



Representing the community's interests in getting around
on bikes in Sydney's eastern suburbs

Sydney Gateway Road Project

Environmental Impact Statement / Preliminary Draft Major Development Plan

18 Dec 2019

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NSW Planning Portal Online

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BIKEast is pleased to make a submission on the [Sydney Gateway Road Project - - Environmental Impact Statement/Preliminary Draft Major Development Plan](#).

We believe that providing and maintaining open and accessible space for the community is very important.

We also believe safe, continuous, and connected bike routes will encourage more people to ride their bikes more often – an outcome that is consistent with NSW and Local Government strategies to realise the considerable individual and public benefits of increasing the mode share of active travel (walking or cycling).

As such, BIKEast submits the following comments.

- We are pleased to see that the proposed replacement route provided is the most direct alternative to the connection being removed.
- We are pleased to see mention for adding active travel connectivity to Sydney's network as outlined in NSW and Local Government strategy.

However, we object to the Sydney Gateway project and propose that the project should not be approved, until it is strongly aligned with current NSW Government policies and plans, to meet its stated goal *"making journeys from west and south-west Sydney to Sydney Airport, the M5, Eastern Distributor and Port Botany easier, faster and safer"*, for all customers.

Summary of issues

1. **Missing walking and cycling integration to surrounding active travel network**, in particular from surrounding local areas to Sydney Airport, a major destination and employment centre for the local community.
2. **Access during construction** - The conditions of consent must be phrased to provide specific commitment that "access routes during construction must be safe, direct, convenient and consistent in travel time and distance with the existing routes".

1. Missing integration to surrounding active travel network

It is good that the paper acknowledges the existing connectivity gaps in the current active travel network and the low participation rates in the local area.

“A number of connectivity gaps exist in the current active transport network of the area. Roads and Maritime and Sydney Airport Corporation would develop an active transport strategy, with the input of relevant stakeholders, to identify potential opportunities to enhance active transport opportunities and guide the future provision of active transport infrastructure.” (Section 9.4.7 - pg 9.48)

Further to our submission earlier this year in response to the Concept Design (attached at the end of this document), we urge the Sydney Gateway project to work closely with Bicycle NSW and surrounding local governments (City of Sydney, Bayside Council, Inner West Council) to improve and facilitate future connectivity and integration to Sydney’s existing and future active travel network.

We have outlined 4 specific missing links in the active travel network that relate to the Sydney Gateway project space. These are still missing from the EIS.

1. A connection from St Peters Interchange to the Alexandra Canal cycleway
2. A direct, crossing of the Cooks River from the South towards the CBD
3. Direct connections from the Alexandra Canal cycleway to T2, T3 and beyond, to the Bayside Council network
4. A direct connection between Coward St and Sydenham station (and future Metro)

See yellow dotted lines below.

Sydney Gateway Road Project
Technical Working Paper 1 – Transport, Traffic and Access

