

Submission to the Alexandra Canal Draft Masterplan

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We are pleased to present this joint submission to the South Sydney Development Corporation regarding the Alexandra Canal draft Masterplan and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss further any of the issues included in this submission.

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Attachments: Map of the Alexandra Canal locality and cycling catchment areas

List of Key Recommendations

Cycleway and Access Issues

We support “the **early implementation of the [Canal] route** and the need for the route to connect to major activity centres was of the utmost importance and should be given high priority.” (p.p.6-10).

We recommend that the Canal **cycleway be planned to have local and regional network connectivity, and designed as part of a network** to provide safe, legible links to major origins/destinations including, University of Sydney/RPAH; St Peters station; Redfern station and ATP; Green Square precinct and station; Mascot station; Centennial Parklands, and UNSW/Randwick Hospitals.

We recommend the **construction of cycleways on both the eastern and western sides** of the Canal, although we acknowledge that the eastern cycleway is more feasible in the short term.

We recommend that the masterplan for Alexandra Canal should contain **goals to promote access by sustainable modes** – walking, cycling and public transport – and to discourage driving.

We recommend that the masterplan be supported by a **communications strategy**.

We recommend that urban regeneration projects, such as the South Sydney Growth Centre to the immediate north and east of the Canal, are planned as walking, cycling and public transport communities, ie as a **‘transit oriented development’**.

Regional Coordination

Alexandra Canal has the potential to become a valuable community facility and key cycle route. We are deeply concerned that without effective coordination of both the planning and implementation of the regional cycle network, funds will not be spent in a timely or effective manner and that the Canal’s potential will not be fulfilled. We are also concerned that the depth of this issue has not been fully appreciated in the draft Masterplan. Therefore, we recommend that close attention be given to an **appropriate co-ordination mechanism**, and this mechanism be trialled in the Canal region.

We recommend that the NSW Government in conjunction with Councils identify a trial co-ordination mechanism for developing a locality cycling network, ensuring coherence between RTA’s regional cycleways and local plans and routes.

We recommend that in addition to the three Councils bordering the Canal, Councils within comfortable cycling distance of 5 km and ROCS should be included in cycling network planning activity.

More detailed recommendations are included in the full text.

1. Introduction

We welcome South Sydney Development Corporation's invitation to respond to the draft Masterplan for Alexandra Canal which summarises the staged urban planning for the Canal corridor. The survey form helped us to consider more closely the vision and recommendations of the draft Masterplan.

This submission responds to the questions set out in the survey form and comments in detail on the issues of Alexandra Canal's role as part of a regional cycleway network, the importance of coordinated regional planning and the draft Masterplan recommendations.

The precinct of Alexandra Canal could readily become an enjoyable public space for the many people living and working within a 5 km radius (a comfortable cycling distance, see attached map of the Alexandra Canal locality) both now, and in the future with the planned growth.

The Canal, with waterways to its south (Cooks River) and to the north-east (the stormwater channel), could provide an invaluable 'spine' cycleway due to the connections with highly used cycleways on the eastern and western sides. The connectivity of the Alexandra Canal cycleway is equivalent to the importance of the Princes Highway for motor vehicle traffic.

Changes to Alexandra Canal, in the terms proposed in the draft Masterplan, to revitalize and improve the connectivity for walking and cycling are highly significant for the sub-region which is undergoing massive urban regeneration, densification and reviews of plans (see section 4 below). Restoration and access to the Canal will help catalyse Sydneysiders to revise their mental maps of this sub-region and help people living in the sub-region to appreciate the improvements in cross-regional east-west access.

The map of the Alexandra Canal locality (Attachment 1) has marked 2.5 and 5 km radii from the northern end of the Canal to highlight the significance of the locality as:

- a connector and through cycling destination from many attractors, such as the CBD, regional parks, South Sydney Growth Centre, airports, ATP and new residential site, universities and hospitals, local railway stations and the Cooks River.
- encompassing many jurisdictions of land and roads – Councils, State and Federal statutory authorities and corporations, private corporations, and private holdings.

The implications and opportunities of this complex arrangement are addressed below in section 4. In the following sections we highlight key points which follow from Alexandra Canal's role as part of a regional cycleway network.

