



14th August 2008

Bicycle NSW provides this submission in relation to the *Sydney Olympic Park Master Plan 2030*. The submission is also made with reference to the *Sydney Olympic Park Transport Strategy 2008* (PB, June 2008)

Bicycle NSW Involvement at Sydney Olympic Park

Bicycle NSW is the State's peak member cycling organisation, with its role to support its members, provide policy support for cycling across various jurisdictions in NSW, and to implement encouragement and promotional programs. Bicycle NSW for many years has been involved at Sydney Olympic Park, initially through activities at Bicentennial Park, involvement in the development of cycling facilities for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, and preparation of a Cycling Audit and Masterplan for Millennium Parklands in 2003.

Bicycle NSW holds a number of events each year at Sydney Olympic Park including the Gear Up Girl program, training and bike maintenance days, and as a venue for completion of the Spring Cycle event. Key initiatives that we see as relevant to the Master Plan include the Ride 2 Work campaign, and the Gear Up Girl program. Bicycle NSW also more generally in NSW supports initiatives for active transport and healthy lifestyle programs.

Strengths of Sydney Olympic Park in Regards Cycling and Active Transport

Sydney Olympic Park is without question a key location in Sydney for cycling. It has become a leading example in Australia for the provision for cycling and active travel infrastructure, and since the Sydney 2000 Olympics, anecdotal evidence suggests that it is now a key destination for at least recreational riders in Sydney. Unfortunately the Transport Strategy does not present any information on current ridership, trends or overall pattern of cycle use at Sydney Olympic Park. This lack of data needs to be addressed urgently so as to better plan for longer term growth and provide base level data from which to assess the impact of measures.

The development of Sydney Olympic Park as a world class cycling destination has developed largely over a period of limited growth and development density. Wide open streets with low motor vehicle volumes, dedicated cycle lanes, and many kilometres of shared pathways in a landscaped setting are natural attractions.

Features of the Sydney Olympic Park site in relation to cycling:

- an ideal venue for groups or individuals for recreational rides – with a number of loop ride options, plenty of features to provide interest along the way, and safe and easy riding environment. Rides within or having Sydney Olympic Park as a destination are now featured in a number of prominent cycling publications including *Cycling Around Sydney*, *Bike Rides Around Sydney* and the *Bike Bible* (due for release late 2008). SOP is a regular destination for the BUG rides and feature prominently in the *Push On* calendar;
- the size of Sydney Olympic Park means that cycling is an ideal way to travel to cover the various features and locations spread out over some kilometres;
- the on-road network of cycle lanes provides a location for training and fitness riders;
- low motor vehicle volumes and generally low posted speed limits (apart from the major arterials) helps to provide a more conducive cycling environment; and,
- increasing support for those who visit Sydney Olympic Park and wish to ride, including bike hire, mapping, directional signage, bicycle parking.



With the additional growth at Sydney Olympic Park and an estimated additional population of some 50,000 as foreshadowed in the Master Plan 2030, it is essential that the achievement to date for mainly recreational riding are consolidated, and a similar advances are made in encouraging utility trips at Sydney Olympic Park.

Potential Implications for Cycling for Master Plan 2030

The greatly increased commercial activity and residential population at Sydney Olympic Park in the next 20 years and the infrastructure proposed to be put in place to service such growth has a number of implications for sustainable and active transport such as:

- increases in the volumes of motor vehicle traffic, particularly during peak periods weekday, and for commercial traffic (such as delivery vehicles and trucks). Unless specific allowances are made in the design and provision of cycling facilities, this increase can have an adverse impact on willingness to ride, particularly on roads where there is no specific cycling provision;
- infrastructure that is proposed to be put in place to maintain road capacity (such as on-street car parking) can reduce the room available for cycle lanes, and result in increased stress and trauma for riders;
- increased numbers of people at Sydney Olympic Park (resident population, visitors, workers) in the commercial precinct will place greater demand on the shared path network and the pedestrian environment generally, potentially resulting in increased levels of conflict between pedestrians and riders; and,
- new development sites that could potentially sever existing pedestrian or cycling access routes.