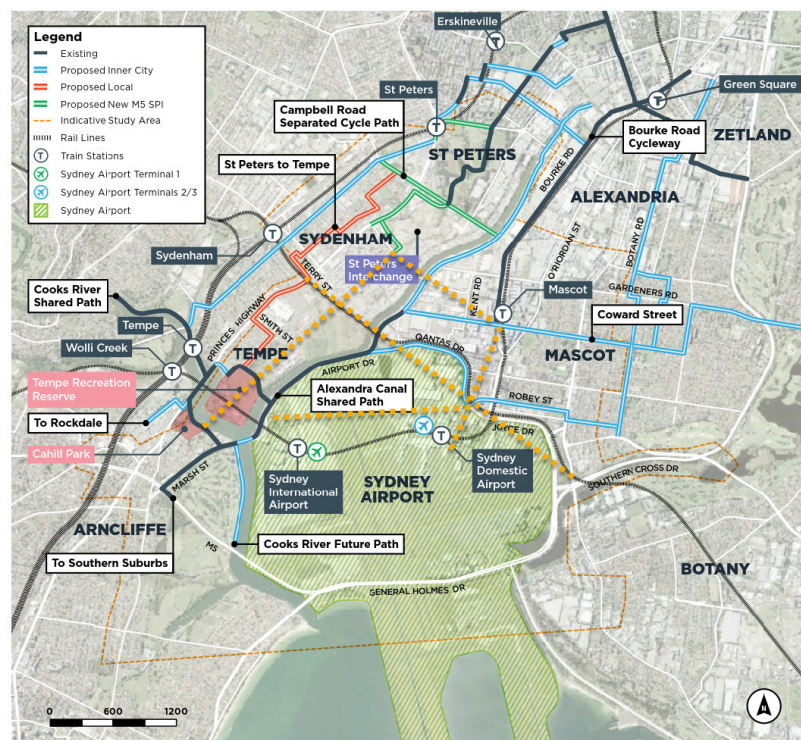


Figure 4-8 Existing and proposed cycle routes within the study area

Upgrade and maintain temporary route to a permanent route

The Sydney Gateway has proposed a North / South temporary route that traverses through the project site. An option to maintain a North / South active travel corridor would be to upgrade and maintain this proposed temporary route as a permanent route through this land space.

Upgrade walking and cycling accessibility in Airport East precinct

Lack of walking and cycling integration and connectivity from the [Airport East precinct project](#) needs to be rectified in the future.

NSW Government Policies

Other details regarding the NSW Government policy and missing links were outlined in detail in our submission to the Concept Design earlier this year. Rather than repeat the content, a copy has been attached to the end of this submission.

2. Safe active travel connections during construction

We again emphasise that safe active travel connections be developed and maintained during construction. Roads and Maritime have acknowledged the number of people to be impacted by the removal of the existing paths during construction.

*Active transport activity: Roads and Maritime collected pedestrian and cyclist data along the Alexandra Canal cycleway in March 2019. The data indicates that, on average, **the Alexandra Canal cycleway carries around 600 cyclists and 100 pedestrians per day**. Peak usage occurs during the weekday morning and afternoon peak periods, when the cycleway carries around 90 cyclists and 10 pedestrians during the morning peak and afternoon peak hours. (Section 9.2.5 - pg 9.22)*

The conditions of consent must be phrased to provide specific commitment that “walking and cycling access routes during construction must be safe, direct, convenient and consistent in travel time and distance with the existing routes”.

From other transport projects in Sydney (eg. Sydney Light Rail - see Diagram 1 & 2 on the next page, Westconnex Rozelle Interchange), it has been observed that contractors are not willing to provide alternative routes that are convenient and consistent in travel time and distance with existing routes. These oversights have placed heavy and hazardous impact on vulnerable path users such as those with mobility and accessibility requirements, as well as inexperienced and less confident bicycle riders.

BIKEast community members reported that their families did not cycle during construction due to fear of injury.

Diagram 1: Alison Rd / Wansey St protected off-road shared path route, showing distance and maximum gradient.

