

**Making Cycling Better
in Northern Sydney**

BNA/GHF_2101002

The Hon. Gladys Berejiklian
State Member for Willoughby
Shop 26
145-151 Sailors Bay Road
NORTHBRIDGE NSW 2063
Email: willoughby@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Madam,

Beaches Link EIS – Concerns re Active Transport Impacts on Lower North Shore

Bike North is writing to you, in your role as the local member for Willoughby, asking for your support so that pedestrians and bike riders receive the best possible outcome to address our significant concerns about the impacts on active transport infrastructure from four years of construction of the Beaches Link.

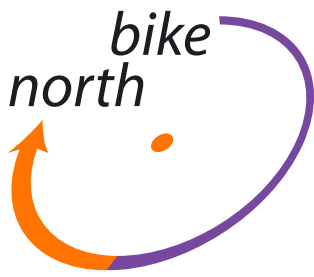
We have a high level of concern regarding the impact on the existing, popular and high quality pedestrian and cycling path along the Gore Hill Freeway in Artarmon. We also have some concern regarding the impact on the local shared path at Flat Rock Gully. We are also extremely disappointed that the Beaches Link project provides no improvement to active transport infrastructure on the lower North Shore.

We write on behalf of our members, many of whom live in your electorate of Willoughby and the general public of walkers and bike riders who currently use these paths and/or ride and walk in the Willoughby area.

Bike North is a volunteer run bicycle user group with a membership of over 500, and is affiliated with Bicycle New South Wales. We work with many councils in northern Sydney and also with state government agencies, towards creating a bicycling friendly environment for all who want to use a bike for transport or recreation in northern Sydney.

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Artarmon Site – Walking and Cycling Path alongside Gore Hill Freeway

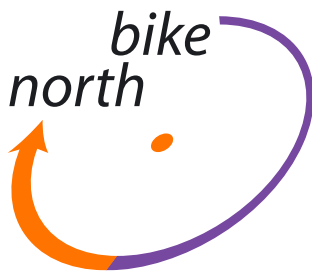
The Beaches Link project team has determined that this pathway will be within their proposed construction zone and that they will therefore need to detour pedestrian and bike rider users of this path between Station Street, Naremburn and Reserve Road, Artarmon for at least the period of four years construction. The EIS document has identified that they propose to detour people walking and cycling, through the hilly and highly trafficked Artarmon Industrial Area, even proposing a route along Reserve Road with its high volume of heavy vehicles and other roads which are access routes to the Beaches Link work sites.

We are deeply concerned that the Beaches Link project team has failed to understand both the high value and importance of the existing path and how inappropriate their detour route proposal is especially considering existing pathway users include families and less confident riders who have been attracted specifically to the traffic free pathway.

Construction will require millions of dollars to be spent to adjust sections of the Gore Hill Freeway to allow cars to continue their usual route during construction. The Beaches Link project team has not given an equivalent consideration of path users to ensure that all ages and all abilities can safely and efficiently continue along the pathway for the duration of construction. Even the temporary ancillary works have been designed before pedestrians and cyclists are considered, leaving the proposed detour unnecessarily long and over hilly and unsafe roads.

This pathway alongside the Gore Hill Freeway has high value both as a continuous, traffic separated long regional route between Eastwood/Epping and Naremburn and also for its safe, quick connections between Naremburn, Artarmon and Lane Cove. This section of the regional pathway underpasses the North Shore railway line and major roads including Herbert Street, Reserve Road and the Pacific Highway. There are many local connections into these neighbouring suburbs including a pathway and local road route to Chatswood itself and access to a major sporting and recreational centre at Bicentennial Reserve. All this, at a gentle gradient and traffic free. **This section of pathway connecting Naremburn, Artarmon and Lane Cove enables frequent, safe, local trips by people of all ages, the type of active transport that is prioritised by Transport for NSW.**

The proposed four year detour route includes a hilly climb on local roads in Naremburn, difficult, unsafe manoeuvring into a significant tradie, vehicular route over the railway line at the Lambs



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Road Bridge, unsafe mixing with impatient drivers / heavy traffic along Lambs Road and Cleg Street, then extremely unsafe riding along up and downhill on major heavy vehicle Reserve Road. The EIS document itself is contradictory, and lacking in detail. It describes and maps two different routes through the Artarmon Industrial Area. It proposes returning to the pathway at Reserve Road, when there is no existing access. Further questioning of the project team does not give us confidence that they have given the needs of pedestrians and bike riders any consideration in the development of the Beaches Link EIS.

