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## Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

### CBD BUG

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Office of the Lord Mayor  
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My dear Lord Mayor

I write concerning three issues on O'Keefe Street, Woolloongabba which affect safety for cyclists and pedestrians in this area and present legal liability for council due to the poor design.

The **first request** is for safety enhancement to the crossing of O'Keefe St, Woolloongabba, mid-block between Carl St and Wolseley St.

Social media is full of stories of people walking and cycling who have nearly been killed as a driver in a car or truck roared through the red light here. This happened to me personally one Sunday morning in 2013. The young female driver proceeding at full speed through the red light appeared shocked as I quickly pulled the front wheel of my bike back to the footpath. She did not seem to have even noticed the traffic lights.

There is some design feature of the road which makes car or truck drivers ignore the lights. Perhaps west bound drivers are focussed on the lights on Ipswich Road.

We note that Brisbane City Council often responds to petitions about dangerous driver behaviour with the boilerplate text: "[Speeding] is primarily a behavioural issue, which is best handled by enforcement of the Queensland road rules by the Queensland Police Service" (used 22 times on Council's website as of 3 July 2019).

We disagree that dangerous driver behaviour is best handled by police enforcement. In fact, the "safe system approach" adopted in Australia envisages that safety is a shared responsibility. One of the guiding principles is the "forgiving road transport system".<sup>1</sup>

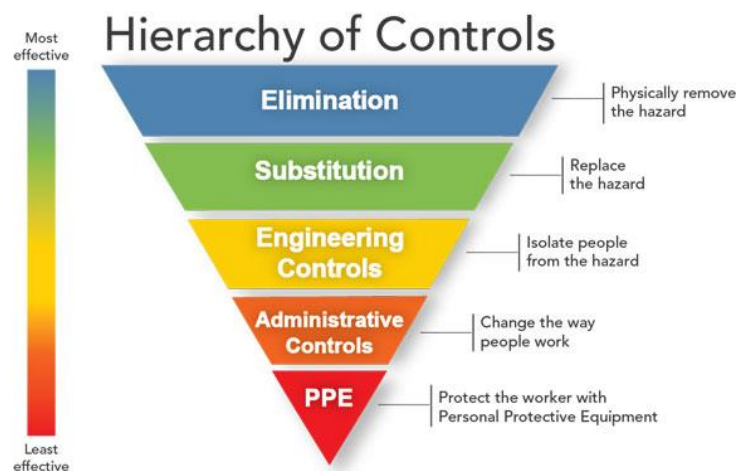
Brisbane City Council, as a system designer and operator, bears primary responsibility for ensuring that "forces in collisions do not exceed the limits of human tolerance". The Hierarchy of Hazard Control triangle indicates that the most effective measures are the ones Brisbane City Council is in control of.

That is, while police are in control of the relatively ineffective administrative measures, Council is in control of the more effective design measures – elimination, substitution and engineering controls.

The boilerplate text is a tiresome and fundamentally incorrect "buck passing" response. Police cannot be at all the thousands of "hot spot" pins on the BCC "Move Safe" pedestrian and cyclist maps.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.roadsafety.gov.au/nrss/safe-system.aspx>



Additionally, police have in the past refused to act on clear video evidence of a breach at this location. The complainant had to escalate his complaint to the Minister for Transport and Minister for Police for action to be taken (see Appendix).

We are also familiar with the other boilerplate text of "Funding for 20xx/xy has already been allocated to other projects across the city. While this means Council does not currently have plans to upgrade this intersection, we will consider the location in line with similar projects across the city as future funding becomes available." (or similar). In blunt terms, to rephrase bureaucratic language: Council will consider safety improvements at these locations after somebody is killed.

Although WebCrash has shown that nobody has yet been killed at the crossing, there have been two bicycle incidents in 2015, one in 2016, one "other" in 2018, requiring medical treatment and with minor injuries. The locations are expected to become more hazardous with improvements to the Veloway south of this point and bikeways in Kangaroo Point and the CBD; and have become more hazardous with increased driver distraction.

In any case, the dozens of Move Safe map stories (see Appendix) have already indicated to Council that this crossing is incredibly dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians. There are many other "near miss" stories on social media not accounted for in WebCrash. Council seems to have installed cameras, but they don't do anything.

We note that while a grade level bikeway crossing is proposed for O'Keefe St by TMR it is "subject to available funding" which means that it is unknown when, if ever, such a crossing will be built.

Orange flashing lights or features to slow drivers down may be part of the solution. Austroads "Achieving Safe System Speeds on Urban Arterial Roads: Compendium of Good Practice" features a four lane road in Victoria (Surf Coast Highway and Kidman Ave)<sup>2</sup> similar to O'Keefe St (Appendix).