The proposed development in Master Plan 2030 can also provide opportunities for cycling such as:

- provision of significant new cycling-specific infrastructure and initiatives funded through new commercial and residential development, that cater for utility trips, in the same way SOP currently caters for recreational riders;
- ability to introduce new initiatives such as Transport Travel Plans for firms operating at Sydney Olympic Park;
- more end of trip facilities including the retrofitting of these at existing premises as well as for new developments, and the new development could result in more services for riders such as bike repair, bike hire, cycling information etc;
- altered traffic and parking arrangements that could positively impact on cycling and cycling safety; and,
- chance for a fresh approach and changed focus so that utility cycling is catered for and promoted, and Sydney Olympic Park not seen just as a sporting and recreational cycling venue. This could result in increases in cycling mode share driven by forward thinking policies and strategies.

Due to its role as a training and cycling location for riders to gain experience, what happens at Sydney Olympic Park also has implications for cycling more broadly throughout the Sydney Metro area.

Comments on Masterplan 2030 and Transport Strategy 2008

General Comments

The general objectives of the Masterplan with regard travel demand management and the setting of targets for public transport are worthwhile sentiments and are fully supported. However, the mechanisms to achieve this are not as clear, particularly the apparent catering for anticipated motor vehicle growth through road infrastructure, and the expansion of car parking



capacity in line with residential and commercial growth. This could have adverse implications for utility cycling at Sydney Olympic Park.

Cycling as a travel mode appears to be largely neglected in the targets for mode share, although a mode share target of 8% by 2030 is presented in the Transport Strategy. Unfortunately no base case data for cycling has been presented in the Transport Strategy or Master Plan. Unless this data is gathered, achievement of any future cycle mode share targets will be impossible to determine.

There do not appear to be any major new cycling initiatives listed in the Master Plan document, with these only presented in the Transport Strategy (not a public document). More detail on cycling infrastructure and initiatives as put forward in the Transport Strategy should be carried through to Master Plan 2030 document, to ensure that they carry weight and are in fact implemented.

The modest initiatives proposed in Master Plan 2030 are unlikely to result in any major shift in the mode share for utility cycling, over and above the existing situation. This is particularly so given that there appears to be little or no disincentives to drive to Sydney Olympic Park, and that most new streets do not provide cycle lanes, yet cater for on-street car parking.

Specific Comments – Master Plan 2030

3.7 Access and Transport

First paragraph – what is the meaning of “improved” in this context? What are the outcomes being sought? The following sections indicate that the strategies and policies are catering for demand rather than adopting travel demand management principles.

1st dot point – refer earlier re discussion on targets. A target for cycling share should also be included. Note that cycling did not appear on the data on journey to work. Was this an option in the SOPA survey as reported in the Transport Strategy report at Figure 3.3? The public transport target seems modest compared with the existing public transport mode share of between 15-20%, and in comparison with other centres such as Macquarie Park (40% by 2030).

4th dot point – could also include “active transport” here as well as public transport. However the proposals in the Master Plan and Transport Strategy do not seem to back this assertion of limiting parking spaces. The allowances are typical of other developments but are hardly restrictive – particularly combined with the additional on-street parking being provided. It is hard to argue that the number of parking spaces available for residents and workers over above the current provision will result in any meaningful shift in mode of travel.

7th dot point – hard to see the point being made here if design is including vehicles – i.e. the street network will be designed. What is missing is references to speed limits on these streets. Apart from the (shared?) Pedestrian streets approach which is strongly supported (assuming that they are shared with riders), the design of the new streets do not appear to support cycling, particularly where there is on-street car parking and no cycle lanes. Every street needs to be rideable and have a good cycling environment, and priority should be explicitly given to active and sustainable modes in design and provision of the street environment.

8th dot point – unless more direct rail services are provided (more direct services to SOP combined with link to a Metro West line), SOP will develop as a car-based “Specialised Activity Centre”, and any proposed target is largely a nominated ideal rather than a practical and achievable target. This is where additional resources and incentives for cycle travel can help SOP to meet travel targets in a cost effective and timely way.

9th dot point – there is clearly a role here for cycling to contribute for trips under 5km to SOP. Sydney Olympic Park needs to work together with local councils and the RTA to achieve the



most effective regional cycling connections. Maps of local routes should be placed at the periphery of SOP to help riders navigate the adjoining streets into and out of SOP.

10th dot point – active and sustainability transport should be promoted as the highest priority. Car share should be specifically referred to here as there are successful schemes already in place in Sydney.