2. Response to the South Sydney Development Corporation survey

Question 3. Do you support the vision of Alexandra Canal as a 'major recreational and ecological asset; part of a green, regional spine linking the Cooks River with Sydney and Moore Parks'.

Yes, supported.

We applaud the concept of the valuing Alexandra Canal both as an asset in and of itself, and in an urban ecology sense, as being a spine within a 'green web'.

We concur with the draft Masterplan in explaining that, "complementary actions such as street beautification and development of the public domain ... are also important to overall accessibility" (6-15).

We make the following recommendations in support of this vision:

We recommend that the masterplan for Alexandra Canal should contain goals to promote access by sustainable modes – walking, cycling and public transport – and to discourage driving. This would benefit the urban design and use of space around the Canal because only very limited car parking and motor vehicle access would be necessary.

We recommend that the ecological restoration of the Canal is aided by complementary changes in the surrounding streets and green spaces, consistent with the quality street landscaping in nearby Belmont Street, for example. In particular, the planting of native plants, such as flowering shrubs and trees that provide food sources and habitat for native birds should be given high priority (e.g. lilli pilly and red bottlebrush). However, casuarinas should not be planted within 10m of any pathways as they are damaging to paths and their needles are slippery.

We recommend that the ‘landscape’ work be informed by, and adopt native planting in order to provide habitat for native birds and butterflies. This would add to the enjoyment and ecotourism potential of the site. The Como bridge cycleway includes some popular attractions along its length, including picnic areas, a restaurant and a Sunday market, which draw people to the cycleway. It may be worth considering attractors which could be implemented at an early stage. Birmingham’s large restored canal network (built in the same era as Alexandra Canal) has been the focus of their urban regeneration, including cycleways.

We note, too, that Councils produce state of the environment reports which provide useful species lists to guide landscape planning, and should lead to the review of street-planting plans to reduce the use of exotic tree species.

Connectivity for human movement by walking and cycling is crucial for the success of the draft Masterplan in forming a desirable place as a destination and route. The ‘structural environment’ support for walking and cycling with concurrent discouragement of driving is in accord with the principles of Ecological Sustainable Development contained within the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (NSW) 1979* and the *WHO Charter on Transport, Environment and Health (1999)*.

We recommend that the masterplan be supported by a communications strategy to ensure that local people can be informed and involved as work progresses on the ecological restoration of the Canal. The masterplan exhibition and its implementation should be accompanied by information onsite, at key local travel trip generators and in local council publications.

We recommend that information about the Canal region’s bicycle routes as part of the local and regional bike route network should also be developed. This information should show the connections to local railway stations, nearby parks and particular places, including St Peters, Mascot and Green Square stations; Centennial Park and UNSW/Randwick Hospitals; Sydney airports; Marrickville; Glebe, and Sydney CBD.

We recommend that information on self-guided walking and cycling tours be produced and made available at the local railway stations, at Councils, health promotion outlets, and major trip generators in the vicinity.

Marrickville Council has produced a 'Walkwise' map and the 'Out and about in Leichhardt map' shows open spaces, walking and cycling routes (off- and on-road), and public transport stops and routes which provides a valuable model for Alexandra Canal information.

We also recommend that the communications strategy and information about tours of the area should be developed in consultation with local residents and community groups (such as MASSBUG). Such consultation will help ensure that the information meets the needs of its users.

Question 4. How do you rate the importance of the following issues about the Canal?

This submission focuses on access principally by people, but with recognition of the 'green web' contribution of the Canal. In our detailed response to question 5 below, regarding the proposed cycleway and pedestrian way, we provide further comments about cycling networks, sub-regional policies and planning, and propose a co-ordination mechanism.

Question 5. Do you support the proposed cycle/pedestrian way along the Alexandra Canal?

Yes, highly supported, in principle. Our in practice qualifications are set out in sections 3 and 4.

We commend the proposed cycleway and pedestrian way, with its attention to the distinct needs of the different types of users. The draft Masterplan acknowledges that pedestrians, commuting cyclists and recreational cyclists cannot necessarily share the same path (6-9).

We note the high level of international support for urban design which increases the provision of spaces and encourages people to walk, cycle and use public transport. For example, the United States Centre for Disease Control has a program supporting cities and towns which create 'community structural environments' to provide settings conducive for people to use 'active transport' and become more physically active.

