

***ES 38 - PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF DRAFT BIKEPLAN  
For Recommendation***

File Ref: 1868

**Director, Technical Services reports:**

**Synopsis**

In 2005 and 2006, Council has been reviewing its original (1996) *Bikeplan* and has been developing a new *Bikeplan*. This has been assisted by bicycle planning consultants, Council's Traffic and Transportation Committees, the local bicycle user group and other stakeholders. The consultant team's *Draft Bikeplan* report recommends implementation of an improved cycleway network at an estimated total cost of \$7.2M over a ten-year period. It also recommends provision of bicycle parking at railway stations, commercial centres and other strategic locations at an estimated cost of \$240K over a three-year period. It is expected that at least half of these costs would be met by Commonwealth and NSW Government grant funds. Public exhibition of the *Draft Bikeplan* report does not commit Council to funding *Bikeplan* works within a fixed period, and annual costs could be varied to match the available budget for any given year by varying the construction timeframe if and when necessary.

It is recommended that this report be received and noted, and the consultant's *Draft Bikeplan* project report, entitled *Marrickville Bikeplan 2006 Bicycle Infrastructure Development Strategy*, be placed on public exhibition in early 2007 and subsequently reported back to Council for adoption.

**Background**

Council's first comprehensive *Bikeplan*, developed in 1996, proposed a network of local cycling routes across the Marrickville LGA. Whilst the local network proposed in the 1996 *Bikeplan* has been largely implemented by Council over 10 years, Council has recognised a need to improve and expand the network. This would facilitate and further promote the increasing use of bicycles in the inner-Sydney and respond to new NSW Government cycling guidelines and programs.

Hence in 2005 and 2006, Council has been reviewing its original *Bikeplan* and has been developing a new *Bikeplan*. This has been assisted by: Bicycle planning consultants Sustainable Transport Consultants and Jamieson Foley; Council's Traffic and Transportation Committees; relevant Council staff; the Marrickville and South Sydney Bicycle User Group (MASSBUG); Leichhardt and City of Sydney Councils, who are also preparing new bikeplans; and other stakeholders and interested members of the community. It has also been assisted by formal consultations on earlier report drafts at *Bikeplan* workshops and meetings of Council's former Bicycle Committee, Transportation Committee and Traffic Committee. MASSBUG members and Council staff also participated in the consultant's technical assessment of the existing network in 2005. An initial draft of the consultant's report was available on Council's website in May 2006, and the attached report draft was considered at the October 2006 meeting of the Transportation Committee and at a Senior Staff meeting in November 2006.

The *Draft Bikeplan* is supported by several NSW Government and Council policies and projects, including:

- **NSW Government active transport policies**, such as the RTA's *Action for Bikes: Bikeplan 2010* policy and *NSW Bicycle Guidelines*, and the Department of Planning's *Planning Guidelines for Walking and Cycling*;

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- **Plans and path works for the Cooks River and GreenWay corridors**, funded by NSW Government and Council, including the *Cooks River Pedestrian and Cycle Path Improvement Study* and associated works program, and the *Cooks River to Iron Cove GreenWay Co-ordination Strategy*;
- **Other Council planning and environment policies** such as the *Draft Marrickville Urban Strategy*, *Local Action 21 Plan*, *Draft Integrated Transport Plan*, *DCP 19 Parking Strategy*, the *FutureFleet* project and *TravelSmart* primary schools project, which include objectives and provisions for promotion of cycling within Council and in the community;
- **Council committees**, particularly Council's Traffic and Transportation Committees in their ongoing consideration of cycling in all traffic and transport issues discussed; and
- **Council-supported cycling promotional events and media**, such as Council's ongoing support for the MASSBUG cycling stall at the Marrickville Festival.

**Discussion**

The *Draft Bikeplan* project report comprises:

1. **A bicycle network plan**, which builds on the existing network by adding new routes and by introducing a two-tiered network of higher quality regional routes and more modest local routes. A course grid of regional routes would provide direct, higher speed access to centres and other major trip generators. This would be supported by directional signage and roadway treatments that separate cyclists from other traffic wherever possible. A finer grid of local routes would serve shorter trips and provide links to regional routes using low speed, low trafficked back streets and laneways, generally within a mixed traffic environment. The network plan aims to create safe, functional cycling routes with a minimum of interference to existing roadways, particularly along the local routes. The most significant changes are intended to occur at intersections, with a focus on difficult, dangerous and/or heavily trafficked intersections. All roadway treatments and signage is based on the RTA's *NSW Bicycle Guidelines*.
2. **A bicycle parking plan**, which identifies locations for the installation of bicycle parking racks in Marrickville's commercial centres and bicycle lockers and/or racks at Marrickville's railway stations. Newtown is the priority commercial centre, whilst Sydenham is the priority railway station, and it is recommended that installation of bicycle parking facilities at these locations serve as a pilot project. Bicycle parking at railway stations is recognised as a key element of improving the integration of cycling with use of public transport. Locations for installation of bicycle parking at Council parks/facilities and at schools are proposed, as is a system for responding to requests for installation of racks on an as-needs basis. Finally, the bicycle parking plan recommends that the bicycle parking provisions of *DCP 19: Parking Strategy* be updated and improved. This would be undertaken as part of a comprehensive review of *DCP 19* proposed for 2007/08 by the *Draft Urban Strategy* and *Draft Integrated Transport Plan*.
3. **A plan for integrating cycling with public transport**, which aims to ensure that the bicycle network plan provides direct connections to and from Marrickville's railway stations and that bicycle parking is available at railway stations and major bus stops. It also aims to generally improve the cycling (and walking) environment around stations and adjacent commercial centres to make it easy for pedestrians and cyclists to gain access to stations and to move about commercial centres. This is consistent with the broader aims of the *Draft Urban Strategy* in relation to improving commercial centres.