12th dot point – rather than simply “facilitating vehicle access”, if there is indeed an intent to promote sustainable transport modes, then all of the new streets within the development sites should be shared zones, with vehicle access only for loading and unloading, with access restricted by use of bollards that can be retracted to allow access by emergency vehicles (fitted with transponders).

3.7.1 Vehicular Access

1st dot point – in essence this increasing road capacity in line with development. Even the modest targets set for mode share are unlikely to be realised if there is an overriding objective of expanding road capacity to meet vehicle demand.

2nd dot point – what are the “induced traffic” implications for providing “improved” connections to major roadways, such as a new M4 East ramp? Again “improving” vehicle connections will tend to maintain the current mode split, and do little to support a cycling-friendly road environment.

3rd dot point – unclear as to whether cycling facilities (such as lanes or advanced waiting boxes) will be included where intersections are signalised.

4th dot point – event road closures would specifically allow for cycling and pedestrian access?

3.7.2 Parking

What is the meaning of “improved” in this context? What are the outcomes being sort? Similarly to above, the points in this section indicate that the strategies and policies appear to cater for demand rather than adopt travel demand management principles.

1st dot point – the greenhouse gas impacts of construction and materials should also be taken into account. Ideally reducing car parking reduces the need for and amount of construction, and can influence travel behaviour and levels of car ownership. This is far easier to achieve at a location such as SOP which is essentially under the control of a single body.

2nd dot point – given the distance of these parking areas are from the main commercial precinct, and the amount of on-street parking proposed, there is unlikely to be significant utilisation of these areas outside event periods.

3rd dot point – how is this going to be achieved in practice? The amount of parking and its location as proposed is unlikely to provide any disincentive for car travel or ownership. For streets where on-street parking is proposed and no bike lanes in place, kerbside parking will act as a disincentive for cycling, due to threats of car door opening on the rider, as well as the space that the on-street parking takes up not allowing room for dedicated cycle lanes.

5th dot point – this tends to confirm the fact that car parking provision will rise in line with growth at the site, and act to maintain car dependency.

6th dot point – as per point above, creating more convenient parking will only serve to maintain car dependency.

10th dot point – ensuring that major car park entries are provided off (i.e. away from) major roads, although visually/aesthetically more pleasing, will lead to potential quiet side streets that could be conducive to cycling and walking, having higher volumes of motor vehicle traffic.

Figure 3.10 – from the figure it is not possible to determine what is existing on-street parking and what is proposed new on-street parking (either on existing streets or new streets).

3.7.4 Pedestrian and Bicycle

“Pedestrian and bicycle access may be improved by:” – the word “access” used in this context can be compared with that for “vehicle” access under 3.7.2. There is a concern that simply referring to “access”, reduces the importance of safety and convenience, encouragement and quality of riding experience, and the improved mode share of cycling and cycle use.

1st dot point – apart from the existing on-road bicycle lanes, and proposed shared streets (location or extent not defined), the current new streets do not appear to provide any new design or facilities that would encourage cycling. Intersections should also be designed so as to facilitate cycling, through the use of bicycle lanterns which means riders are not required to dismount, as well as cycle lanes or bicycle storage areas.

2nd & 3rd dot points – more details need to be provided as to the nature of end of trip facilities, including short-term bicycle parking, overnight storage and lockers, and secure bicycle cages.

4th dot point – this is strongly supported – and as well local cycling maps should be provided at “gateway” locations to the site

5th dot point – it is unclear as to whether this point is making the inference that cycling would be prohibited or restricted during major events? Cycling should be permitted at major event times except for the actual event sites (e.g. Easter Show). Usually riders will avoid the more congested areas in any case.

6th dot point – will the existing pathway network function adequately for shared use following the growth in population and visitors to the site?

Figure 3.1.2 Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes

- More detail is needed to see what facilities are proposed at the precinct level
- The location of the future shared pathway utilising the former Pipitta rail line does not show any continuation of the route past the SOPA boundary. This conflicts with the description of the link provided in the Transport Strategy which describes a link to the south side of Parramatta Rd.
- The location of shared streets should be shown

4.3 Public Domain

4.3.1 Controls

2. – design should also take into account the Cycling and Walking Guidelines, NSW Dept Planning.

Similarly to guidelines 3-5, Public Domain controls should also be developed for the cycling environment.