The draft Masterplan should be commended for its recognition of the range of needs among pedestrians and cyclists so that they "cannot necessarily share the same path" (p.6-9). Planning for this area should not only be staged, (the draft Masterplan recognises for example, the urgency of providing cycling access on the eastern side of the Canal), but be able to accommodate growth. As an example, in some surrounding streets, it may be appropriate for the footpath to be converted to a shared facility. When the number of pedestrians and cyclists increases, it may be necessary to build a separate cycle lane/route. While separate cycle routes may be regarded as a barrier to mobility for pedestrians, particularly people with certain disabilities, pedestrians with impaired eyesight and hearing find it easier to orientate themselves with separate routes. Useful guidance for deciding and designing shared and separated areas is available from the Danish Road Directorate in *Collection of Cycle Concepts* (2000).

We also commend the recommended "close design attention" (6-16) to intersections and crossings to ensure the needs of recreational cyclists and pedestrian amenity are met.

3. Alexandra Canal's role as part of a regional cycleway network

We applaud the statement made by Dr Andrew Refshauge, Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning on 6th December 2000 that he wishes to see the Alexandra cycleway construction brought forward:

I've already indicated our intention to transform the canal and its environment into a major ecological and recreational asset for the community. Cycle and pedestrian pathways along the length of the canal are there to provide opportunities for recreation. And I've let my preferences be known to the board that I don't mind if they bring those opportunities forward and we can have cycleways and pedestrian ways ahead of the otherwise scheduled time frame for it. For two reasons: one - we're all getting older, and the more we can ride our bikes the longer we'll live. And secondly: if it's out of sight it's out of mind and the more people that are riding and walking along it the more people will be seeing it and therefore the pressure will be on to finish it faster than in twenty years time.

A cycle route along the Alexandra Canal will provide an invaluable 'spine' cycleway connecting cycling routes to the east and west and would improve the commuting and recreational cycling facilities for thousands of people in the inner-west and further afield. We believe that the Canal and its links to the cycling network would lead to increases in safe cycling, inline with the State Government's 'Action for Air' Air Quality Management Plan. **We concur** with the draft Masterplan in highlighting that, "the early implementation of the [Canal] route and the need for the route to connect to major activity centres was of the utmost importance and should be given high priority." (pp.6-10)

Draft Masterplan's proposal for access is supported

The draft Masterplan's proposal (p. 6-16 & 6-17) is conceptually appropriate in responding to the community wishes for the Canal to serve as a:

- an 'initial connector' between the Cooks River and Green Square
- a 'spine' accessway for cycling and walking running alongside the Canal and its tributaries
- local link to connect to surrounding parks, stations, streets and attractors and the regional cycling network.

Using the 'spine' would provide potential for connectivity and easy access to water views for people walking and cycling.

We support the draft Masterplan's emphasis on the need to respond to access by cycling and walking in the short-term, and increasing access as the implementation of the masterplan and related plans progress.

We welcome the way in which the draft Masterplan anticipates drawing on existing plans, some of which were listed on p.6-7, and recognises the need for a co-ordinating mechanism, particularly between state and local government agencies, for network planning, development, and construction. However, we believe a stronger case must be made for Canal regional planning for cycling and pedestrian networks owing to the proliferation and status of plans and the numerous agencies with jurisdiction over lands and networks, and this is outlined in section 4 below.

Canal-side access for pedestrians and cycling routes

We support the provision of a continuous access way for people walking and cycling alongside the Canal and its tributaries. We appreciate that a building setback should be provided for waterway and riverine protection and recognise the heritage constraints on the usual 40m preferred setback.

We recommend that the masterplan includes plans to provide a parallel cycleway on the western side following the construction of the eastern cycleway. Plans for access between Mascot station precinct, the Woolsheds Conservation Management Plan, any extension to Campbell St including a bridge as

part of the St Peters Industrial Road (SPIR) and Sydney Park need to be resolved to advantage walking and cycling use.

In any event, the western side will need to be managed so that it is visually interesting and compatible with the goals of the Canal precinct. A mirror promenade/access way, perhaps with a greater emphasis for recreational cycling rather than commuter cycling, could be provided on account of its potential for continuous access to Tempe Recreation Reserve and the Cooks River Cycleway.

