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BIKESydney's Response to the City of Sydney's Crown Street Improvement Project

Hi Adam.

Thanks for the notification regarding the Environment Committee's (EC) consideration of the Crown Street Improvement Project.

BIKESydney has yet to see the Minutes of the EC meeting, so we don't yet know whether it passed, rejected or amended the scheme presented in Item 6.

On the basis that it was passed [as presented to the 19 Aug 2013 EC meeting](#), BIKESydney submits the recommendations below for Council's consideration.

Above all, BIKESydney strongly supports the City's move toward re-humanising Crown St (South). This notwithstanding, we make the following recommendations with a view to improving safety for cyclists within the scheme.

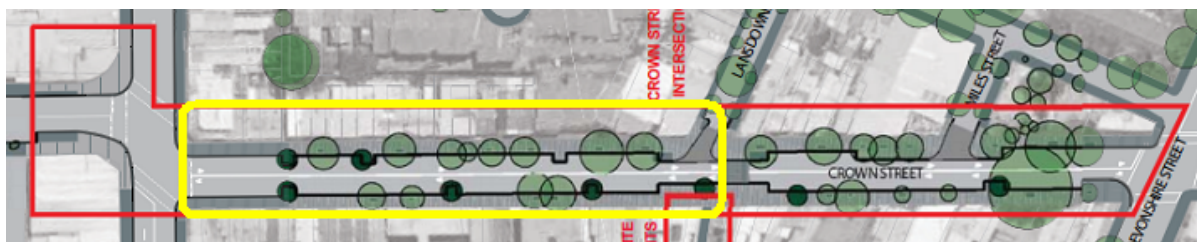
In relation to the [Background Paper](#) we make the following recommendations:

1. **Background: Point 7** should explicitly articulate "improved cycling amenity" as an expressed objective of the scheme as consistent with *Sustainable Sydney 2030 (Direction 4)*;

2. **Background Point 9(f)** indicates that the number of mid-block thresholds will be reduced from two to one. This will encourage higher motor vehicle peak travel speeds, and so, reduce safety for cyclists. BIKESydney can support the concept of provisioning cycling by means of an *on-road mixed-traffic treatment* on the proviso that ACTUAL (not merely theoretical) motor vehicle speeds do not exceed 40km/h. (In actuality, the City should be moving toward restricting traffic speeds to indeed 30km/h as is best practice in other world cities. What efforts are being made with the RMS to have the road rules make provision for a 30km/h road speed designation? The Crown Street Improvement project presents a prime opportunity to enable that discussion with the State Government).

As presented, the scheme will encourage faster driving (compared to the present situation) and in any case, speeds above 40km/h (despite the posted speed limit). Separately, motorists travelling north on Crown St (South) will be encouraged to overtake northbound cyclists given the now longer "uninterrupted" mid-block section between Cleveland and Lansdowne (refer figure below). (Note, northbound cyclists will be travelling uphill, and thus slower.)

The scheme should enunciate measures to ensure that travel speeds will not increase and in any case be kept below 40km/h. Even aside from consideration of cycling provision, the success of the entire scheme (pedestrian facility, shop and browse, outdoor dining etc) depends on traffic being suitably calmed. As above, there are grounds for suggesting that the scheme will result in an *increase* in peak traffic speeds. We propose that along with BIKESydney, the City investigate vehicle speeds (using a radar gun) on this section of Crown St to monitor whether even *existing* travel speeds are contained to 40km/h...



BIKESydney acknowledges (and commends the City for) the introduction of in-lane bus stops which will calm traffic. However, traffic calming cannot be made to be reliant on the presence of buses.



3. **Background Point 22:** the reduction in demand for a "dedicated cycling lane" along this section of Crown does not give grounds to permit a reduction in safety for those who will ride this route (refer point 2 above);

4. **Background Point 32:** We note that the response to submissions does not include responses to the following points raised by BIKESydney in its correspondence with the City dated 4Mar13) [forgive the copy and paste]:

- mitigating the opportunity for cars to speed into Crown for having just beaten the lights at Baptist;
- ditto: sight lines into Crown from Baptist: riders entering Crown from the Cleveland intersection are very quickly lost from view.

5. **Background Point 44** (risk to cyclists have been considered by the project): Hmmm... refer points above.

6. **Background Point 45:** we recommend that the scheme's Safety Audit report provide commentary on the points raised in Point 2 above;

In relation to Attachment A we make the following recommendations:

7. The artist's impressions contained in Attachment A appear to indicate an absence of either on-street or on-kerb bike parking. Needless to say, the scheme must include ample bike parking and ramps placed judiciously at kerb buildouts to quickly receive cyclists from on-road traffic. Encouraging cycling will improve the local economy by increasing the catchment of spenders and funding the area with more people than can be borne by the on-street parking provision. There is a large body of evidence that making streets more pedestrian and bicycle friendly improves local commerce, and that business owners dramatically overestimate the proportion of customers who arrive by car and underestimate the number that arrive by other means as outlined in:

- Tolley, R. (2011). Good for Business\$: The benefits of making streets more walking and cycling friendly. Heart Foundation South Australia.
<http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/active-living/Documents/Good-for-business.pdf> and
- City of Darebin (2009). Northcote Travel Survey. Darebin City Council
http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Files/2008_Northcote_Travel_Survey_Report_January_2009.pdf.

8. We note that the artist's impressions suggest that the road double centreline will be removed. This appears to be in conflict with point 5.4 of Attachment B (discussed below).



In relation to [Attachment B](#) we make the following recommendations:

9. **Attachment B Point 5.4** indicates that the scheme will include a double centreline so as to "prevent dangerous behaviour and confusion". Indeed, it is this "confusion" that serves to calm traffic. The safety benefits of "naked streets" are well established. There is strong evidence to show that the introduction of "confusion" and ambiguity increases alertness of road users and therefore actually improves safety (Vanderbilt, T. (2008). *The Traffic Guru. The Wilson Quarterly*, 32(3), 26-32.). As a traffic-calming measure, road centrelines should be removed from the scheme (cf: Glebe Point Rd (north) which is also a bus and cycling route).

10. Where the centreline is removed - and therefore, cyclists may often be presented with space for filtering through stopped traffic - the scheme presents a good opportunity for the City to introduce **Advanced Stop Lines** for cyclists at Crown Street's intersection with Devonshire Street. This would improve safety for cyclists.

11. **Attachment B Point 5.7:** The documentation should articulate the carriageway (lane) widths of the scheme. These are critical in determining the most appropriate road treatments for cycling provision. Confusingly, the documentation indicates that the City recognises (and desires?) the safety benefits of constraining lane widths and yet in the next breath states that existing lane widths will not be reduced. The Safety Audit report should include a response to this issue. In the event that the City will persist with having lanes demarcated by a centreline, we bring to the City's attention, Section 5.3 of the NSW Bicycle Guidelines which recommends that lane widths of between 3.3m - 3.7m should be avoided in order to uphold safety for cyclists.

Yours sincerely

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BIKESydney

President

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