From: Neil Tonkin [mailto:neil.tonkin@ozemail.com.au]
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2016 4:32 PM
To: 'community.input@ghd.com'
Subject: Lilyfield Road Regional Bike Route IWBC Response to the Lilyfield Road Regional Bike Route GHD Woodhead plans presented on 29 November 2016

The Inner west Bicycle Coalition (IWBC) is comprised of members of the bicycle user groups of AshBug, Bike Leichhardt and Bike Marrickville formed to work more closely with the new Inner West Council resulting from the merger of the former Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville councils.

IWBC welcomes state government involvement to further the implementation of the regional route through the Lilyfield corridor outlined in Sydney’s Cycling Future. We see this as a useful means of implementing portions of the cycle routes in 2016 Leichhardt Bike Plan. In general we support the principle of providing separated cycle ways as a means of attracting more people to cycling.

However we believe that the gradients on Lilyfield Road that the bi-directional separated cycleway have been applied to will not achieve the additional take up of cycling aspired to in Sydney’s Cycling Future. It is our opinion that this proposal is inferior to the use of the City West Cycle Link through the Lilyfield rail corridor. That alternative will achieve dramatically greater take up of cycling by the 70% of the community that are interested to cycle but are currently being discouraged by difficult and dangerous cycling conditions.

There are some merits to the current GHD Woodhead proposal and there are many issues which we believe are unacceptable and need modification. We have collated our views below for your consideration:

We have made these comments based on the map provided to us below:
 https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3YTNOlpMHsSYU1sZjVjSVV3eWM/view?usp=sharing
and from comments provided by Inner West Council. If some of the specifications are wrong, please correct any errors of interpretation we have made.

Specifications
The bi-directional cycleway (orange) would be 2.4M wide and the median (yellow) would be 0.4M wide. There would be bicycle lanterns at the James/Mary St and Balmain Rd intersections. The right of way of cyclists at the crossover between Balmain Rd and Rayner St is unclear. There would be a loss of parking of potentially 123 spaces, approximately 30 of these would be where the ‘long term’ trailer parking is currently taking place. The plan shows Lilyfield east of Gordon St being converted to one way east for motor traffic. It will be closed to left turning traffic off Victoria Rd by a garden bed.

Arguments FOR:

1. A separated cycleway would claim some road space for cyclists and may encourage inexperienced cyclists to take up cycling, depending on the terrain.

2. The facility would make a safer bicycle access to the narrow overbridge over Victoria Rd and improve pedestrian and bus patron safety at the junction with Victoria Rd.

3. ‘Bent out ‘ crossings at Catherine and Rayner Sts may improve cycle safety at these intersections.

4. Would provide Inner West Council with the ability to progress EW 09 of the 2016 Leichhardt Bike Plan, funded totally by RMS.

Argument AGAINST:

1. The plans have completely disregarded the potential use of the Lilyfield rail corridor which has substantially easier gradients. This attractive route would bring about much greater participation in cycling and provide an asset of benefit to the broader community. The plan has not taken into account the benefits that could flow from the former Rozelle rail yards involvement in the Westconnex ‘parklands’ and the Bays Precinct improvements planned for White Bay and the old Glebe Island bridge.

2. The favourable cycling conditions at the north end of the successful Greenway route would end abruptly if linked to the proposed Lilyfield Rd route. The steep gradient of Lilyfield Rd is too sudden a transition to a different cycling environment. The popular Greenway route is left incomplete and is not seamlessly linked with the city.

3. The money and time spent on this project could go towards providing a comprehensive cycleway through the rail corridor. See BikeSydney brochure attached for the City West Cycle Link.

4. No demand studies for catchments west of Leichhardt have been provided to demonstrate the case for this facility. Residents in Leichhardt would be served by improved local routes if travelling east/west.

5. The project does not address the problem of the narrow and dangerous bridge over Victoria Rd. This shared pedestrian crossing is outdated and causes safety issues between cyclists and pedestrians.