We support:

- development priority being given to the eastern side because of the relatively better readiness to access the lands.
- priority being given to a continuous cycle route along the eastern side of the Canal – to provide a north-side ‘spine’ running alongside the Canal and its tributaries (p.6-16).
- the recommended 10m setback alongside the Canal on both the western and eastern sides (p.6-10). These provisions would need support from section94 contributions, allowable floor space and bonus offsets as stated in the masterplan.
- attention be given to the creation of pedestrian and cycling access along the Canal’s tributaries from Sydney Park to the western side of the Canal, and from Allen St in the north to the northern end of the Canal at Huntley St.
- investigation into the Recall Archives Site to provide a cycle access way along the Canal between Gardeners Road and the Canal (6-11).
- connecting the private road on the eastern side, opposite Campbell Rd on the west side, to Bourke St using the interim Campbell Rd extension road reservation to Bourke St (6-11).

This approach could introduce a safer use of the road space with parallel provision for:

walking ←-----→ cycleway ↔ parking lane ←-----→ motor vehicle driving lane

as in Berlin, and other world cities, i.e. with cycleway next to walkway rather than between the lanes of parked motor vehicles and moving motor traffic, thereby reducing the risk of injury from cars opening doors or pulling out in front of riders.

Land surrounding the Canal

We support the recommendations in the draft Masterplan for greater permeability of the surrounding site. The history of land use surrounding the Canal has resulted in large consolidated sites with low permeability (p.6-10), which is not conducive to walking or cycling (p.6-13). Some of these lands are reserved or owned by DUAP, DPWS, and the RTA. For the human energy scale of walking and cycling, a finer grain of routes is desirable (6-10).

This characteristic is also faced in other sites in the sub-region, such as the South Sydney Growth Centre and the Australian Technology Park, managed by the South Sydney Development Corporation and the Sydney Harbour Foreshores Authority respectively. Therefore, addressing this common

planning obstacle may assist in network planning and in ensuring that Councils' planning instruments are revised wherever necessary. For example, the South Sydney Council SSC DCP 1997 (Part C- public domain) and Alexandra Canal Model DCP for Urban Form need to be consistent and recognise the need for both pedestrian and cycling links. Currently, the South Sydney Council SSC DCP 1997 recognises pedestrian links but not cycling links.

We recommend that urban regeneration projects, such as the South Sydney Growth Centre to the immediate north and east of the Canal, are planned as walking, cycling and public transport communities. Many leading authorities internationally including the WHO Centre for Urban Health support such 'transit oriented development'. Using this approach, it is desirable to consider movement flows first and then the existing infrastructure, starting with walking, cycling and moving up through public transport, road freight, and considering the movement of cars last. This approach allows planners to better understand what alternatives exist in order to reduce access by private motor vehicles. Restricting motor vehicle access may assist in reducing the contaminated runoff into stormwater drains and thus help to protect the waterways.

Cycling crossings for Alexandra Canal and Cooks River

Since the cycleway running on the eastern side of the Canal would form a major north-south route from St George to the Sydney CBD, it is essential that crossing points are planned and built.

The southern end of the Canal joins into the Cooks River and cycle routes have been planned as part of the *M5 East Motorway Bicycle Strategy* (1998). On the eastern side, on the M5 East Cycleway, it is planned that cyclists would ride from the south from Princes Highway to Airport Drive via Holbeach Ave and the Tempe Park roadway to cross the Canal at the existing bridge, and then north along Airport Drive. The plans for the M5 East cycleway continue the route east, following Airport Drive to Qantas Drive (both roads under Federal or private jurisdiction), a new cycleway turnoff is required to enable cyclists to turn north into Coward Street. This turnoff is shown on the draft Masterplan 'Access Map (p.7-1).

From the south riding east along Marsh St, a route is planned to cross the Brunetti Bridge, to Airport Rd and Qantas Drive, with a turnoff at Robey St, and then continuing past O'Riordan St to General Holmes Drive. Owing to the narrow road corridor from Brunetti Bridge along Airport Drive and Qantas Drive, roads on Federal land leased by Qantas and the Sydney Airports Corporation Ltd, the RTA has a recommendation to widen the pavement to accommodate a shared cycling/pedestrian facility.