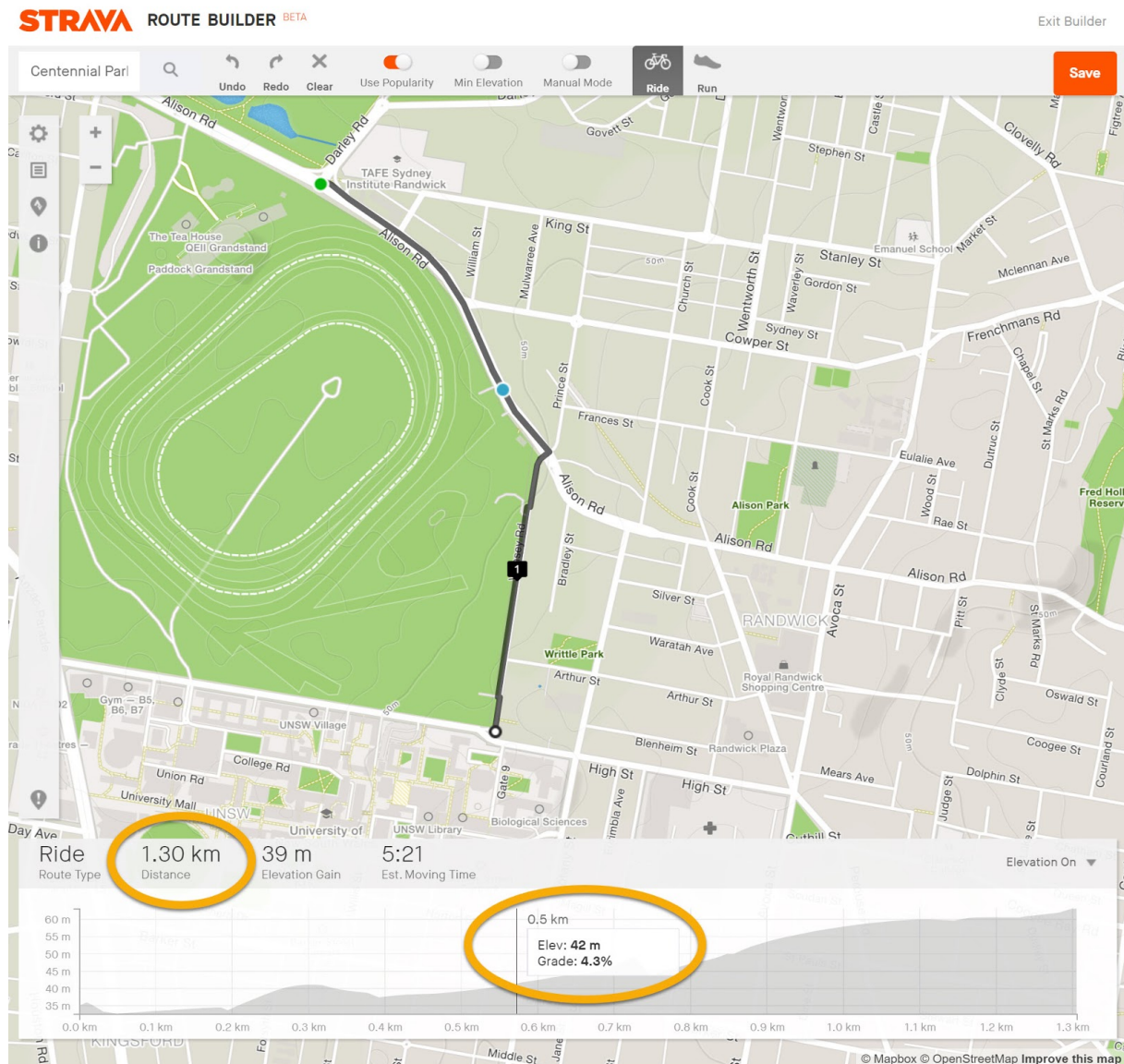
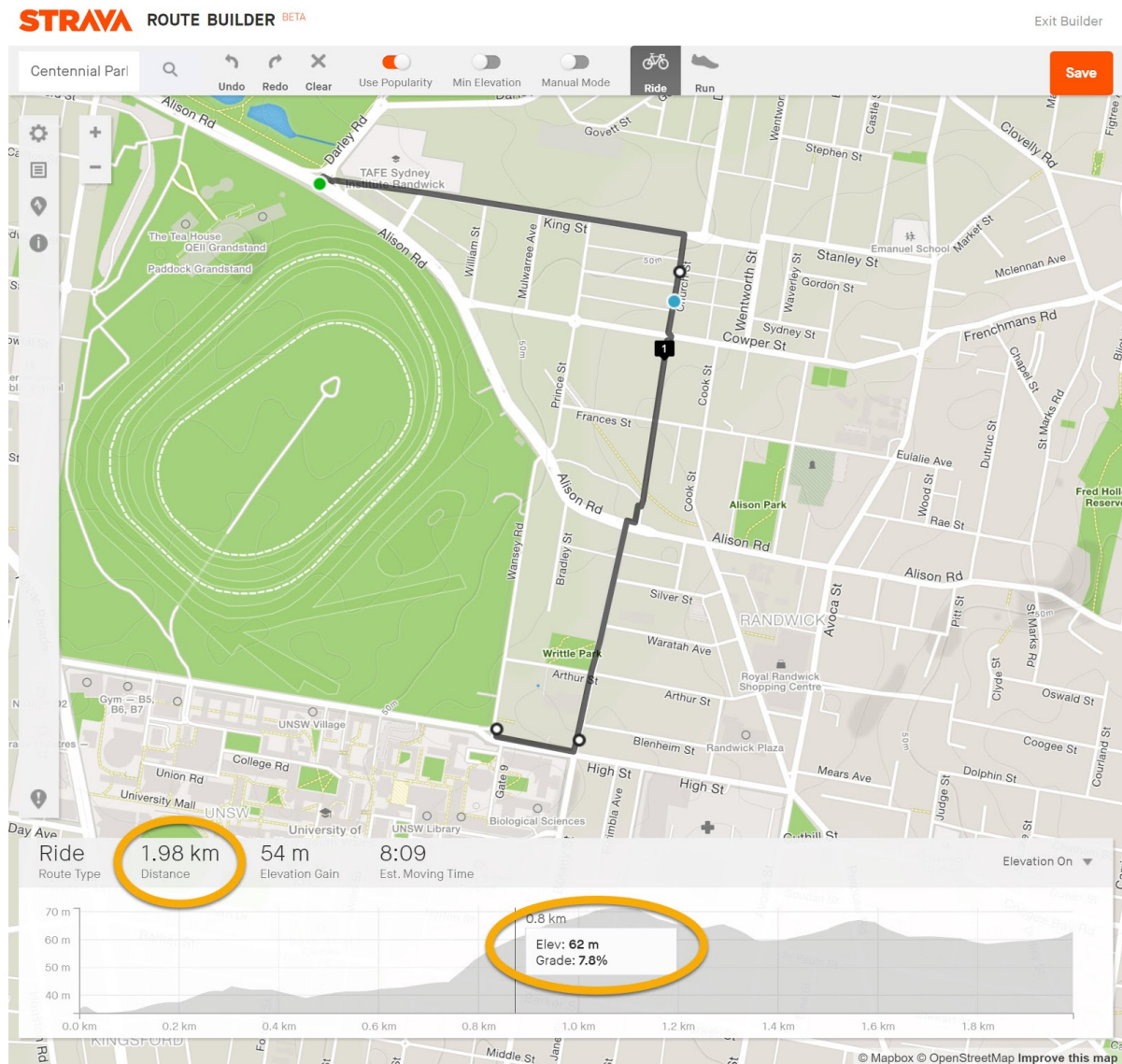


