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## **SYDNEY LIGHT RAIL INNER WEST EXTENSION**

Attention: Glenn Snow  
Acting Director Infrastructure Projects  
Department of Planning  
GPO Box 39  
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20 January 2011

### **1. Introduction**

**BIKESydney** understands that The Department of Planning is presently considering the Submissions Report to the Sydney Light Rail Inner West Extension Project ("The Project").

**BIKESydney** believes that the Submissions Report's response to **BIKESydney**'s November 2010 submission was inadequate.

**BIKESydney** seeks here to again draw the Department's attention to the significant opportunity presented by the Project to provide for a shared path connection between Hawthorne Canal and Anzac Bridge. .

### **2. Who we Are**

**BIKESydney** is an incorporated not-for-profit community organisation that advocates on behalf of people who ride bicycles living and working in the City of Sydney local government area. We are affiliated with Bicycle NSW.

We seek to develop a city:

- in which riding a bicycle is part of everyday life;
- that is vibrant, healthy, productive, creative and robust;
- that values community, mobility, health, wellbeing, social equity and sustainability, and
- where people of all ages can make easy choices to ride a bicycle, walk and take public transport.

**BIKESydney** is strongly supportive of the Project and its included Greenway shared path scheme. The Greenway will provide an excellent off-road, flat, quiet, green and largely, grade-separated route for established and new cyclists.

### **3. Greenway Connection to the CBD - Hawthorne Canal to Anzac Bridge Shared Path**

**BIKESydney** again urges the Government to extend the Greenway's shared path at Hawthorne Canal (north) to the Anzac Bridge via the disused Lilyfield rail corridor to form what might be termed the "**City West Shared Path**". Such a link to the CBD would bring many benefits and would serve to finally, meaningfully connect several regional cycling routes to the city (eg, Cooks River shared path, Iron Cove Bay Run shared path). This is a significant opportunity to connect large catchments of cyclists to the City of Sydney's new cycling infrastructure.

Once complete, The Greenway will provide a magnificent infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists, although will leave the latter rather short of the opportunity to use it as a meaningful cycling connection to the city. As indicated in the photos below, the *existing* on-road connection from Hawthorne Canal (north) to the city via Lilyfield Rd presents significant barriers for cyclists such as steep gradients (eg, Lilyfield Rd and the bike-unfriendly Victoria Rd footbridge), high-speed traffic and car door zones. The unattractiveness of the existing route is evidenced by the almost complete lack of children and the elderly using the route - one which in reality services only road-hardened cyclist. (A very simple test of this assertion would be to challenge inexperienced cyclists to climb the Lilyfield Rd hill - see photo).

Conversely, a relatively flat, off-road connection between the northern end of the Greenway (Hawthorne Canal) and the western approach to the CBD via Anzac Bridge (or in future, the Glebe Island Swing Bridge) would be *very* strongly supported and patronised by all members of the cycling community and one which cycling advocates will continue to campaign heavily for.

The existing Rozelle/Lilyfield Goods Line rail corridor is near ideal for this purpose and presently sits unused and "shovel-ready".

The **NSW State Plan** sets a target of five per cent travel by bike across Sydney by 2016 for all trips less than 10 kilometres (NSW State Plan, p64).

A targeted goal of the **Metropolitan Transport Plan** is the "...completion of the highest priority missing links in the "Sydney Strategic Cycleway Network" " (Transport Plan, p29).

Once connected, this "City West Shared Path" would serve as one of the most significant cycling trunk routes south of the Harbour, connecting suburban Sydney to the CBD less than 10km away. Currently, the city accommodates approximately 600,000 people per day, the vast majority of whom arrive to the city by motorised transport. This future trunk route would provide the potential for significant mode-shifting from motorised vehicle trips to active transport in volumes that will not be easily achieved by other routes or projects. The goal of achieving the State Government's Bike Plan's target of 5% of all trips of less than 10km being taken by bicycle by 2016 will be dependent on governments delivering such trunk routes.