The **second request** is for safety enhancement at the crossing at Carl St. We suggest a priority or raised crossing for bicycles here so that bicycle riders and walkers can cross safely. In the current Queensland road rules, turning drivers in vehicles aren't required to give way to cyclists crossing.

The Carl St intersection has already been mentioned in the January 2019 TMR Technical Guidelines on Raised Pedestrian Crossings as an example of poor design (see Appendix).

The **third request** is for safety enhancement around the Junction St / O'Keefe St intersection and roundabout with O'Keefe St and Logan Road. Drivers on O'Keefe St turn across traffic and do not see pedestrians or cyclists crossing. Instead of "traffic flow enhancement measures" here, what is needed are safety improvements for vulnerable road users, given the huge number of stories on the Move Safe maps at all of these locations.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.google.com/maps/place/Surf+Coast+Hwy+%26+Kidman+Ave,+Belmont+VIC+3216/@-38.1853248,144.3443086,3a,75y,195.24h,89.73t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1sBQMI4Dvubbv0t\\_LRVKLPgg!2e0!7i13312!8i6656!4m5!3m4!1s0x6ad41362d6cc66b1:0x49dbfada3dae5a59!8m2!3d-38.1856945!4d144.3442694](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Surf+Coast+Hwy+%26+Kidman+Ave,+Belmont+VIC+3216/@-38.1853248,144.3443086,3a,75y,195.24h,89.73t/data=!3m6!1e1!3m4!1sBQMI4Dvubbv0t_LRVKLPgg!2e0!7i13312!8i6656!4m5!3m4!1s0x6ad41362d6cc66b1:0x49dbfada3dae5a59!8m2!3d-38.1856945!4d144.3442694)

I look forward to hearing from you with regards to these issues.

Yours faithfully

Dr Richard Bean  
Co-convenor  
Brisbane CBD BUG  
3 July 2019

Cc Jonathan Sri, Councillor for Woolloongabba

### *Appendix*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4uJV9BZlek>

*“This is a no-action clip, but while waiting for a green light to cross a busy street in Brisbane, I captured evidence of this large truck, trundling through the light, well after it had turned red. The green pedestrian light is clearly seen. I think the casual wave of the passenger as they bowled past made me cranky enough to submit it to Holland Park Police Station for action.*

*“Their first reaction was there wasn't enough proof because I didn't capture the red light. I decided to follow this up by writing to my Member of Parliament, Minister for Transport and also Minister of Police, and that worked. The case was reassigned to a Senior Constable who tracked down the owner/driver and issued a traffic infringement notice.*

*“Although the driver wanted to plead not guilty, due to only having three points left on his licence, after 10 months of faffing around, he eventually paid the fine. There's a certain amount of satisfaction derived from this!”*

### Move Safe Pedestrian Map

Crossing: 10 pins

- Cars drive straight through red lights at this pedestrian/cyclist crossing.
- This is a major crossing but is inherently very dangerous because drivers often do not notice the red light and go straight through (I was very nearly hit). The lights also frustratingly slow to turn green. Traffic speed should be much lower, motorists should get more warning that a crossing is ahead, and ideally an overhead or underground crossing be built.
- Road environment too fast - cars don't stop at lights” (JSri)
- Lights take far too long to change. Drivers often fail to stop.
- Cars don't always seem to 'see' the lights here. I have reported 2 near misses I have personally had here in the last year. It is not 'running the lights' they sometimes don't seem to even see the lights! It is scary.
- Vehicles often run the red light. This is a major pedestrian crossing. I have seen a number of near misses.

Carl St: 6 pins

- Dangerous to cross with cars turning from both directions off O'Keefe St, meanwhile cars emerging from Carl St block the intersection for pedestrians and cyclists crossing.
- Safer intersection outcome for everyone: traffic lights here on intersection of O'Keefe St and Carl St and have main pedestrian and bikeway crossing here. Problem here is confusing priority for pedestrians and cyclists crossing Carl St along the bikeway.
- There needs to be priority for pedestrians and cyclists across Carl Street - frequent conflicts and vehicles blocking the walkway bikeway.

- Drivers consistently fail to give way to pedestrians and cyclists, and also block the ramps. This is a connection on Brisbane's preeminent cycleway. Consider setting up a dutch style intersection here for safety and convenience. Would work perfectly here.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yceHo8VvQbs>
- Very difficult for cyclists and pedestrians to cross Carl St as drivers block intersection.

#### Junction St: 11 pins

- Terribly devised intersection/roundabout combination making for dangerous crossing for pedestrians/cyclists.

