



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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The Honourable Graham Quirk
Lord Mayor of Brisbane
GPO Box 2287
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Dear Lord Mayor

This letter seeks your action to address the motorist rat running that is creating dangerous conditions for cyclists riding along King Arthur Terrace in Tennyson.

The background to this request is the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) has for some time held serious concerns about the excessive speed and volume of motor vehicles, and the irresponsible behaviour of some motorists driving along King Arthur Terrace in the Tennyson riverside development.

With the Brisbane City Council creating the new Tennyson Riverside Park, opposite the Queensland Tennis Centre on King Arthur Terrace, there is now an even greater need for Council to take action to ensure the ongoing safety of vulnerable road users in this precinct. The CBD BUG would also point to the Yeerongpilly Transit Oriented Development to be located at the eastern end of King Arthur Terrace, as an even more significant generator of motor vehicle traffic along King Arthur Terrace. To this end the CBD BUG requests that King Arthur Terrace be blocked in the vicinity of the Tennis Centre plaza to prevent through-driving by motorists.

When the Queensland Tennis Centre was built, the precinct's redevelopment was hailed as a win for cycling. Prior to this there had been a long-standing safety issue with the need for cyclists to use the existing Fairfield Road/Tennyson Memorial Avenue/Softstone Street route. This was because of several pinch points and some high-speed convergences that were incompatible with the commuter cyclists and particularly the large bunches of sporting cyclists who frequented this route – then part of the 'River Loop, Brisbane's most popular on-road route for recreational and sporting cyclists, as well as a vital commuter cyclist route without alternatives.

However, since its opening to all traffic King Arthur Terrace has evolved into being a major motorist rat run, with cyclists regularly being subjected to inconsiderate and aggressive driver behaviour. King Arthur Terrace was not designed for the current traffic volume it is carrying. The traffic calming devices are ineffective, as drivers can thread their way through at speed, or even drive straight over the top of some without slowing. Furthermore, the traffic calming devices actually contribute to the danger for cyclists by forcing them to ride into the path of motor vehicles. Some motorists, evidently frustrated by the 40 km/h speed limit and having to wait for cyclists, perform dangerous manoeuvres such as overtaking at speed and on corners, and even driving around barriers on the wrong side of the road.

There is no justification for the number of motor vehicles using this road. It is clearly a local access road, yet motorists continue to use it as a thoroughfare. This route saves little time for motorists compared to the Fairfield Road/Tennyson Memorial Avenue/Softstone Street route.

The new park to be installed by BCC is now likely to increase the risk for cyclists riding through this precinct, by attracting more traffic that will be parking and turning, often distracted from road hazards by the nature of their activity. This risk will be greatest on weekends due to the concurrence of the extra vehicular traffic attracted by the park and the large number of cyclists who ride through here at this time.

While it is expected the Tennyson Riverside Park Draft Concept Plan will include an off-road cycle route through the new park (the map is not explicit on this point) connecting Softstone Street to the existing path that ends at Ortive St, it is likely this path will only be suitable for slow-riding recreational cyclists. As such it will not be suited to higher speed commuter cyclists, or the larger groups of sporting cyclists who continue to frequent King Arthur Terrace on the 'River Loop'.

The CBD BUG's first preference for improving cyclist safety is that the rat running along King Arthur Terrace be addressed by closing it to through-driving by motorists. The closing of King Arthur Terrace to through traffic would see motorists reverting to the situation that existed before the development of the Tennis Centre. Clearly there is a viable alternative route for motorists via the route they previously used to pass this precinct i.e. Fairfield Road/Tennyson Memorial Avenue/Softstone Street. Furthermore, it has been noted that King Arthur Terrace has been temporarily closed to all traffic in 2010 and 2011, and likely will be again in 2012, for the duration of the Brisbane International Tennis Tournament, indicating this route is not essential as a through way for motor vehicles.

In addition to this measure it is also proposed a design of the western end of King Arthur Terrace, which is closest to the new park, should specifically incorporate best practice design for cyclists to ensure the highest level of cyclist safety for the ongoing period after the new park is installed.

Should traffic studies indicate this approach is not viable the CBD BUG would alternatively propose the traffic calming along King Arthur Terrace that is currently proving to be both ineffective and dangerous, be enhanced so it provides a stronger disincentive to through-driving motorists. This approach should be reinforced with increased signage indicating King Arthur Terrace is for local traffic only and by police enforcement.

In closing, the current design of King Arthur Terrace has significantly reduced cyclist safety. The CBD BUG's position is cyclist safety should be to be paramount in all works for the new riverside park and the principal focus of a redesigned King Arthur Terrace.

I look forward to your response on these issues.

Yours faithfully



Paul French
Co-convenor
Brisbane CBD BUG

28 October 2011