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…making cycling better in northern Sydney

Bike North Submission

to the

NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure

in response to

Exhibition of North West Rail Link Environmental Impact Statement 2

Contact: advocacy@bikenorth.org.au

About Bike North

Bike North is a volunteer run bicycle user group, affiliated with Bicycle New South Wales, with a membership of over 600 members. We work with eight councils in northern Sydney, towards creating a bicycling friendly environment for all who want to use a bike for transport or recreation in northern Sydney.

As well as actively working with councils, Roads and Maritime Services / Transport NSW and other government authorities, we run a diverse, popular and quality program of social rides which is free and open to the public. More recently we have developed and offer an education program of cycling skills called 'Bike for Life' to encourage more skilled and confident bike riders in Sydney.

Bike North has worked with many state government roads and transport authorities, consultants and road/rail builder on a number of transport projects including:

- M2 widening – phase 1 and 2
- Lane Cove Tunnel Project
- Chatswood to Epping Rail Line

This Submission

Bike North Supports the North West Rail Link project in its provision of heavy rail public transport infrastructure for the North West community of Sydney. This should enable the removal of many buses and cars from the road, reducing pollution, noise, congestion and creating greatly improved amenity to the residents of these communities.

We are extremely supportive of a multi-mode approach to this project that encourages the use of active transport, walking and cycling, for the access of all railway stations. We are concerned however that the planned provision of extensive car parking will encourage inappropriate usage of the cars for short journeys. There is a high risk that car parking associated with train stations will exacerbate local congestion.

We recognise and are encouraged that EIS2 gives strong recognition to the value of cycling. It is clear however that planned provision for cycling falls short of the declared position. Improvements to provisions for cycling are required in the following areas

- **Station Facilities**
  - Best practice secure bike parking is required in accord with the Australian Standard
  - Available Bicycle Parking should be be consistent with the planned mode share of cyclists as and other end of trip facilities in closest proximity to station entrances/exits.
  - Station entrances, walkways and lifts must be designed to permit unhindered bicycle access to to station concourses, platforms and trains

- **Station Precincts**
  - Plans do not document bicycle movements through station precincts creating difficulty assessing safety of cyclists and other users, and causing uncertainty about linkages to surrounding areas.

- **Bicycle Access Routes to Station Locations**
  - EIS2 does not provide any definition of cycle routes to local stations
  - The EIS has not provided a planning strategy for cyclists which is consistent with studies and plans documented for pedestrians.

Preparation of this submission by Bike North members has been supported extensively by Bicycle New South Wales, our neighbouring bicycle user group, Camwest, and community members with an interest in cycling.

Enquiries about this submission may sent to:
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The North West Rail Link and Cycling
Issues from Environmental Impact Statement 2

The following items are applicable to all stations planned for construction.

- **Station Facilities**
  - *Bicycle Parking Location*
    The Plan shows the location of bicycle parking at each station which, in most cases, is located in suitable positions. In accordance with the desire to place pedestrians and bicycle users first in terms of access to station entrances,
    bicycle parking is placed:
    - adjacent to station entrances
    - in highly-trafficked areas
    - in sheltered and well-lit areas

  - *Bicycle Parking Spaces*
    A very limited number of bicycle spaces are planned to be provided at the start of station operations. No basis for the number of spaces has been provided however the numbers approximate 1% of the daily vehicle trips forecast to be saved by the NSWRL during 2021.

    It is likely even at the current low mode share of commuter cycling in North Western Sydney that the planned bicycle parking provision will not be sufficient. The very current mode share of cycling presents further risk. A small increase in commuter mode share will generate a very large change in the numbers of cyclists.

    All stations along the NWRL will have high proportions of commuter trips starting in the area. This means demand for bicycle parking will be higher than would be the case if the stations served primarily as destinations for commuter cyclists

  - *Bicycle Parking Options*
    Standards for Bicycle Parking are defined in Australian Standard:
    AS 2890.3—1993
    Parking facilities
    Part 3: Bicycle parking facilities

    It is important that all three classes of bicycle parking as shown in the following table from AS 2890.3-1993 are available at stations.