4.8 Transport Strategies and Infrastructure

It is noted that there is no reference to the contribution that could potentially be made from cycling to the travel tasks and mode share targets. Rather it appears that public transport and providing increased road capacity is the only enhancements that could meet the transport



demands of commercial developments. This contrasts with the Transport Strategy which places a mode share target in cycle trips of 8% by 2030

Again for the latter phases where a 40% public transport share is put forward, there is not mention of the potential contribution from cycling / active transport. It is clear from reading of the Transport Strategy and the Master Plan, that "traffic" projections and policies largely deal with motorised vehicles, and have neglected to consider cycling as a serious measure to reduce car dependency. This is particularly relevant as Sydney's public transport infrastructure has, and will continue to face capacity constraints.

Bicycle Access and Servicing

Mention should be made in this section of key cycling and walking infrastructure proposals as contained in the Transport Strategy 2008

Point 12. – it appears that there are no new bicycle lanes being constructed on new streets as there is insufficient room due to on-street car parking. Every street needs to be considered for the potential for riding, not just a "network". Those travelling by bicycle still have unique origins and destinations as do car users, thus requiring a varying range of routes.

Appendices

C2 – provision should be made for a bicycle lane

C3 – there is sufficient room to place a 1m wide on-road lane in each direction

C4b – figure should show typical location of rider outside the car door zone, bicycle logos should be located towards the outside of the lane away from car door zone

C5 – parking separation line should be at 2.0m not 2.6m to conform with NSW standards

C7 & C8 – street to have lower speed limit (30kph) or parking removed from one side to allow wide kerb lanes for riders

C15 – lane width should be increased to 2.0m due to higher vehicle speeds

C16 – either provide more bicycle operating space to avoid "car door" bike lanes or reduce vehicle speed limits to 30kph and do not have specific treatment.

C20-24 – some cycling provision needs to be made for these streets – there is none at present

C25 – Pedestrian street – this should be designed to provide unimpeded cycle access, with no steps located to block access along the "street"

Specific Comments – Transport Strategy 2008

The Transport Strategy fails to include cycling under the topic of "traffic". Riders as legitimate road users, and bicycle being legal "vehicles" under road law, should be considered as are other road users in the traffic mix. This omission should be rectified through a supplementary study that takes into account the current and potential levels of cycling and the facilities required to provide for riders in the traffic mix.

The data with respect mode share is somewhat confused by the data presented at Table 3.6 and 3.7 which suggest about 14-15% use public transport, compared with Figure 3.3 which suggests about less than 21% use public transport (i.e. 100% minus car travel figure of 78.6%). This makes a target of 25% mode share for public transport very modest, although achievable, if this is an early phase (no date set).

The new bicycle infrastructure proposed in the Strategy at section 4.4.2 are strongly supported, particularly use of the former Pipitta Rail link to connect the Lidcombe area with Sydney Olympic Park across Parramatta Road and the M4. Similarly to the Homebush Bay Bridge, specific budget allocations and project timetable should be developed for this link, possibly in conjunction with major businesses and landowners such as Dairy Farmers, who could see potential to link their administrative and operational areas along this route



Recommendations

1. SOPA put forward strategies, facilities and targets for cycling mode share that are commensurate with that adopted by other similar sites including Macquarie Park (Ryde Council) and the City of Sydney, and build on the proactive policies presented in the SOP/Millennium Parklands Masterplan 2003. A 10% mode cycling share by 2030 should be pursued.
2. The issue of cycling and encouragement of active transport should be given a higher profile in the Master Plan. SOPA to consult with BNSW, cycling groups and engage suitable qualified expertise to advise on strategies to achieve increased mode share and safe cycling and include initiatives in the Master Plan.
3. SOPA incorporate contemporary guidelines and best practice for cycling provision currently used in NSW into the planning requirements. Specific cycling provision be made in ALL new street and road infrastructure in SOP and/or the street environments modified to low speed/volume. On-street car parking should be reconfigured where this interferes with effective provision of on-road cycling.
4. Prior to revising the Master Plan 2030 in the light of comments received, SOPA hold a public forum to examine specific strategies for the site to better promote and encourage active and sustainable transport to and through SOP and incorporate these outcomes into a final Master Plan.
5. That the Master Plan 2030 specifically rejects use of the Sydney Olympic Park site for V8 car racing as this is not compatible with the promotion of the site for sustainable and active transport, for the disruption it would cause to riding during the event period and the reconstruction process, and the poor road share attitudes that often result if sites are promoted as racing venues.