Diagram 2: South East Sydney Light Rail's King St / Church St detour was on-road (rather than a protected path), 68m longer, with a much steeper gradient and multiple busy intersections.





Sydney Gateway - EIS / MDP
18 Dec 2019

We believe the benefits of active travel to community and worker health, as well as traffic congestion, are important to the local community, and should be captured in the planning processes going forward.

Thank you for taking the time to read our feedback.

Yours sincerely,

Yvonne Poon
BIKEast Secretary

Sydney Gateway Concept Design

21 June 2019

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BIKEast is pleased to make a submission on the [Sydney Gateway Concept Design](#).

We believe that providing safe, continuous, and connected bike routes will encourage more people to ride their bikes more often – an outcome that is consistent with NSW and Local Government strategies to realise the considerable individual and public benefits of increasing the mode share of active travel (walking or cycling).

As such, BIKEast submits the following comments on the design elements.

Summary of issues

- We are pleased to see that the proposed replacement route provided is the most direct alternative to the connection being removed.
- We are grateful for the outline of the proposed temporary routes during construction, and emphasise that these routes must be safe and maintained during construction.
- The provision for adding active travel connectivity to Sydney's network as outlined in NSW and Local Government strategy is significantly lacking from this concept design.
- Together with the local councils (City of Sydney, Bayside Council, Inner West Council) and Bicycle NSW, we have outlined 4 specific missing links in the active travel network that relate to the Sydney Gateway project space.
- We urge the Sydney Gateway project to work closely with these groups to improve and facilitate future connectivity of Sydney's active travel network.

