

I am a 72 year old almost retired resident of Artarmon. I have recently taken up cycling again after realising that I could cycle relatively safely around my local area and beyond with detailed planning. My husband and I moved to Sydney from Cairns in 2012 and gave our bikes away when we were confronted by the volume of traffic in our area. However, the need to live sustainably has influenced us to buy e-bikes to allow us to cycle more safely along less used, often hilly roads. We absolutely appreciate the network of off-road cycle paths on the North Shore.

The Beaches Link as documented in the EIS on public exhibition offers nothing for cycling on the Lower North Shore and will result in severe impacts on the existing cycleways and local amenity both during construction and possibly in operation.

Of greatest concern is the popular cycleway alongside Gore Hill Freeway in Artarmon which provides a safe separated regional connection between Naremburn and Eastwood. The EIS states that this cycleway will be closed during construction, which is estimated to take around 4 years, between Station Street, Naremburn and Reserve Road, Artarmon. This also breaks the local connection between neighbouring suburbs Naremburn/Artarmon and Lane Cove.

The document proposes an alternative route to divert pedestrians and bike riders along Station Street, Francis Street, Lambs Street, Cleg Street and Reserve Road. Bike North knows this is an extremely unsafe route, with already a high volume of heavy vehicles on a hilly road, before adding the heavy vehicles accessing the construction sites. I have ridden down Reserve Road once only and do all in my power to avoid this road since the amount and size of traffic is horrendous for a person who cycles.

The EIS document downplays both the risk impact of the detour route and the significance of this bicycle path by:

- Illustrating the detour route in the EIS document in Figure 8-12 as a version of the detour route with fewer hills and much reduced use of heavy vehicle Reserve Road than described in the text
- Describing the detour in Chapter 8 (p8-47) as being a 'minor impact on cyclists and would be managed by providing advanced notification to the community and appropriate linemarking and signage
- Implies in Chapter 8 (p8-47) that usage is up to 150 pedestrians and cyclists in peak periods whereas this is shown in chart in Appendix E as up to 150 each hour over a number of hours – by far the majority weekday use is by bike riders
- Fails to include any consideration of risks to bike riders on this detour in Chapter 23 Hazards and Risks
- Fails to identify any access to the pathway at Reserve Road.

In my opinion, any detour route during construction of the Artarmon site must:

- Provide separation from vehicles, protection from heavy vehicles and to Austroads standards
- Be included as part of the overall site design, rather than fitting around a pre-determined site design
- Be based on a final designed path as much as practical
- At all stages be developed in consultation with Bike North, the Artarmon Progress Association and Willoughby Council with timely notifications of all changes
- Provide an underpass of the railway line connecting to Punch Street so as to avoid steep hills and merging with vehicles on and around railway overpass roads
- Provide an underpass of Herbert Street – if not possible to use the existing underpass, there is an alternative underpass off Punch Street which connects into Taylors Lane – this would be an adequate alternative during construction but not as the final path (this was part of the original detour route while the original path was being built – a cycling underpass of the railway line already existed prior to that, continued in use during that build and was upgraded to current path)
- Connect directly back to the existing path from Waltham Street to avoid Reserve Road
- Using Reserve Road for people who cycle should be avoided at all cost. It is a dangerous, busy road used by large construction vehicles that often are not able to see people on bikes.