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Dr Richard Bean
Co-convenor
Brisbane CBD BUG
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Dear Dr Bean

Thank you for your email of 28 August 2015 about cycling facilities along Sylvan Road, Toowong and the Toowong to Indooroopilly Commuter Bikeway Project.

As you would be aware, Council is a strong supporter of cycling to ease congestion and promote an active and healthy lifestyle. Through our Better Bikeways 4 Brisbane program, Council has worked with the CBD BUG and its members to identify key cycle routes and develop safer cycle routes for all users. For example, the upgrade of the bikeway on Gladstone Road, Highgate Hill.

Council certainly appreciates that Sylvan Road is an important connector route between the Western Freeway bikeway and the Bicentennial bikeway, forming the main western corridor for bicycle traffic. I value the passion of the advocacy of the CBD BUG on behalf of its members to improve cycling infrastructure at this location.

I was disappointed to hear that you were not pleased with the outcome of Council's consideration of the petition to install protected bi-directional bike lanes on one side of Sylvan Road, thereby removing onstreet parking on that side. I asked Mr Lindsay Enright from Council's Transport Planning and Strategy branch to investigate your concerns.

As you would be aware, in late 2011 Council completed safety works on Sylvan Road, which included improvements to the existing line marking, the addition of green paint at critical locations in the bike lanes, at intersections and side streets, parking reconfiguration to create additional sections of bike lane, and optimised bus stop placement along the route. All facilities were designed to the relevant standards at the time of construction. Those works not only made improvements but also installed cycling infrastructure that previously was not there.

While the safety of all road users is paramount, Council must make decisions based on the available data. Since 2011, we have pleasingly seen a 31 per cent increase in the number of cyclists using Sylvan Road. In the data available to Council, we have also seen a downward trend in the number of bicycle accidents occurring along this road. However, as you rightly point out, these data sets may not include any near miss incidents that remain unreported.

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The petition was considered by Council in its meeting of 26 May. As you would be aware, Council found a number of impediments to the installation of dedicated bike lanes along this route. While the significant reduction in local amenity for those living, working and visiting the area from a loss of onstreet parking was a consideration, Council also found that cyclist safety could not be guaranteed due to the large number of residential driveways along Sylvan Road. Further complications were found with the nine intersections along Sylvan Road requiring significant upgrade or changes to the signal operations to accommodate a separated bike lane.

As a result, Council decided to monitor safety and the use of cycling facilities on Sylvan Road. While no further works are proposed at this time, I can assure you that Council will continue to investigate a long term outcome that balances the needs of the whole community including businesses, residents, visitors and cyclists. I have asked Mr Enright to work with the CBD BUG to ensure we can capture your concerns and work with the Toowong community to overcome the impediments listed above.

I also acknowledge your concern about the use of 'truck and dog' trailers within urban environments. As you know, the coronial inquiry into the death of Ms Rebekka Meyer occurred on 19 to 21 August. As the coronial inquest remains ongoing, it would be inappropriate for Council to comment at this time. However, I can assure you that Council will work closely with the Coroner and bicycle user groups, such as the CBD BUG, to implement any recommendations that can improve safety for our cyclists.

If you would like to discuss these matters further, please contact Mr Enright on 3403 8888.

I would also like to acknowledge your feedback about the Toowong to Indooroopilly commuter bikeway project. I can confirm work on this project is now complete and Council considers that this route provides a safe and direct route between Toowong and Indooroopilly for both recreational and commuter cyclists.

The roundabout treatment at the Gailey Road Fiveways has been designed to improve the safety and efficiency for all road users. The new line marking/road surface treatments increase vehicle deflection on the approach to and while travelling through the roundabout, which acts to reduce the speed of vehicles. These changes have been made to improve motorist's reaction time to crossing pedestrians, cyclists turning right and vehicles already on the roundabout.

I have noted your comment about the potential for conflict points due to the bicycle lanes marked on approach to the roundabout. The treatment provides a visible delineated space for bike riders entering the roundabout and ensures adequate space exists for all road users. The bike lanes also highlight that the route is a key cycle route and road users approaching the roundabout should be aware of cyclists. However, as noted in your letter, recent changes to the Queensland Road Rules state that cyclists are no longer required to travel in the bicycle lane when approaching a roundabout, if safe to do so.

I also wish to acknowledge your comment regarding the relevant speed for cyclists travelling through a roundabout. As noted in your letter, Austroads have released an assessment of the effectiveness of onstreet bicycle lanes at roundabouts including recommendations for appropriate speed for cyclists. It is important to note that this assessment has not yet been adopted as part of the current Austroads guidelines. As such, motorists and cyclists should use caution when travelling through a roundabout.

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As part of the safety improvements at the Gailey Road Fiveways, two taxi bays were removed from Indooroopilly Road and relocated to Alexandria Avenue. This ensures adequate space exists for cyclists to share the road safely and comfortably with motorists as well as improving site lines for all road users.

Your comments about community consultation on this project are noted. Please be advised that the upgrades were developed following an extensive corridor study, which included feasibility investigations, concept design and community consultation.

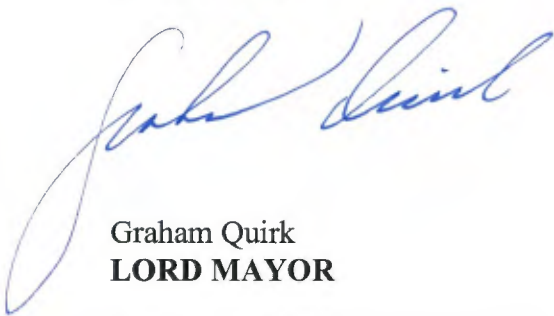
A two-stage community consultation process was undertaken in July and August 2013. The first stage involved engaging with cycling groups, bike retailers and the broader community to better understand cycling route options between Toowong and Indooroopilly. The second stage involved gathering feedback on the preferred alignments, and included two public information sessions. The feedback received, along with the investigation along the corridor, guided the design process for the project.

I appreciate your request that all further bikeway construction should take note of the guidance of Technical Note 128 from the Queensland Government's Department of Transport and Main Roads. You may be interested to know that this Technical Note is based on an assessment undertaken by Austroads, however, it has not yet been adopted into the guidelines.

If you would like to discuss the Toowong to Indooroopilly commuter bikeway project or the use of Technical Note 128 in more detail, please contact Ms Lisa Laney from Council's Transport Planning and Strategy branch on 3403 8888.

Thank you for contacting me with your feedback.

Yours sincerely



Graham Quirk
LORD MAYOR

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