Direct replacement route for existing cycleway



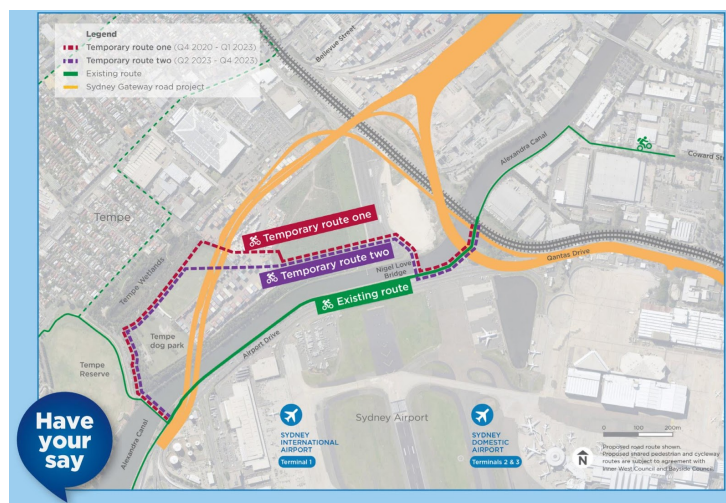
It is unfortunate that the existing cycleway facility must be removed, however, **we thank the Sydney Gateway project for listening to the early feedback from stakeholders such as local councils and**

Bicycle NSW, and providing a replacement that is as direct as possible, alongside the canal. This will support and facilitate easy travel for people currently regularly using the existing route.

We understand that the connection around the rail bridge near Coward St is quite low and will require management for flooding issues, including a pump. **We urge that this facility be designed well to include adequate maintenance and ensure safe community access all year round, including when the canal water level is high.**

We understand the Alternative route marked on the map is not being proposed, as it was a previous proposal, however, we have identified this connection as a missing active travel network connection - that we have outlined in more detail later.

Outline of temporary routes during construction



We thank the Sydney Gateway project for listening to our concerns and the concerns of our community and have committed to temporary active travel connections during construction as part of the construction planning. We understand that the routes are not confirmed and will need to be negotiated with Inner West Council.

We urge the Sydney Gateway to ensure these safe connections are developed and maintained during construction.

Safety factors to be managed include minimal gradient changes, smooth and good quality surfacing, adequate lighting, minimal path obstructions and flooding provision.

BIKEast and Bicycle NSW are currently working with Austroads to incorporate better traffic management planning guidelines to support safety for vulnerable road users (people walking and cycling), during Australia's current and future levels of construction and encourage Sydney Gateway to keep up to date and adopt best practice.

Missing active transport in the concept design

Sydney Gateway



The Sydney Gateway project outlines its benefits are to [make journeys easier, faster, safer](#), but it lacks provision for a section of the community - people cycling and walking.

Westconnex New M5

The active travel connections outlined in the [Westconnex New M5 - B51 - Pedestrian & Cycle Implementation Strategy](#) are currently lacking, and the concept design does not provide any additional or alternative connections to the Westconnex New M5 infrastructure and surrounding destinations.

“The Airport Gateway will include ATN along the future Airport Gateway link. This will link the SPI with the ATN in and around the:

- Sydney Airport
- Alexandra Canal cycle path (both sides of the canal)
- Existing shared path along the southern side of the Alexandra Canal between Coward Street and the International Terminal
- A safe and connected cycle link across the Cooks River on or adjacent to the Giovanni Brunetti Bridge

As part of the SPI design, there is allowance for future pedestrian / cycle links associated with the Airport Gateway Project which will improve access for pedestrians and cyclists between SPI area and the airport. Figure 5.19 indicates the direction that the Airport Gateway may take.”