#### Move Safe Cycling Map

#### Crossing: 12 pins

- Drivers regularly fail to stop for the red lights here after coming through under the bridge. There is some kind of design issue and before someone is killed, there needs to be better design, perhaps more warning of the lights or more efforts to slow drivers down (as oppose to prioritising "traffic flow" at all costs as per BCC usual policy). If I were to start a petition to BCC about this issue, no matter how many signatures I got, it'd be dismissed with the usual boilerplate copy and paste BCC garbage: "speeding is primarily a behavioural issue, which is best handled by enforcement of the Queensland road rules" (try Googling that phrase!) ... which is absolutely false as the issues have arisen because of awful BCC design, and buck passing is not the answer.
- Too much wasted green time for cars. Crossing signal priority should be given to the bikeway
- Unsafe crossing as cars fail to stop for red lights. This is part of the veloway and should have a dedicated bridge.
- Out of peak times, the delay between hitting the button and the green crossing light seems incredibly long. During this time there is often very little or no car traffic, with a lot of pedestrians and cyclists waiting to cross. This causes many to jaywalk across.
- Vehicles often run the red light. This crossing is part of the V1 bike way. There have been a number of near misses at this intersection. Part of the issue might be in the late afternoon due to the sun and the traffic lights.
- I agree with the other poster. This intersection is dangerous. Its too crowded with cars, bikes and pedestrians, and cars run the red lights. Pedestrians coming from the east sometimes wander diagonally across the bike crossing to continue east on the other side of O'Keefe, instead of crossing properly on the pedestrian section. As mentioned with Carl St, a horseshoe bridge over O'Keefe could possibly fix both pinch points, if there is space.

#### Carl St: 23 pins

- This can be a terrifying crossing point as the volume of cyclists has rapidly increased and outgrown the existing infrastructure here. I have seen many car/cyclist and cyclist/cyclist near misses.
- This a particularly dangerous crossing. Carl St leads to a significant shopping centre and as such is quite busy with cars turning left and right into it off O'Keefe. Meanwhile, cars exiting Carl onto O'Keefe often double-up (going left and right), almost blocking the bike ramp. Cyclists are left trying to squeeze past each other and the stopped cars while also avoiding more cars coming up Carl and turning off O'Keefe. Visibility is poor for all vehicles and near misses are frequent. The uneven and narrow path profiles leading on and off Carl does not help. Its a mess! When the V1 Section E is complete, more bikes will be encouraged to squeeze through here. Something must be done! A horseshoe bridge up and over O'Keefe to rejoin the V1 northside might work, but space is tight. Alternatively, close off Carl and have drivers use Wolseley to access the shops. Or, close Carl AND build a bridge!

- The crossing is not designed for the number of bikes that access the V1. This intersection has a number of cars that turn left into the street who do not stop. Also, for vehicles coming to the intersection, it is hard to see them due to the number of vehicles that are parked on the street obstructing a clear view. Sometimes you have to be nearly in the intersection in order to clearly see.
- Many bicycles use this crossing, and I have seen several near misses from cars both turning into and onto O'Keefe St. Cars do not give way.
- V1 crossing of Carl St provides priority to side street instead of cycleway. Major hazard for cycles from traffic turning into or exiting Carl St.
- Side street should have improved cycling treatment to improve awareness of vehicles turning into Carl Street that they must give way to pedestrians/cyclists crossing. Offset zebra would be ideal to provide storage for a turning vehicle
- This is an incredibly bad and unsafe intersection to cross cycling. Cars traveling West on O'Keefe St arrives very fast and turn on Carl St without giving priority to pedestrian and cyclist. I have 2 near misses there in the last month or two where car clearly saw that I started to cross (it takes only few seconds to cross) but they never slowed down and cut me very close. So to avoid getting killed by a car, you need to stop and look BEHIND YOU to ensure no car is coming fast and turning. It really needs priority crossing for cycles where cars give way to cycles crossing Carl St. This is the major cycle route for the SE Bikeway and should not have to give way by looking behind you to a minor side street.
- Very dangerous with cars turning into Carl Street, needs pedestrian and cyclist priority or even closing the intersection
- Fantastic work on the V1 Stage D comes up against the requirement to cross Carl St to get to the O'Keefe St crossing. This is a particularly unsafe crossing due to the high volume of foot, bicycle and vehicle traffic all trying to negotiate this one intersection.
- Link between V1 & South East Freeway Bikeway. Very busy intersection with vehicles turning all directions in and out of Carl St. Drivers blocking walkway/cycleway. Drivers not able to see pedestrians/cyclists crossing due to congestion.
- The crossing between Carl St and Wolseley Street should be moved to the Carl St intersection. This will improve cycling/pedestrian movements but also traffic, especially with the increased development in this area. O'Keefe Street is too busy for cars turning into and exiting Carl St. Lights at this intersection would improve safety for motorists but also provide a more convenient location for pedestrian and cyclist crossing. This is especially the case for pedestrians who quite frequently jaywalk further down across O'Keefe to get to the Busway as the current location of the crossings are just that little too inconvenient
- Not safe to cross Carl St with vehicles coming from 3 directions, especially during peak times.
- Cars turning into Carl St from O'Keefe are moving very fast here. It's a very busy street and cars often don't give way to cyclists or pedestrians making very close calls. Cars turning out of Carl St onto O'Keefe block the entrance to connecting path making an awkward time getting off the road. This whole situation urges you to sprint across the road as cars are darting in and out.
- Dangerous crossing. Motorists don't give way or pay attention.
- Crossing of Carl Street when travelling on the V1 cycleway is dangerous. Cars travelling along O'Keefe Street turning into Carl Street is a significant hazard on the main north/south cycling route.
- A dangerous intersection to cross.
- Regularly see near misses at this intersection. Cars do not give way to either cyclists or pedestrians as they should. Needs painted treatment prioritising the bikeway similar to Coronation Drive / Archer Street.
- Cars turning down this side street at speed pose a big risk to cyclists how are transitioning across the gap in the bikeway
- This crossing is super dangerous. There are ruts to catch your wheels, side streets with turning cars, pedestrians walking randomly looking at their mobile phones. The V1 should continue uninterrupted over o'kefe street.