Classification of Bicycle Parking Facilities		
Class	**Security Level**	**Description**
1	High	Fully enclosed individual lockers
2	Medium	Locked compound with communal access using duplicate keys
3	Low	Facilities to which the bicycle frame and wheels can be locked

    All 3 classes of parking must have roofing cover giving protection from wet weather

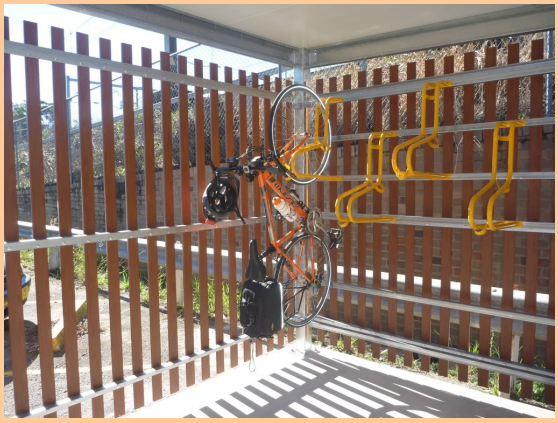
- *Mix of Parking Options*

  The proportions of the bicycle parking forms musty be considered. We suggest the following proportions may assist planning:

Class 1	Fully enclosed individual Lockers	15%
Class 2	Restricted access secure compounds	50%
Class 3	General access locking points (rails, bars etc)	35%

  At individual stations these proportions translate into the following provisions based on the committed numbers of spaces as shown in EIS2:

Station	Class 1 Lockers	Class 2 Compound	Class 3 Rails, Bars etc	Total
Cherrybrook	6	20	14	40
Castle Hill	3	10	7	20
Showground	3	10	7	20
Norwest	5	15	10	30
Bella Vista	5	15	10	30
Kellyville	6	23	16	45
Rouse Hill	6	20	14	40
Cudgegong Road	7	23	15	45



Recently Constructed Class 2 Bicycle Parking Compound at Eastwood Station

- *Space Provision for Bicycle Parking*

  Insufficient information has been provided on the EIS documents to determine whether the sites identified within the station precincts are large enough to accommodate bicycles appropriately.

  It should be expected that the different classes of parking will be positioned in slightly different locations.

- *Facilitating Cycling*

  To assist cyclists some provision for storage of personal items such as helmets,, jackets and gloves should be considered.

- *Station Access for Bicycles*
  The Plan provides indicative vehicle and pedestrian movement diagrams in the vicinity of the stations, however, no plan is provided for bicycle movements. Bicycle NSW and Bike North recommend that The Plan includes bicycle movements on these diagrams with particular consideration given to through-traffic and trip generators as follows.
  - Through Traffic
    Train stations can present significant obstacles to the movement of pedestrians and bicycles through an area. By co-ordinating with local councils, The Department can identify the major desire-lines through station precincts and implement appropriate measures to ensure bicycle through-traffic is catered for.

  - Trip Generators
    A Bicycle Access Plan needs to show how bicycle users will access major trip generators such as the bicycle parking at stations and shopping centres in the vicinity.

- *Separated Bicycle Facilities*
  The station diagrams in The Plan indicate that no separated bicycle facilities will be provided in station precincts. This will result in bicycle users either sharing the road with buses, taxis and cars in a congested space or sharing the footpath in an even more congested space.

  Bicycle NSW and Bike North recommend that The Plan adopts the approach recommended in the NSW Transport Masterplan and examines ways to incorporate separated bicycle facilities that integrate with local bicycle networks.

  The need for separated facilities is particularly pertinent in cases where the new station precincts are positioned on an existing bicycle thoroughfare. In this case, bicycle users are travelling through the station precinct, as opposed to travelling to the station precinct and need to be treated differently.

  Bicycle users travelling to a station precinct and seeking to stop and park their bike will be slowing to navigate the many obstacles present at a destination point. Bicycle users travelling through a station precinct will be focussed on their overall journey which may result in unpleasant and even dangerous conditions for pedestrians.

Station Precincts

- **Cherrybrook**

  The proposed design of Cherrybrook Station does not indicate how safe and efficient bicycle access will be provided. The omission of bicycle lanes on figure 6.11 and the omission of bicycle movements on figure 6.12 make it difficult to assess whether appropriate bicycle facilities will be provided around the station to facilitate bicycle movements.

  In particular:

  - are bicycles permitted to use the pedestrian bridge from Castle Hill Rd at Glenhope Rd?
  - are bicycles permitted to use the pedestrian path heading North past the on-site detention basin?

  The primary bicycle route through this precinct is along the existing Shared Path on Castle Hill Rd. This will continue to function as the primary bicycle route, providing access to the station from Glenhope Rd. Other bicycle users are likely to approach the station from Robert Rd or Franklin Rd and will seek to access the station via the "new road". They will also use these roads to seek access to Castle Hill Rd Shared Path.

  Bicycle NSW recommends that:

  - Bicycle parking be provided on either side of the rail cutting to reduce the need for bicycles to cross the busy station entrance.
  - A curb-separated, bidirectional bicycle path that connects Franklin Rd and Robert Rd be provided North-East of the "new road". The bidirectional path would feed bicycle users into the Primary Plaza Space.
  - The pedestrian crossing at the Primary Plaza Space should include bicycle markings at the North end of the crossing which lead bicycle users to the parking area.