BIKESydney urges the State Government to take the opportunity presented by the Sydney Light Rail Inner West Extension to inexpensively develop a shared path between the northern end of the Greenway (Hawthorne Canal) and the Anzac Bridge.

Such a shared path would return **benefits** such as:

- providing a meaningful walking and cycling route to the City - the existing route via Lilyfield Rd is too difficult for most cyclists (refer to photos);
- greatly facilitating the shift from motorised active transport;
- re-connecting surrounding communities presently segregated by the rail corridor;
- making the city more liveable by opening up green space to the public;
- improvements to public health and the economy, and reductions in congestion and pollution, and
- not imposing restrictions to future uses of the rail corridor.

The concept would be **relatively easy to deliver** due to:

- minimal (if any) property acquisitions;
- negotiations for access to the corridor being restricted to very few title-holders, almost all of whom are government agencies;
- the uncomplicated construction program required;
- the lack of imposition the completed scheme would place on other existing or future infrastructure and services;
- the nature of the concept being sympathetic to the existing land-use (transport corridor).

**BIKESydney** understands that it was primarily because of the width restrictions of the Lilyfield rail tunnel that the city end of the Greenway shared user path was not extended to follow the alignment of the rail line toward the city.

**BIKESydney** is in possession of a detailed and current quote for the civil works required to complete the concept. [Company ABC] - a recognised civil works contractor - has provided a quote of **\$5million** to deliver the entire scheme provided the works can be undertaken prior to the installation of the light rail's overhead wiring. This represents **merely 1% of the cost of the Light Rail Inner West Extension project** despite delivering an infrastructure approximately half the length of the Greenway shared path. The scheme could be delivered in time for the opening of the Inner West Light Rail project.

It is vitally important that the Greenway proposal consider its impact and potential influence on this "CBD Link" corridor, which, soon after the opening of the Greenway will encourage a significant increase in cycling traffic.

#### **4. Greenway Design: Marion St Grade-Separated Crossing**

**BIKESydney** also takes this opportunity to urge the Government to have the Greenway opt for a grade-separated (rather than an at-grade) crossing over Marion St, Leichhardt. This would be most simply achieved by having the shared path retain its elevation at rail-level north of Taverners Hill Stop. The cost of such a grade-separated crossing is in keeping with the scope of the budget given that the existing Project scope already accommodates five tunnels and two bridges, and would indeed result in significant financial savings for removing the need for a signalised intersection at Marion St. This strategy would significantly increase the utility and safety of the path for pedestrians and cyclist, and would remove the significant barrier to *prospective* cyclists of having to negotiate motor vehicle traffic (which is most often quoted as the reason for not taking up cycling). Tellingly, even the RTA's submission to the Project indicates that it too prefers a grade-separated crossing of Marion St.

### **Conclusion**

**BIKESydney is strongly supportive of the Greenway/Inner West Light Rail project, and urges the Department of Planning to take the opportunity the Project presents to establish the attaching City West Shared Path - an off-road, flat, quiet, green, shared path that connects the Greenway to the Anzac Bridge.**

Critically, the opportunity to establish this **City West Shared Path** exists only for the time before the Inner West Light Rail overhead wiring is installed, after which, it is highly unlikely that service outages for the purpose of construction works not related to the light rail will be permitted.

The **City West Shared Path** concept presents the ideal project for a progressive government in that it would be inexpensive, ready and easy to build, would complete local regional cycling connections and would be well patronised by the community. It also speaks to myriad progressive government initiatives such as sustainable transport, integrated planning, and community-building. The concept would provide a very attractive return on investment.

BIKESydney also calls on the Government to adopt a grade-separated crossing of Marion St which would much increase the attractiveness and therefore patronage of the Greenway shared path.

**BIKESydney** would keenly accept an invitation to participate in and support the government's efforts in establishing this project.

Yours sincerely

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**BIKESydney**  
Vice President

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**View east to Lilyfield Rd hill**



**The climb over Victoria Rd footbridge**



**Typical encroachment of parked vehicles into Lilyfield Rd cycle "shoulder lane"**