structure, recommended in the St.Leonards Study, would have provided direct access to the nearby Crows Nest shopping centre, a major employment node that generates significant traffic. When the Australand residents move in, they are unlikely to walk the circuitous route either via noisy, polluted Pacific Highway or via River Rd 's very narrow footpath. Such lack of consideration during the planning process is a disaster for sustainability.

1.3 With the recent Billy Blue subdivision, council should have required a shared path corridor to be provided with a future link to Greenwich Rd , as an alternative to the steep River Rd access to Greenwich Rd.

1.4 The most obvious development in the near future will be the Rosenthal Ave carpark site, where two-way bike movement should be permitted around the eastern and southern side of the development as an alternative to the hilly, dangerous roads on the north and west.

1.5 The other site would be the Little St carpark, where a much better graded shared footpath should be provided along its eastern boundary linking the shopping centre ( Longueville Rd ) with the Aquatic Centre, Pottery Green and the existing bike routes to Osborne Park , Greenwich , Wollstonecraft and North Sydney .

## **CONCLUSION**

Cycling's growth is particularly evident in the recent upsurge of bicycle traffic on the Sydney Harbour Bridge . With Lane Cove just 6km distant and with an excellent facility along Epping and Longueville Rds, the challenge now is to significantly improve cycling access to the Lane Cove Shopping Centre and to improve links to the rest of the municipality.

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