- **Castle Hill Station**

  The proposed design of Castle Hill Station does not indicate how safe and efficient bicycle access will be provided. The omission of bicycle lanes on figure 6.15 and the omission of bicycle movements on figure 6.16 make it difficult to assess whether appropriate bicycle facilities will be provided around the station to facilitate bicycle movements.

- **Showground Station**

  The proposed design of Showground Station does not indicate how safe and efficient bicycle access will be provided. The omission of bicycle lanes on figure 6.19 and the omission of bicycle movements on figure 6.20 make it difficult to assess whether appropriate bicycle facilities will be provided around the station to facilitate bicycle movements.

  Given the location of the bicycle parking just North of the station entrance, the Secondary Plaza Space along New Street B seems to provide access to the station while avoiding the dangerous Kiss and Ride areas. However, it is not clear if bicycle users will be permitted to use this plaza space.

  Bicycle NSW recommends that:

  - A separated, bidirectional, path be marked along the North edge of the landscaped area between the bicycle parking and the Middleton Ave extension.

- **Norwest Station**

  The proposed design of Norwest Station does not indicate how safe and efficient bicycle access will be provided. The omission of bicycle lanes on figure 6.23 and the omission of bicycle movements on figure 6.24 make it difficult to assess whether appropriate bicycle facilities will be provided around the station to facilitate bicycle movements.

- **Bella Vista Station**

  The proposed design of Bella Vista Station does not indicate how safe and efficient bicycle access will be provided. The omission of bicycle lanes on figure 6.27 and the omission of bicycle movements on figure 6.28 make it difficult to assess whether appropriate bicycle facilities will be provided around the station to facilitate bicycle movements.

  The primary bicycle route through this precinct is along the existing Shared Path on Old Windsor Rd. This will continue to function as the primary bicycle route with many bicycle users seeking to access the station at the pedestrian bridge over Old Windsor Rd. Other bicycle users are likely to approach the station from Brighton Dr and Lexington Dr.

  Bicycle NSW recommends that:

  - The pedestrian bridge over Old Windsor Rd include a ramp for bicycle users to provide easy access to the bicycle parking near the station entrance. The proposed designs do not indicate whether bicycle users can use the pedestrian bridge or whether a lift or ramp is provided. The designs do not show how it is envisaged that bicycle users will access the bicycle parking.

- **Kellyville Station**

  The proposed design of Kellyville Station does not indicate how safe and efficient bicycle access will be provided. The omission of bicycle lanes on figure 6.31 and the omission of bicycle movements on figure 6.32 make it difficult to assess whether appropriate bicycle facilities will be provided around the station to facilitate bicycle movements.

  Bicycle NSW recommends that:

  - The bicycle parking be moved to the North end of the large car park in close proximity to the major pedestrian flows (but without obstructing them). This location requires less interaction with busy motorised traffic than the current position, while still providing good passive surveillance.
  - The pedestrian bridge over Windsor Rd be designed with adequate width to accommodate both bicycles and pedestrians. The project documentation should clearly state that the bridge is for shared use.
  - A shared path is provided along the South side of Samantha Riley Dr as this is a key access point for this station. It is critical that this path is constructed as part of the Kellyville Station Precinct so that an adequate connection is available for use by Local Councils in developing their own bicycle network.

- **Rouse Hill Station**

  The proposed design of Rouse Hill Station does not indicate how safe and efficient bicycle access will be provided. The omission of bicycle lanes on figure 6.35 and the omission of bicycle movements on figure 6.36 make it difficult to assess whether appropriate bicycle facilities will be provided around the station to facilitate bicycle movements.

  Access to the bicycle parking is restricted due to the busy road environments to the East and West (T-way) of the station.

  Bicycle NSW recommends that:

  - Access to the bicycle parking from the North (Rouse Hill Dr) and South (White Hart Dr) be provided as a bi-directional bicycle path along the edge of the landscaped areas.

- **Cudgegong Station**

  The proposed design of Cudgegong Station does not indicate how safe and efficient bicycle access will be provided. The omission of bicycle lanes on figure 6.35 and the omission of bicycle movements on figure 6.36 make it difficult to assess whether appropriate bicycle facilities will be provided around the station to facilitate bicycle movements.

  Bicycle NSW recommends that:

  - A bi-directional bicycle path is provided from the bicycle parking at Cudgegong Station to Cudgegong Rd.
  - A bi-directional bicycle path or shared path is provided on the West side of Cudgegong Rd to join future networks on Schofields Rd and Guntawong Rd.