At the goods railway on the eastern side of the Canal, sufficient clearance is available for a cycle underpass and the route could then continue north through land occupied currently by Simsmetal. If changes are being made to this rail bridge, such as a proposed road freight bridge to access the new airfreight terminal on the western side, then pedestrian and cycleway crossings should be included. The draft Masterplan refers to air rights over the Canal having been sold by Sydney Water to the Sydney Airports Corporation Ltd to construct two bridges for its exclusive use. The draft Masterplan recommends that these bridges both be made accessible for pedestrians and cyclists. This recommendation needs close corroboration with the overall cycling network plan for this sub-region.

If the SPIR were to go ahead, then a cycleway, including another water crossing, at grade, as an extension of Campbell St (p.6-13) should be accommodated – as indicated on the Access Map.

Increasing safe cycling

The benefits of cycling include improved personal health, reductions in traffic congestion and consumption of urban space and reductions in motor vehicle pollution of all kinds. The benefits of cycling are widely recognised by the community and there is evidence for suppressed demand for cycling facilities. NSW government research has shown that more than 50% of households have a bicycle. Increased cycling is therefore an appropriate and popular objective for governments. The NSW Government's AQMP refers to programs directed to "Action 2.25. Improve government support for safer and more convenient bicycle use" and the target is a "threefold increase in bicycle use statewide, and a 5% reduction in accidents by 2001". The National Road Safety Action Plan also encourages increases in cycling and walking, as alternative modes of transport, to reduce the risk of fatality and injury.

The Danish Road Directorate also has targets for safe cycling. To attract car occupants to cycling, it emphasises that an optimal strategy for a locality is a combined campaign of physical improvements, restrictions on car use, and communications to inform the public about new cycle tracks and to promote cycling among those who cycle occasionally. Experience in Denmark highlights the opportunity for widening the scope of partners or interested parties in promoting more and safer cycling, to include, for example, health agencies, GPs, bicycle dealers, and chambers of commerce.

At Sydney Park, the new CARES facility will provide a focus for bike education, and the route and locality of Alexandra Canal will provide a desirable place for practical on-route bike education. The opportunities in the Canal's region for innovative, effective cycling promotion are substantial, as are the opportunities for wider partnerships with schools, health promotion services and local GPs.

South Sydney Council together with South Sydney Development Corporation and the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust could sponsor local bike rides, such as monthly bike-to-work campaigns (coinciding with monthly car-free Centennial Park days), with the RTA and local bike groups, such as BikeEast and MASSBUG, and sports cyclists. Open days at the Canal could also be held with promotions for cyclists at Centennial Park and Sydney Park.

4. The importance of coordinated regional planning for the success of Alexandra Canal

At first sight, it could appear that a cycling route connecting into the Canal-side cycleway could be pieced together from the existing local and regional cycleway plans and redevelopment plans of State and local authorities. However, the list of plans with cycle-based proposals in the draft Masterplan is incomplete and does not indicate the problem with their relative status. For example, while the Canal is located within South Sydney Council area, this Council now needs urgently to update its bikeplan which was written in 1997. This bikeplan is no longer an appropriate planning document due to the completion of the Eastern Distributor (with its difficulties of west-east access for cyclists) and the apparent uncertainties surrounding the plans for the M5East regional cycleway and its connections with local cycleways, including the Canal-side cycleway.

The list in the Masterplan omits Randwick Council's Bikeplan (1997) which covers a significant area within 2km immediately to the east of the Canal. The major N-S roads sever and restrict access from the east to the Canal – Bourke St, O'Riordan St, Botany Rd and the Eastern Distributor south of Dacey Ave. The eastern area – within 5-6km – has a high population and likely to be important to recreational and commuter cyclists due, for example, to the densification of Kensington (new LEP), the locations of UNSW/Randwick Hospitals, Kingsford and the redevelopment of Bundock St site.

The Randwick Bikeplan, like South Sydney's, has also been superseded by the effects of the Eastern Distributor, and the crossing of the Eastern Distribution at Lenthall St- Epsom Rd which has also become the 370 bus route with more frequent services, running on both weekdays and the weekends. In 2000, Randwick Council also recognised the need to revise some of its planned on-road segments due to the high volume of motor vehicle traffic and the speed of motor traffic.

While the RTA's Sydney Cycleways program is listed in the draft Masterplan (p.6-7), both the bike route from Mascot-Darlinghurst (planned for construction in 2002 according to *Bike Plan 2010*) and the M5 East regional cycleway need to be connected to the Alexandra Canal cycleway.