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The *Draft St Peters and Marrickville Railway Station Area Revitalisation Plans*, currently being developed, are intended as pilot projects for the improvement of these important areas.

4. **A plan for creating bicycle-friendly streets and neighbourhoods**, which aims to ensure that Council continues to consider cycling in all of its roadway design, construction and maintenance actions. Key elements of this plan are: cyclist access through road closures; consideration of cyclists when remarking roads; creating bicycle-friendly bridges and other structures; efficient reporting/response to pavement repair issues; replacing unsafe drainage grates; considering bicycle access through construction sites; and working with the RTA to create bicycle-friendly Regional and State roads. Whilst Council has traditionally considered the needs of cyclists in the design and implementation of roadworks through its Traffic Committee, former Bicycle Committee and Transportation Committee, the *Draft Bikeplan* will assist this process.
5. **An implementation plan for Regional Route 7**, which would serve as a pilot project to guide the implementation of the other *Draft Bikeplan* routes. Details of the proposed implementation of the Newtown to Petersham section of *Draft Bikeplan* Regional Route 7 were reported to Council's October 2006 Technical Services Committee. Implementation is planned to commence in 2006/07 to take advantage of a *Draft Bikeplan* funding opportunity. Regional Route 7 has been selected over other routes because of its high level of commuter cycling usage and its link across King Street into the City of Sydney's popular Wilson Street route to Redfern and the CBD.

The total cost estimate (preliminary) for the proposed network is currently \$7.2M. To implement the Bike Plan, it is necessary to lobby the NSW Government to contribute a significant level of the total network and bicycle parking costs through its existing *Bikeplan 2010*, *Metropolitan Greenspace* and *Cooks River Foreshore Improvement* programs, with the possibility of funding for bicycle parking from other NSW and Commonwealth Government programs.

A modest contribution to *Bikeplan*-related roadworks could also be expected from Council's *Section 94 Contributions Plan* and annual Resources Plan budget. Council's allocation of funds for bicycle facilities works over recent years has been about \$100k per annum.

Public exhibition of the *Draft Bikeplan* report does not commit Council to funding *Bikeplan* works within a fixed period, and annual costs could be varied to match the available budget for any given year by varying the construction timeframe if and when necessary. Apart from its planning role, the *Draft Bikeplan* is intended to serve an advocacy role for generating greater support from the NSW and Commonwealth Governments for cycling in Marrickville and the region. As such, it will greatly enhance Council's ability to secure the funding necessary to construct the proposed network.

Broad community support for the new *Bikeplan* is apparent from *Bikeplan* consultations undertaken in 2005 and 2006, and there is statistical and anecdotal evidence to suggest that the extent of commuter and recreational cycling has increased in inner-Sydney in recent years. However, it is possible that some community concerns could be raised over visual or physical impacts of line marking, signage and other *Bikeplan* works on local streets.

In recognition of these possible concerns, the *Bikeplan* has adopted a 'minimum interference' approach. Particular care has also been taken to ensure that the upgrading of existing routes and implementation of new routes does not result in the significant loss of kerbside car parking.

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Wherever this occurs, Council will balance this against the wider benefits of the *Bikeplan*, and will ensure there is adequate consultation with local residents, MASSBUG members and other relevant stakeholders wherever significant changes are proposed.

There is also potential for State agencies to raise concerns in relation to roadway changes proposed by the *Draft Bikeplan*. The RTA may object or refuse approval for changes that affect RTA roads, and the Ministry of Transport has already raised issues over bicycle-bus interactions on proposed Strategic Bus Corridors. These concerns will continue to be resolved through Council's Transport and Traffic committees as they arise.

**Conclusion**

The *Draft Marrickville Bikeplan* has been developed in 2005 and 2006 with the input of all relevant stakeholders, and it is appropriate that the *Draft Bikeplan* report be placed on public exhibition in early 2007. This will enable a final round of input from relevant Council and State agency staff and interested community stakeholders, followed by a report back to Council for adoption. Concurrent to exhibition of the *Draft Bikeplan* will be implementation of selected sections of *Draft Bikeplan* Regional Route 7 as a pilot project.

It is not anticipated that significant concerns will be raised by exhibition of the *Draft Bikeplan* by State agencies and members of the community. Any concerns raised at the implementation phase will need to be balanced against the wider benefits of the *Draft Bikeplan*. Council's Traffic and Transportation Committees will continue to provide a forum for discussion and decision-making on *Bikeplan* matters, and targeted consultation of local residents and stakeholders on *Bikeplan* implementation issues will be undertaken on an as-needs basis.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** Council:

1. receive and note this report;
2. receive and note the consultant's *Draft Bikeplan* report at **ATTACHMENT 1**; and
3. endorse the proposal to publicly exhibit the *Draft Bikeplan* report in early 2007 and subsequently report back to Council for adoption.

**ATTACHMENT 1: Total 99 pages**

Consultant's *Draft Bikeplan* report: *Marrickville Bikeplan 2006 Bicycle Infrastructure Development Strategy*.

***\*Please note ATTACHMENT 1 has been distributed as a separately bound document***