Station Access Routes

We note on page 20 of the EIS2 summary report that *"in consultation with key stakeholders, linkages would be provided to existing and new bicycle routes."* Bike North supports this process and we emphasise that the attractiveness of cycling to the stations along the NWRL is critically dependent on having safe and well designed routes.

The development of bicycle access routes is integral to the transport integration process. Planning of catchment areas around stations has assumed a radius of 800m walking distance or approximately 10minutes travel time. Planning for cycling does not appear to have been given the same consideration, however a 10 minute travel radius is also reasonable for bicycle travel. Access routes to stations should therefore anticipate a catchment radius around stations of 3km.

Bike North asks that cycling organisations be included in the process of designing suitable access routes to the stations.

While the need for further work is required we note the following route requirements around the NWRL stations. We emphasise Cherrybrook station in particular as having difficult conditions which will require significant works to resolve.

- **Cherrybrook Station**

  Bike North believes that high quality cycling infrastructure must be provided from the Cherrybrook Station precinct to all parts of its catchment area. Provision of cycling facilities will be beneficial to the wider transport network in reducing vehicular demand, and increase the attractiveness of a sustainable and healthy mode of local transport.

  The EIS has correctly identified the lack of cycling facilities to and from the proposed Cherrybrook Station precinct. Bike North is therefore extremely disappointed to learn that the EIS provides absolutely no consideration - let alone providing facilities - to local cyclists, affording them only the "opportunity to access the station using via the local road networks", with no mention of any provision for cycling facilities. Bike North regards this as absurd.

  The "upgrade" of Franklin and Robert Roads without construction of a high quality separated cycleway causes the greatest concern. Franklin and Robert Roads provide the only direct routes for cyclists accessing Cherrybrook Station from the key catchment area to the north of the station.. The significant increases in the amount of vehicular traffic along both Franklin and Robert Roads will make it virtually impossible for any cyclists to ride their bicycles to access Cherrybrook Station.

  Bike North believes that a separated cycleway must be constructed along Franklin Road and Robert Road from the station precinct to John Road. The bicycle network to other parts of the Cherrybrook Station catchment could then be provided along existing local streets from the intersections of John Road and Franklin/Robert Roads. Given the relatively low volumes of traffic on most roads beyond John Road However there are a few exceptions due to the hilly terrain around Cherrybrook Station.

  Franklin Road provides the best terrain to Cherrybrook Station for Cherrybrook residents north of New Line Road. The terrain either side of Franklin Road is steep and disincentivises cycling. Franklin Road between John Road and Franklin Road is ideal due to not only the best terrain with the gentlest gradients, but also due to the relatively low

traffic volumes. On-road facilities are sufficient on this section. However, there is currently no provision to cross New Line Road at Franklin Road. With the high traffic volumes on New Line Road, it is impossible for either cyclists or pedestrians to safely cross at this point. Bike North believes that a new traffic light for pedestrians and cyclists must be constructed to enable cyclists to safely cross New Line Road at Franklin Road.

Further to this, Bike North believes a cycleway must be constructed along New Line Road and Shepherds Drive from the intersection of Franklin Road to Cherrybrook Village shopping centre. This cycleway will provide access for a large part of the Cherrybrook Station catchment by connecting with the current cycleway linking Cherrybrook Village and Mark Place, and onto the on-road cycle facilities along Beechwood Parade and Purchase Road.

- **Castle Hill Station**
  - A cycleway is required along Crane Road and Castlewood Drive providing a station connection from West Pennant Hills valley.
  - A crossing of the bush area from Excelsior road to Darcy road should be investigated.

- **Showground Station**
  - A cycleway is required along Middleton Avenue and Parsonage road to Old Northern Road
  - Pathway access should be established from Doran Avenue to Salisbury Road. Such a path would provide major benefit to people working in the Salisbury Road business area, and improve travel conditions for cyclists.

- **Norwest Station**
  - Current cyclepaths from Barina Down Road to Fairmont Avenue and from Fairmont Avenue across, Brookhollow Avenue to the Norwest Boulevarde underpass must be upgraded.
  - A cycleway should be constructed along the length of Brookhollow Avenue to provide an alternate bicycle access route to the Norwest Station.
  - A cycleway should be constructed along Barina Downs Road providing safe access from Bella Vista and Crestwood residential areas.
  - A cycle way is required to connect Norwest Station with Fairway Drive

- **Bella Vista Station**

- **Kellyville Station**

- **Rouse Hill Station**

- **Cudgegong Road**

  Developments around this station will result in large numbers of cyclists.
  - A cycleway should be built along the full length of Schofields Road from Windsor road to Railway Terrace
  - A cycleway should be constructed along Cudgegong Road from Schofields Road to Rouse Road, and along Rouse Road to Windsor Road
  - A cycleway should be constructed along Tallawong road from Schofields Road to Guntawong Road.