In addition to cycle route planning, a number of Councils prepare pedestrian route plans in accordance with the RTA's guidance under the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plans (PAMPs). These PAMPs should be included in the Masterplan.

Also, Councils and other authorities are involved in major redevelopment plans with implications for these networks, including:

- South Sydney Growth Centre (known as Green Square)
- Mascot station precinct - urban regeneration
- Macdonaldtown development on ATP site
- Bundock St development
- Kensington consolidation
- possible Kogarah Golf Course area development
- Randwick Council's Strategic Planning studies
- Marrickville Council's Local Environmental Study
- Centennial Park Trust's Transport, Access and Parking Study.

Conceivably, many of these major sites will also prepare transport management plans which should be aligned with the Alexandra Canal Masterplan. The council or consent authority should be taking into account cycling network, access and facilities for these developments.

Given the status of the bike plans relevant to the locality of the Canal and its immediate precinct, **we recommend** that a Canal-regional cycle network be:

- planned to have local and regional network connectivity;
- designed as a network to provide safe, legible links to major origins/destinations including, the east-west links - University of Sydney/RPAH; St Peters station; Redfern station and ATP; Green Square precinct and station; Mascot station; Centennial Parklands, and UNSW/Randwick Hospitals Complex; and north-south links - Sydney CBD, Sydney airports (plus cycling route within domestic airport precinct), Botanic Gardens, and The Rocks;
- include a link built from Airport Drive, opposite North Pond, under the railway bridge running north along the E side of the Canal up to Huntley St. From there further investigation of a possible route along the present grass verge on the eastern side of O'Shea's to Maddox and then either left to join the South Sydney Council route to the city or further along the concrete terrace on the western side before turning right to follow the sewer easement along the northern side of Perry Park, through the Austral Bronze site to Reserve Street and on to UNSW and other destinations.

- include Canal cycleway crossings, from the eastern cycleway across to the western side, and to connect the South Sydney Council route from Sydney Park;
- supported by State agencies (such as, SSDC, DUAP, RTA, SHFA, Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust) and by Councils, IMROC and SSROC with the engagement of local bicycle user groups and major trip generators (such as major parks, universities, Sydney airports);
- implemented as a staged project, with the first stage to be undertaken urgently to enable safe cycling access to see the Canal and to provide rudimentary access from South to North.

Regional co-ordination is crucial to expediting coherent cycleway and pedestrian networks. The resolution of access issues involves more organisations than even the draft Masterplan anticipated.

We recommend that in addition to the three Councils bordering the Canal, Councils within comfortable cycling distance of 5 km and ROCS should be included in cycling network planning activity.

We recommend that close attention be given to an appropriate co-ordinating mechanism, and a model structure be trialled in the Canal region for the following reasons. First, although we note that the draft Masterplan’s recommendations call for “early commitment and decisions” and the recommended actions as “a test for the achievability of an integrated approach to the Canal”, we are concerned that the test will not be positive. The community responded strongly to the NSW Government’s Green Paper on plan making, *Plan Making in NSW – Opportunities for the Future*. The *Feedback Report* included calls for:

1. a simpler system of plan making for a region
2. better co-ordination
3. stronger co-ordination with State government and with local Councils
4. better community involvement
5. plans to be subject to regular monitoring and review.

Second, the key features of the new system to be detailed in the forthcoming White Paper appear to be highly relevant to the situation at the Canal and in its locality.

The highlights seem to be:

- locality planning – managing and delivering better ‘places’, making plans more meaningful to the communities whose future they shape;
- thinking and planning strategically to meet the challenge of sustainability
- working together across government – collaborative planning at all levels, so that:
 - State and local government work in partnership with other regional stakeholders to set regional direction, co-ordinate strategies and actions;
 - there will be a ‘whole-of-Council’ approach to planning and managing local areas in collaboration with the community.

Third, the review of Part 3 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act is to provide a framework for meeting the challenge of ecological sustainability, including community vitality, jobs, and a healthy environment. The management of Alexandra Canal would provide an exemplary case and valuable learning opportunity for all stakeholders.

In addition to this foreshadowed legislative change, eight councils (most within 5km of the Canal), are involved in making submissions to hearings of the Sproats Inquiry on boundaries. Attention is being directed to governance processes and co-ordination, for which the issues for the Canal, particularly the cycleway network, are a good illustration.