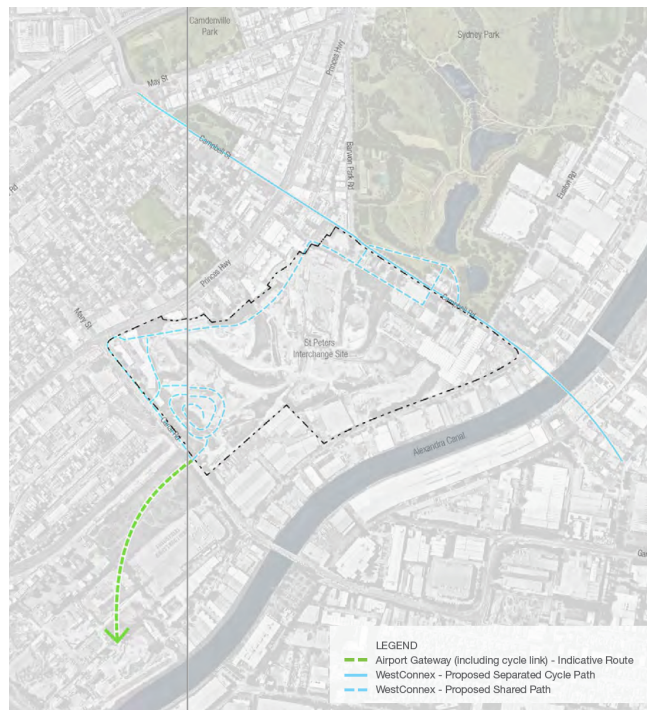


Figure 5.19

Future Transport 2056

The [Future Transport 2056](#) strategy states the benefits of sustainable transport - “Moving people from private vehicles to more sustainable transport modes will reduce congestion and the transport sector’s emissions intensity, improve air quality and support better health and wellbeing.

Well planned centres and cities, will enable a shift from private cars to public transport and active transport modes such as walking and cycling. In Sydney, the key to this will be the delivery of three 30 minute cities, supported by reliable ‘turn up and go’ mass transit services.”¹

The strategy also explicitly outlines Sydney Airport as a key location in the Eastern Harbour City as part of the “Metropolis of Three Cities, where people can access the majority of jobs and services within 30 minutes”, and states “Encouraging cycling could help relieve congestion and could more than double the number of people who can reach our three cities within 30 minutes.”

The Greater Sydney Principal Bicycle Network clearly states bicycle connections between Sydney Airport, Sydenham (Metro coming soon) and Wolli Creek.

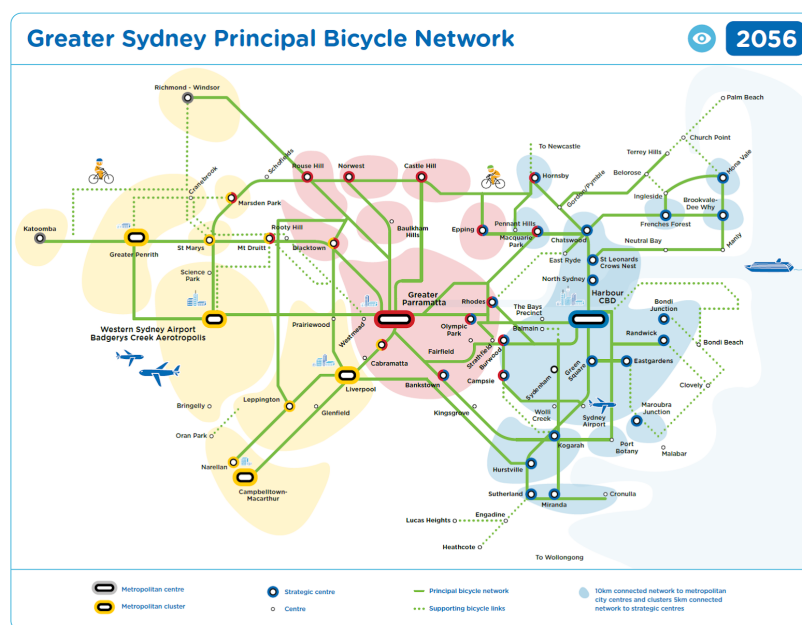


Figure 59: Growing Sydney's bicycle network (visionary)

¹ [Future Transport 2056 - A Vision for Transport](#)

Alexandra Canal masterplan

The 2001 Alexandra Canal masterplan (endorsed by surrounding councils) proposes “to create public access links along the tributaries and through large development sites adjoining the canal”.²

As a result of this, a 10m setback has been written into each of the Development Control Plans (DCPs) of the areas surrounding the Canal. Diagram from City of Sydney DCP.

