



PO Box M59 | Missenden Rd | Camperdown NSW 2050
www.bikesydney.org | ABN 95939852367
Tel +61 2 8213 2437

To:

Stephen Sherwin
Project Manager
Roads and Maritime Services
PO Box 609 PYRMONT NSW 2009

Email: Moorepark_access_bridge@rms.nsw.gov.au

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BIKESydney's submission to the Moore Park Pedestrian and Cycling Bridge Review of Environmental Factors (REF)

BIKESydney opposes the Moore Park Bridge proposal.

While we welcome the intention to introduce safe crossing of Anzac Parade, we are concerned that the current Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) proposal presents sub-optimal cycling outcomes, isn't well coordinated with other infrastructure plans for the area and therefore entails unnecessary expenditure and land impacts.

Our interest is to see that high-quality cycling and pedestrian access to the Moore Park parklands is provided in a consolidated, cost-efficient and context-sensitive manner.

Introduction

BIKESydney is an incorporated not-for-profit community organisation.

We want to live in a city:

- Where 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;
- Where people of all ages can make easy choices to ride a bicycle, walk and take public transport.

We advocate on behalf of people who ride bicycles who live, work and find their recreation in inner Sydney.

Principles on which our Response is Based

BIKESydney's response to the REF is based on the ambitions to:

- Encourage people-centric design;
- Encourage Sustainable Transport by securing vital links and connections;
- Encourage a shift away from personal car trips, particularly in congested regions;
- Provide cycling infrastructure that allows people to ride away from roadways;
- Encourage people into healthy, fun activity in attractive landscapes;
- Support and protect valuable parklands, a forever diminishing resource;
- Contain the impact of development to reasonable levels.

Why we Oppose the Proposal

- It appears that **due process has not being followed**. The project has neither waited for, nor sought feedback from the community in the development of the proposal. The RMS granted a meeting with community representatives only after the exhibition period for the REF had closed, and then only due to the request being escalated to the Member for Sydney. Further, it is clearly demonstrable that the project is being undertaken with inappropriate haste ahead of coordinated planning; the REF omits analysis of nearby infrastructure projects and construction at the project site had commenced even before the Government had released the REF. (How can the project have initiated investigative drilling at the site ahead of archaeological and heritage clearances? Section 3.2.5 of the REF itself identifies that “...*the proposal site contains areas of high to moderate archaeological potential*”).

The government delayed any decision on delivering The Greenway (Dulwich Hill to Iron Cove active transport corridor) for need to ensure that coordinated planning could be completed, and yet, this project is proceeding apace, on ad-hoc planning. The community has had no opportunity to consider this proposal in relation to other major infrastructure works proposed for the area. In this context, it is inappropriate that **the RMS is the sole proponent, the sole consent authority and the constructor for this project**. Every indication is that the consultation of the community has been inadequate and that this project is a fait accompli;

- The REF disingenuously suggests that BIKESydney was consulted in this process - it was not. We did receive a phone call from the project's community liaison officer that alerted us to the upcoming release of the REF documentation. It is certainly incorrect and inappropriate for the REF to have implied that BIKESydney's view was or is:

“...Ramps onto the bridge will connect to existing pathways and could link to new pathways and cycle ways in future. The location enables cyclists to connect with the Metro Sydney Bike Network and supports the Sydney City Access Strategy.”

As related in that phone call, BIKESydney's position at the time was summarised as:

- 1) the bridge **must** connect directly with the Anzac Pde Shared Path;
- 2) as a key stakeholder, BIKESydney should have been consulted in the design of the bridge;
- 3) The bridge must connect with the Inner Sydney Regional Bike Network. No mention was made of whether the proposal actually achieves this, as there was no detail provided.

- Indeed, **why is the RMS - an agency whose scope is purportedly limited to implementing (constructing) the government's projects - responsible for designing this proposal?** The input of Transport for NSW is conspicuously absent in the project documentation. As a consequence, the proposal's outcomes for cycling are at best, disjointed and sub-optimal, and at worst, dangerous (viz. forcing cyclists to cross the high-speed, bi-directional busway);

