

Proposal to modify Heath St separated cycleway

Community Consultation Report

February 2023



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BACKGROUND

Heath Street Cycleway is part of the East-West Regional Route. The East-West Regional Cycleway will establish regional bike connectivity between North Strathfield and Henley Marine Drive (The Bay Run). After consulting the community in July/August 2020, the Heath Street segment of the cycleway was adopted by Council in December 2020, with construction of the cycleway taking place in August 2022.

Following resident concerns regarding safety, in December 2022 we engaged an independent specialist consultant to review and provide advice on the interactions of all users. This review included residents/pedestrians navigating in and out of properties/carparking, motorists and cyclists using the road and the Regional Cycle away. The report was received and assessed, and Council proposed changes to the current design to deliver a more balanced solution for the surrounding residents and road users.

Council sought the community's feedback on the modifications from 27 January – 24 February 2023. This report outlines the feedback received during this period.

CONSULTATION METHODS

- Collaborate feedback form
- Community meeting on 2 February 2023 at Timbrell Park, Five Dock
- Feedback via phone and email
- Meetings with stakeholders and community upon request.

NOTIFICATION METHODS

The following methods were implemented to notify the community of this consultation:

- Notification letter delivered to residents on Heath St and surrounding streets
- Collaborate project page: <https://collaborate.canadabay.nsw.gov.au/ewcycleway/seg1heathst>
- Email to 189 Collaborate project followers
- Email to BayBUG.

COLLABORATE TRAFFIC

- 1,657 page views
- 677 unique page visitors
- 11 new project followers
- Website traffic report can be found in appendix B.

RESULTS

135 submissions received:

- 118 Collaborate submissions
- 15 email submissions
- 2 submissions from cycling advocacy groups.

The community consultation aimed to answer the following questions:

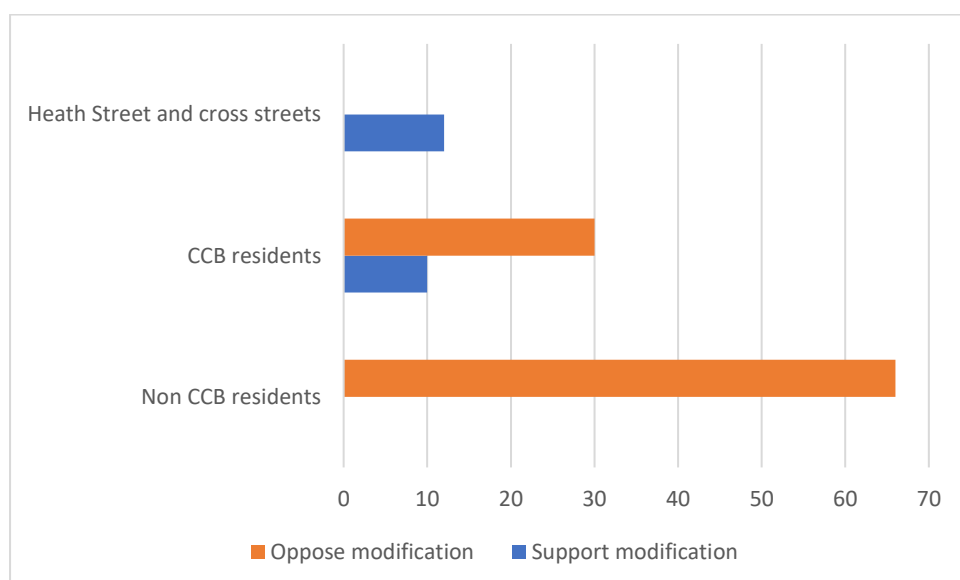
- Does the community support this proposal? (why/why not)
- What are the varied stand points on the benefits and issues with the existing cycleway?
- What alternative suggestions does the community have?

COLLABORATE FEEDBACK – 118 submissions

- 45% (52/118) of participants live in the City of Canada Bay
- 12 participants live on the Heath St or cross streets
- 55% of participants live outside of the City of Canada Bay

Support for proposal to modify cycleway

Stakeholder group	Support modification	Oppose modification
Heath Street and cross streets residents	12	0
CCB residents (excluding Heath Street and cross streets)	10	30
Non CCB residents	0	66
Total	22	96



EMAIL FEEDBACK – 15 submissions

Support for proposal to modify cycleway

Stakeholder group	Support modification	Oppose modification
Heath Street and cross streets residents	9	0
CCB residents (excluding Heath Street and cross streets)	0	3
Non CCB residents/not identified	0	3
Cycling advocacy groups	0	2
Total	9	8

FEEDBACK THEMES

Support for modification

- Difficult in accessing driveways due to sight lines changing
- Sight lines across intersection at Rickard and Heath St have been reduced
- Unsafe for cyclists, drivers and pedestrians due to changed conditions