- This is a major part of a bikeway, yet it crosses a very busy side street. Cars turning into O'Keefe Street are looking for traffic on the road, not cyclists on the footpaths. Cars turning into Carl St from O'Keefe St are not looking for cyclists.
- Crossing is bad with vehicles queuing through waiting to exit Carl Street

#### Junction St and roundabout: 16 pins

- Remove parking. Cyclists are forced into the traffic lane which is very narrow at this point
- Not a safe crossing
- Near misses are a daily occurrence. Bike lane should be painted across this intersection to provide cycle priority.
- Crossing Junction Road for Cyclists and Pedestrians is a nightmare. This whole roundabout area is a nightmare for all.
- Cars often don't see cyclists heading into the roundabout. I've nearly been collected by a car coming down Logan Road several times when I'm already on the roundabout
- No safe cycle facilities on or near here to navigate the roundabout.
- This roundabout is very difficult to navigate for cyclists coming down O'Keefe Street and trying to connect to the Gladys Road bike path.
- This roundabout is very unsafe on a bike. The traffic volumes are far too high and cars don't care about bikes.
- Dangerous for cyclists travelling through this intersection. Alternative footpath is broken up, bumpy and pedestrian crossing with lights on Logan Rd to the left is inconvenient and very slow.
- Needs a lot more cycling awareness/presence signage here. Very dangerous roundabout, had and seen many close calls. Cars turning right from Junction St don't see cyclists in lane heading east from O'Keefe St. Cars pull into round about whilst cyclists already in lane during roundabout. Can be a high pressure situation. Needs at least cycling lane marking on all sides.
- It's very hard to move from the southern side of Okeefe St/Logan Rd to Northbound Logan road.
- No cycling facilities/bike ramps or lanes provided here. Very dangerous for high number of cyclists heading east from V1 or UQ direction!
- Have been hit by a car here and other close calls with drivers simply not noticing/respecting cyclists. Intersection dangerous for cyclists.

separated path priority crossings and one conventional crossing. A description of each crossing facility and a summary of key findings is presented following.

4.1.1 Conventional crossing, Carl Street at intersection with O’Keefe Street, Woolloongabba

Description	14 m wide crossing with kerb ramps either side
Design attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kerb ramps</li> <li>• Priority to motor vehicles</li> </ul>
Design challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set-back 0 m</li> <li>• Excellent sight lines from major road, limited between vehicles approaching from Carl St and cyclists</li> </ul>
Performance evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 259 interactions between riders and motorists at this location</li> <li>• 25% of interactions between riders and motorists required some form of adjustment, a small proportion of which were major, and one near collision</li> <li>• This crossing was considered the least safe, largely because of the level of confusion that sometimes arose between road users, motorist speeds and riders being masked from entering motorists by other motorists queuing to exit Carl St</li> <li>• Bicycle riders gave way to motorists in 72% of interactions</li> </ul>
Photo	 <p><i>Conventional crossing, Carl Street at intersection with O’Keefe Street, Woolloongabba (photo)</i></p>
Plan view	 <p><i>Conventional crossing, Carl Street at intersection with O’Keefe Street, Woolloongabba (plan view)</i></p>



From <https://austroads.com.au/publications/road-safety/ap-r514-16>