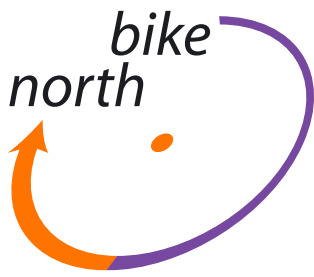
In summary we request that any approval of the proposed Beaches Link ensure that access along the path remains continuous, safe and easy to use. Any necessary detour should be:

- **Minimised to continue along the existing alignment wherever possible.**
- **Provide separation from vehicles, protection from heavy vehicles and to Austroads standards.**
- **Included as part of the overall site design, rather than fitting around a pre-determined site design.**
- **Be based on final designed path as much as practical.**
- **At all times be developed in consultation with Bike North with timely notification of any adjustments.**
- **Provide an underpass of the railway line preferably connecting to Punch Street, so as to avoid steep hills and merging with vehicles on and around railway overpass road**
- **Preferably provide an underpass of Herbert Street**
- **If detoured away from the cycleway, connect directly back to the path from Waltham Street to avoid Reserve Road**

We also request that by the time construction is complete walkers and riders have returned to a continuous, connecting pathway at least to the current standard, with all railway and road underpasses and access routes.

Artarmon Site – Herbert Road / Hampden Street Impacts and Opportunities

The Beaches Link EIS indicates that there will also be impacts to the Herbert / Hampden Street bridge over the Gore Hill Freeway as a result of these construction sites at Artarmon. There is an existing shoulder lane bike route along this road which connects Chatswood to St Leonards and



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we have concerns for the safety of bike riders and pedestrians using this route. **Construction needs to ensure the safety of pedestrians and bike riders in the vicinity.**

Willoughby Council is currently developing a detailed design, with funding from DPIE, for a separated cycleway along Herbert Road / Hampden Streets as a principle route connecting these two strategic centres, Chatswood and St Leonards. The concept design received strong support from the community. This detailed design will provide a shovel ready project ready for construction. This future cycleway will extend the value of the Eastwood to Naremburn Cycleway with the same high level of safety and separation. It will extend cycling access to schools, hospitals and employment centres. The bridge is a pinch point for the separated cycleway. To avoid loss of parking, there is now a proposal to reduce the standard of the separated cycleway to shared path at this site. This could be avoided if the bridge were to be widened during the Beaches Link construction.

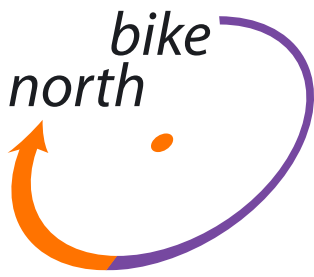
We therefore request that any construction at the Herbert Road / Hampden Street, Artarmon Site include opportunities for improvement to walking and cycling in the vicinity of the site.

Flat Rock Site – Local Pathway Impacts

The proposed worksite at Flat Rock will have impacts on the existing local pathways. While we appreciate there are plans to provide a detour path alongside Flat Rock Drive, we do have concerns that this will be to Austroads Standard and provide strong protection from fast moving vehicles, including the many heavy vehicles that will access this dive site. We also have concerns as to whether continuous connections will be retained to both Small Street and to Sailors Bay Road connection to Northbridge. **We request assurance that the detour will be safe with protection from heavy vehicles and provide access to all existing connections.**

Active Transport Improvement

The Beaches Link EIS does not identify any improvement to Active Transport on the Lower North Shore. There is already great walking/cycling infrastructure along the Gore Hill Freeway provided as part of a previous motorway project. Unfortunately the boundary of that previous project was at Merrenburn Ave, Naremburn and bike riders were abandoned in the middle of the motorway. For over 12 years we have been waiting for the older existing bike path, outside that scope, to be made safer, wider, with better protection from fast moving vehicles and a bridge overpass built to connect this cycleway to West Street, Cammeray.



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This area is clearly within the geographical scope of the Beaches Link. **We therefore request that, if not already completed, this connection be built as part of the Beaches Link.**

Bike North is happy to discuss these issues with you further. The best Bike North representative for this purpose is Carolyn New (carolynn@iinet.net.au or 0427 018 516)

Yours sincerely,

Phillip Hart
President
Bike North

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