Recommendation No.15 in the draft Masterplan proposes a Canal Access Working Party without a rationale for its structure and composition. The draft Masterplan understates the number of plans, agencies and the task of co-ordination – all problems addressed by the review of Part 3 and the Sproats Inquiry. Would a Working Party, chaired by SSDC, be the appropriate forum to crunch through a proposal for a regional cycleway network, where the RTA and Councils have a very strong role?

Given the situation for planning access, particularly cycling access across so many government agencies at all levels and the NSW Government's interest in regional and locality planning, through Part 3 reforms and Sproats Inquiry, **we recommend** that the NSW Government in conjunction with Councils identify a trial co-ordination mechanism for developing a locality cycling network, ensuring coherence between RTA's regional cycleways and local plans and routes.

The problem facing the Canal with regard to local cycling connectivity is similar for Green Square and the ATP site, so we suggest that this recommendation is quite compelling and consistent with the likely direction of Part 3 reforms.

While this suggestion is inspired by the awesome challenges facing cycle network planning under the fragmented functions and boundaries, we also suggest further co-ordination mechanisms be set up for native vegetation planting in the Canal vicinity, in regional parks and streets. Another locality suited to a co-ordination mechanism (such as place management) would be the Mascot station precinct.

5. Response to draft Masterplan recommendations

We support the tasks identified in the Masterplan, such as those listed under recommendation no.15, but with the recognition that a regional coordination mechanism is required, as outlined above.

We recommend that the final recommendation No. 16 be amended to focus on a comprehensive transport, rather than traffic, strategy that deals with movements by people and goods by all modes while limiting motor vehicle access to the Canal.

In addition, we are concerned to emphasise the urgency with which a regional cycling network and walking and cycling access to the Canal is needed . We have already stressed the need to develop an integrated Canal cycling network that connects to local and regional cycleways, as well linking to major origins/destinations within a 5km or so radius.

To avoid delays, **we highlight and support the following recommendations:**

- Recommendation 3 – negotiations for establish rights of way along the Canal and channels from Bowden St to the woolsheds
- Recommendation 2 and 8 – negotiating for the implementation of the section between Huntley St and Bourke Rd, along the Woolsheds site and entering Bourke Rd at DUAP's road reservation; and future lease arrangements.
- Recommendation 11 – for access alongside DPWS Stoneyard to Huntley St because it will give very early access to the Canal, prior to redevelopment of the Woolsheds site

- Recommendations 1 and 4 – regarding optimum route for the M5 East cycleway in relation to the overall cycling and pedestrian network and the newer issues listed under Recommendation 4
- Recommendations 7 and 6 – Mascot station precinct – potential implications for receivership inquiry and NSW Government approaches to improving the interface with the station to achieve greater patronage through Mascot station, before land is developed.

In addition, **we support** Recommendations 5, 9, 10 and 13.

We query Recommendation 12, which seeks to exclude the western side of the Canal as a linear park from South Sydney Council’s planning instruments. From discussions with South Sydney Councillors, and as residents in South Sydney, we are concerned about the future of the western side. It will certainly need to be well managed to retain the attraction for people visiting on the eastern side. A strong case can be made for a cycling route on the western side, although a later stage than the eastern side.

For Recommendation 14, **we support** the importance of the Sydney Airports Corporation Ltd plans for traffic on its bridges being integrated with the Canal and local and regional cycleways, and pedestrian access. We also draw attention to the announcement to privatise the Sydney airports and that changes in land management may occur.

Thinking about the implementation of these recommendations strengthens the need for effective regional co-ordination to be led by an agency of the State Government.

6. Summary

We commend the draft Masterplan for proposing the urgent development of access strategy by cycling and walking to the Canal and for routes to be part of a network.

We consider the co-ordination task awesome given the fact that so many plans are involved and that the most central, South Sydney Council’s bicycle plan needs updating. This situation is an outstanding illustration of the problems raised in the review of Part 3 EP&AA and the Sproats Inquiry. Therefore, it would make an example case or even ‘incubator project’ for the State agencies, working collaboratively with Councils to produce quickly, an integrated cycling network that connects the Canal to local and regional cycling networks relevant to the major origins/destinations. It is also important to include the local groups in planning and development.