It is important that the space around Alexandra Canal is maintained as open community space, suitable for active travel.

4.4 Open space and landscaping

Objective

To ensure adequate landscaping and open space is provided adjacent to the canal and/or its tributaries, and is integrated with pedestrian pathways and cycleways.

Performance criteria

Landscaping and open space improvements take into account the Public Domain Improvement Plan.

Public pedestrian and bicycle access is provided along the banks of the canal.

Landscaping is integrated with pedestrian paths and cycleways.

Landscaping along the canal is planted out with appropriate native species compatible to the adjacent marine environment.

Control

A 10 metre wide open space strip is provided adjacent to the canal on both sides and its open tributaries, and is appropriately landscaped and integrated with public paths and cycleways.

Sydney Green Grid

Alexandra Canal has been identified as a Green Grid Project opportunity in the Central District, as part of the Hydrological Grid. “These list of projects were derived from the original Green Grid Reports together with the outcome from Greater Sydney Commission’s District Plan Workshops and NSW Department of Planning and Environment Open Space Workshops.”³

The Hydrological Grid commits to “Connecting public open space and active transport and pathway systems along waterways”.⁴

It is important that the space around Alexandra Canal is maintained as open community space, suitable for active travel.

CD.1.11 PORT BOTANY AND THE ALEXANDRIA CANAL

This cluster is characterised by the industrial nature of the Port Botany container terminals, freight rail and handling, Sydney Airport and the adjacent Mascot Urban Activation Precinct. With contaminated lands and some of the poorest water quality in Sydney there is a need to establish projects with increased environmental credentials. Opportunities to establish Sydney’s Global gateway as an exemplar of sustainable development should be investigated.

Public access and connections, balanced with ongoing port operations, could also be improved where possible. Better connections to the isolated Sir Joseph Banks Park are highly recommended.

There is an opportunity to initiate additional projects to support work being undertaken to rehabilitate the Alexandria Canal. Opportunities to utilise the canal as a key active transport link and open space corridor between the Cooks River, Mascot, St Peters, Alexandria and Green Square could be developed further in consultation with Sydney Water.



²Alexandra Canal masterplan 2001 (Page 13-5)

³ [Sydney Green Grid - Spatial Framework and Project Opportunities - Central District](#) (Page 126)

⁴ [Sydney Green Grid - Spatial Framework and Project Opportunities - Central District](#) (Page 9)

Greater Sydney Commission

Under Planning Priority E6 - Creating and renewing great places and local centres, and respecting the District's heritage:

*Liveability - "Leading a healthy and active life means substituting walking and cycling for short car journeys. More people can be encouraged to walk and cycle where there is a safe road environment and suitable pathways. This requires better connectivity – direct routes to local destinations and services are required along streets that allocate sufficient road space to safe walking and cycling. A permeable and well-connected urban form that has human scale and attractive streetscapes is required."*⁵

Productivity - "Where possible, the proactive and early reservation of corridors to protect longer term linear infrastructure opportunities should be undertaken to provide greater clarity and certainty for landowners, communities and businesses."

In assessing potential infrastructure corridors, economic, social and environmental outcomes need to be considered. The early preservation of corridors also reduces the potential for conflict in the future.



"Cycling improvements underway or being planned within, and to, the District are:

- [Inner Sydney Regional Bicycle Network](#) (see diagram)
- Inner West links
- Sydney Airport links"⁶

The Sydney Gateway concept design not only removes existing connectivity used by people walking and cycling around Sydney Airport, but also removes the future potential active travel corridor along Qantas Drive to connect to T2/T3.

Sydney Airport Masterplan

Sydney Airport Masterplan states "Nearly 31,000 jobs are located at the airport itself, with many of these undertaken by people living in surrounding areas."⁷

*"Staff movements at the airport are considerable and the number of people who travel to Sydney Airport for work on a typical working day has increased by about 20 percent since 2012."*⁸

[Future Transport 2056](#) states "The 30 minute city will be one where people can conveniently access jobs and services within 30 minutes by public or active transport, 7 days a week."