- **The REF documentation is inadequate in that it doesn't account for all options and in any case is out of date.** By way of example, the REF does not include consideration of the proposed pedestrian bridge crossing at Sydney Boys and Girls High Schools (proposed as part of the CBD and South East Light Rail Project).
- It appears that the Government is now proposing *three* crossings (tram tunnel + 2 pedestrian crossings) of Anzac Parade between Moore Park Rd and Cleveland St. This suggests **a lack of coordinated planning** (a pillar of the government's approach to the delivery of infrastructure), and that opportunities are being missed to consolidate construction and development efforts and to reduce costs, impacts and the scale of the interventions;
- **The REF needs to address whether the combined cost of the three newly-proposed crossings of Anzac Parade will be greater than the construction costs of sinking a short section of the Anzac Parade roadway** (as per South Dowling St) so as to allow grade-level crossings as required without need for bridges and so as to improve the amenity, access, attractiveness and potential of the Moore Park precinct. (The opportunity to significantly reduce the level of traffic noise imposing on Moore Park alone opens a very different vision of the parklands). This approach would significantly encourage higher use of Moore Park, and thereby further protect it against future development that is contrary to its heritage, conservation and recreational purposes;
- The Bridge will purportedly cost \$25million. This is an exorbitant cost for a bridge that will be used only occasionally;
- The spending of \$25million on this single bridge sits in sharp relief to the State Government's annual budget for cycling for *all of NSW* being \$33million (TfNSW's *Sydney's Cycling Future*). **There are more important missing cycling links requiring funding** just a few hundred metres north, eg, cycling access over "Drivers Triangle" and along Flinders St into Taylor's Square which is identified as a "Strategic bicycle corridor" on page 16 of *Sydney's Cycling Future*. In light of this, it's not understood how the REF's Executive Summary can claim that "*..the proposal is justified by, and consistent with ...the NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan*". Evidently, it is inconsistent with this document;
- While justified as a "cycling bridge", **the Bridge doesn't appear to serve any strategic purpose for cycling**;
- **The Bridge doesn't connect to the existing cycling network.** A \$25million spend on a cycling facility has the minimum obligation to connect directly to the existing cycling network, in this case, the Anzac Parade cycleway (technically a "shared path"), which ironically, it will pass over. Although BIKESydney has been advised directly by the RMS project manager that the RMS has determined a ramp connection to Anzac Parade cycleway (shared path) is not possible, we have technical instruction that indicates that it indeed *is* feasible with a simple loop ramp that turns-back under the bridge. No loss of trees would result. The RMS has installed a similar structure (of greater size) at the eastern end of the Anzac Bridge - a project that the project manager has worked on previously. **Where is the evidence that the RMS has properly investigated the option to connect the bridge deck to the Anzac Parade cycleway (shared path)?**;

- **The Bridge is being proposed as a cycling facility yet it will *increase* the requirement for cyclists to interact with heavy traffic.** Cyclists using the Bridge seeking to connect to the Anzac Parade cycleway (shared path) would be required to use (on game day) heavily trafficked roads (eg, Gregory Ave) and (even away from game day) to cross the high-speed, bi-directional busway (parallel to Anzac Parade). This undermines the cycling amenity sought to be provided by the Bridge. If positioned as a cycling facility, the Bridge has the minimum responsibility to connect directly to the Anzac Parade Cycleway so as to remove the need for cyclists to interact with fast-moving heavy vehicles. This proposal exposes the RMS to a legal “misfeasance” liability (culpability by negligent design) for encouraging cyclists across a high-speed, bi-directional busway;
- It is patently obvious that **the crossing of Anzac Parade for cyclists and pedestrians should be provided as part of the proposed tram tunnel. The REF inexplicably ignores the option to provide a pedestrian and cycling tunnel as *part* of a widened light rail tunnel structure.** The REF summarily rules out an underground crossing of Anzac Parade for pedestrians and cyclists on the basis that only a “jacked box” tunnel - ie, one that is constructed *separately* from the light rail tunnel structure - is not suitable. The obvious solution here is to slightly widen the rail tunnel to have it incorporate a shared pedestrian/cycling path. This option would address all justifications given for ruling out an underground crossing for pedestrians and cyclists. We commend the REF’s Response to Submissions report to address this matter explicitly.

The justifications given in the REF for ruling out a tunnelled crossing for pedestrians and cyclists are specious. The REF gives those justifications as:

- 1) Safety - it is unsafe for pedestrians in tunnels;
- 2) “Constructability” - a pedestrian/cycling tunnel would be too difficult to construct;
- 3) Land grab by the portals of such a tunnel.

The additional “land grab” of a tram tunnel widened to also include a pedestrian/cycling facility would be minimal, and in any case *significantly* less than the land grab of the proposed bridge. This appears to be a baseless claim.

The REF’s claims of added complexity being wrought by introducing a pedestrian/cycling underpass are based on a separate “jacked box” tunnel being provided. There is no reason for this approach.

In respect of safety of pedestrians and cyclists crossing Anzac Parade, it is incongruous that the RMS expresses a concern for safety for people having to walk and ride in-tunnel but not for the proposal’s effect on cyclists who will have to negotiate an exposed crossing of the high-speed, bi-directional busway.

The concern for pedestrian safety in tunnels appears confected given long-established, government-provided tunnels such as the Devonshire St tunnel in Surry Hills (ironically, from where almost all of those using the proposed Moore Park bridge on event days will emanate) which is open to the public at all times. Further, why have such concerns for pedestrian safety not prevented the approval of the Government's much-vaunted Wynyard Walk pedestrian tunnel? Clearly, the Government holds the view that 24 hour pedestrian tunnels are viable and safe. A pedestrian tunnel at Moore Park would have the added feature of the passive surveillance afforded by regularly passing trams;

- One of the claimed "benefits" of the bridge - improved traffic flow on Anzac Parade - will not benefit Moore Park. **Here is another example of the RMS working to the favour of cars, and against the stated policies of the State Government (eg, Long Term Transport Master Plan).** Further, this claim foretells of how the RMS will look to curtail cycling and pedestrian access in future where it has the potential to impede motor vehicle traffic flow, particularly along either Anzac Parade or the parallel busway. The introduction of chicanes at the Anzac Pde cycleway's crossing of the very same busway at Robertson Road is evidence to this propensity.

Please feel free to contact us should you require any clarification or wish to discuss other matters.

Yours sincerely

David Borella

BIKESydney

President

david.borella@bikesydney.org