6. Steep gradients of the route especially west of James St will not encourage take up by inexperienced cyclists and will fail to achieve the aims of Sydney’s Cycling Future. i.e. it aims to achieve greater cycling modal share by attracting some of the 70% of people who say they would cycle if cycling facilities were improved. By comparison Austroads maximum recommended gradients are 3% uphill and 5% downhill. The gradient of Lilyfield Rd between Maliyawul St and James St would be around 10%.

7. The narrowness of the 2.4M two way cycleway may result in experienced cyclists avoiding the facility and continuing to use the roadway.

8. The narrow width of the proposed cycleway (2.4M) could result in danger to cyclists moving in opposite directions (especially in the hilly sections where there will be a high speed differential). The 2.4M width is below the 2.5m minimum and 3.0m desirable (Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides p94) for a separated two-way path. Given the speed and volume potential of this regional route a width of at least 3.0m should be considered, or even greater to cope with future demand. Other proposed paths are to be wider e.g. Bicycle NSW submission on Harbour Link path and the new Wilson St Newtown path are to be 3m wide on flat terrain. The current uphill bicycle lane and downhill shared traffic lane is arguably safer for cyclists on the steep sections. E.g. refer to this treatment in Campbell Street Surry Hills.
9. The ‘bent out’ treatment at Maliyawul St is dangerous as it turns downhill cyclists toward exiting motor traffic. This format is not recommended in the QLD guide to separated cycle ways. A ‘T’ intersection with a Stop sign should be provided here requiring exiting motorists to stop and look for potentially faster moving westbound cyclists before proceeding.

10. The high loss of car parking along the route (123 places) could potentially turn the community against future cycling infrastructure improvements as planned in the 2016 Leichhardt Bike Plan. E.g. separate two way cycle ways planned for Moore, Booth and Allen Sts could be threatened. Separated two way cycle facilities in these areas are vital to calming the street environment and encouraging a flourishing bicycle shopping culture.

11. No indication has been given as to how potential motor vehicle/cyclist conflict at the Gordon St intersection will be managed. Are signage and /or raised pavement treatments proposed?

12. The project does not provide for improved connections from the south from Leichhardt via James St, Norton St and Balmain Rd. All of these roads have inferior cycle crossings of the City West Link, a legacy of past poor DMR/RTA planning oriented only towards motor traffic movements. These routes could potentially bring some of the 70% of the new cyclists envisaged by Sydney’s Cycling Future.

13. The loss of the left turn into Lilyfield Rd from Victoria Rd will lead to westbound motor traffic ‘rat running’ on designated bike routes on Quirk St Rozelle in order to access parts of Lilyfield and Rozelle. This change in motor traffic patterns will also adversely affect local residential amenity in Rozelle. The right turn off City West Link into Balmain Rd will also be put under increased pressure from the closure of westbound traffic on Lilyfield Rd at Victoria Rd. No traffic modelling appears to have been done to provide for this substantial change in local motor traffic movements.

14. The route has not explored alternative ways of negotiating the hill from Hawthorne Canal to James St Lilyfield. For example:
14.1By using portion of the 2016 Leichhardt Bike Plan EW 04A (Allen and James Sts) and a suggested crossing of the City West Link (Section 9.4) a less challenging route could be provided to join up with Lilyfield Rd at Henry St. Additionally the 2016 Leichhardt Bike Plan suggests this link could be extended east and west by using an easement along the north side of the City West Link. These routes would have the added benefit of picking up local users from Leichardt, Ashfield, Lewisham and Summer Hill, another part of the 70% of the population that could potentially use this facility.
14.2By using local routes in the 2016 Leichhardt Bike Plan of Lyall St, Allen St, Derbyshire St, Balmain Rd, Moore St & Catherine St a much easier gradient could be achieved. This route would also have the added benefit of picking up new local users from Leichardt, Ashfield, Lewisham and Summer Hill.

15. The proposed surface treatment of the Lilyfield Road route is unclear as to whether a new surface will be provided to overcome the existing poor and uneven surface of Lilyfield Road (where parking exists at present). A new and flat surface is required to conform to Australian Standards for bicycle paths. If the facility is only paint and not a new well formed, attractive surface then this will lessen its popularity and usage.

16. There is no mention of any motor vehicle speed limit reductions on Lilyfield Rd.

We would be more than happy to explain these comments in greater depth if required.

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