The concept design does not currently improve support for local workers, in particular those at Sydney Airport, by providing safe and convenient active transport facilities.

⁵ [Greater Sydney Commission - Eastern City District Plan](#) (Page 48)

⁶ [Greater Sydney Commission - Eastern City District Plan](#) (Page 74-75)

⁷ [Sydney Airport Masterplan](#) (Page 14)

⁸ [Sydney Airport Masterplan](#) (Page 138)

Sydney's Cycling Future (2013) outlines how the State Government will improve the bike route network and make sure that the needs of bike riders are built into the planning of new transport and infrastructure projects. In *Sydney's Cycling Future*, connections to Sydney Airport are mentioned in specific relation to support the workers at Sydney Airport. Also mentioned specifically are connections to the residential and commercial growth areas at Wolli Creek, Mascot and Green Square.

Missing Link #1 - St Peters Interchange to Alexandra Canal cycleway

As outlined in Westconnex New M5 Planning conditions, the intention of the Sydney Gateway project was to include connection from St Peters Interchange to Sydney Airport and the existing and future Alexandra Canal cycleway. This is currently missing from the design.

There are no current commitments to connect the East end of Canal Rd to Ricketty St (Westconnex is only building the West side), which means a missing East/West connection from Canal Rd to Coward St, Mascot.

Missing Link #2 - Direct crossing of Cooks River between South and CBD

With the replacement route alongside the West side of the canal, it is important to connect to the existing routes at Marsh St ([RMS Airport West Precinct project](#)). This link is missing due to the lack of a safe and suitable active travel facility across the Cooks River.

We understand that the existing Giovanni Brunetti/Marsh St bridge cannot provide this connection, as the bridge condition prevents any addition of a “clip-on” walking and cycling deck extension.

Options may include reallocating a road lane along this bridge for walking and cycling, or the provision of a new bridge spanning the river between the Tempe Reserve and the existing Marsh St AT infrastructure.

Missing Link #3 - Direct connections from Alexandra Canal cycleway to T2/T3 and beyond to Bayside Council Network

With the widening of Qantas Drive as part of this project, the future potential of a walking / cycling corridor between T1 and T2/T3 as outlined in the Inner Sydney Bicycle Network is no longer possible.

The existing poor quality path is currently being used by workers and commuters to access the Sydney Airport terminals. This link, inadequate as it is, will be removed by the current Airport Gateway proposals and no alternative put in place.

There should be additional options for connectivity here to enable accessibility and active travel to all the airport terminals from the surrounding suburbs.

Missing Link #4 - Direct connection between Coward St and Sydenham station (future Metro)

There is an opportunity for an East/West link through the Sydney Gateway space. This would provide a direct connection between the surrounding areas to Sydenham station.

The Eastern Suburbs has a lack of access to train stations and active travel is a perfect way to provide this connection at a relatively low cost. Activating connection to Sydenham station will be beneficial to the local community, as it is the closest Metro station to the Bayside Council area and the Southern part of the Eastern Suburbs.

Conclusion

The concept design is currently lacking in focus and commitment regarding detailed strategies for encouraging active travel. This is particularly disappointing given the benefits that improved facilities for active travel might bring to local workers/visitors, residents of adjoining areas and people using the roads bounding this space to get around every day.



BIKEast encourage the Sydney Gateway project to look at improving the active travel network, to better connect our local area, and encourage residents and visitors to partake in active travel.

We've identified major missing active travel links in the project:

1. A connection from St Peters Interchange to the Alexandra Canal cycleway
2. A direct, crossing of the Cooks River from the South towards the CBD
3. Direct connections from the Alexandra Canal cycleway to T2, T3 and beyond, to the Bayside Council network
4. A direct connection between Coward St and Sydenham station (and future Metro)
5. We also urge that safe connections be developed and maintained during construction.

We believe the benefits of active travel to community and worker health, as well as traffic congestion, are important to the local community, and in particular Sydney Airport, and should be captured in the planning documents going forward.

Thank you for taking the time to read our feedback.

Yours sincerely,

Yvonne Poon

BIKEast Secretary

Bayside Advocacy Coordinator