- Traffic on Heath St hard to manage due to reduced width
- Reports of incidents and near misses
- Right hand turn into Heath St from Henley Marine drive causing vehicles to potentially collide
- Difficulty for pedestrians to safely cross the road
- Cycleway is dangerous and a trip hazard
- Danger opening car doors
- Parking issues / loss of parking
- Fear of hitting cyclists
- Car speeds have not reduced
- Cycleway has created congestion
- There has been no apparent uptick in cyclist usage
- Consultation with community was not done effectively before construction was underway
- Council conducted itself poorly in relation to considering community feedback
- Local residents are the experts on their area and should be engaged more and listened to
- Heath St is over-engineered and causing anxiety and concern for residents
- The construction of the cycleway was a waste of money.

Suggestions in addition to modification proposal

- Review concrete island at south end of Heath St at Henley Marine Drive
- Move cycleway to Barnstaple Road
- Make Heath St a cul-de-sac
- Make Heath St one way
- Council should reconsider entire East-West Regional Route.

Opposition to modification

- Cycling should be promoted via safety measures for cyclists
- Modification is a retrograde step for active transport, health, safety
- Cycleway is a valuable piece of infrastructure
- This is a state funded plan and a strategic regional link, Council should assess more than localised impacts; modifications contradict Council strategies and TfNSW
- Cycleway safeguards pedestrians, cyclists, young children and people with disabilities
- Incline requires safety measures for cyclists
- Road symbols are not enough
- Children should never be riding on a street
- Cycleway is used regularly by cyclists across Sydney
- Active transport help reduce effects of climate change
- Cycleways provide zero emissions transport for families and children
- Area needs more dedicated cycleways
- Signage is insufficient
- Retrograde step for safety, environment, and people's health
- Waste of money to remove
- Short-sighted decision.

Suggestions instead of modification / should be considered even if modification goes ahead

- Slowing down traffic on the street would reduce resident concerns
- Make Heath St one way to reduce traffic
- Conduct a 12 month trial with education and adaptation by residents is needed
- 30-40km/h speed limit
- Additional traffic calming should be added to slow traffic

- Reduce concrete barrier size on cycleway
- Educate residents on handling changed conditions
- No-stopping along Western side of street
- Introduce speed humps.

COMMUNITY MEETING

2 February 2023 at Timbrell Park, Five Dock, 5.30-6.30pm

Council officers held a community meeting to discuss the modification proposal and hear from various community stakeholders. The meeting was attended by approximately 50 people. Approximately 15 community members spoke at the meeting.

THEIR FEEDBACK CAN BE FOUND IN APPENDIX A.

Cycling Advocacy Groups submissions

Two submissions were received from BayBUG (Canada Bay Bicycle Users Groups) and Bicycle NSW.

BayBUG submissions is summarised here:

The Heath Street cycleway does what it is intended to do - which is keep cyclists safe and encourage cycling. Changed road conditions are causing residents some distress. This could be resolved with education and guidance from Council.

Disagree with the McLaren study - the changes have NOT reduced the safety of all users. The need to reduce vehicle speeds should be a priority, particularly on cross streets.

Submission cited various studies and strategies that explore the benefits of cycleways, and risks associated with speeding on neighbourhood streets. Width of the street is wider than most streets parallel to Heath St but also across the City.

McClaren report does not note the benefits of the cycleway or assess the probability of the 4 types of increases risk identified, or alternatives to removing the cycleway like removing additional car parking.

Suggestions for improving cycleway include modifying concrete buffers, speed control mechanisms, signage for cyclists regarding driveways and one way usage of the cycleway, introducing a one-way street.

BayBUG request a balanced review of the cycleway before a decision is made.

Bicycle NSW submission is summarised here:

The Heath St Cycleway is an excellent piece of infrastructure and a credit to Canada Bay Council's sustainability and active transport strategies. BNSW and Canada Bay BUG note that the cycleway is successful because it works to keep bicycle riders safer, and thus encourages cycling. Note that good bicycle infrastructure attracts opposition.

Reduced speed limits and the creation of a quiet or yield street will create an environment that encourages CBC's Active travel, climate and sustainability strategies to be realised.

There is an opportunity to conduct more community engagement in partnership with TfNSW.

Removal of cycleway will result in less confident people deciding not to ride, while also setting a precedent for this type of outcome for future active transport projects.

APPENDICES

A. Community Meeting Report

**Thursday 2 February 2023, Timbrell
Park Five Dock**

City of Canada Bay attendees:

- John Clark, General Manager
- Greig Schuettrumpf, Director City Assets
- Franco Guerrisi, Manager Roads & Traffic
- Sarah Corry, Engagement Coordinator



Community attendees: approximately 40-50

Meeting opened by Greig Schuettrumpf who provided background information and detailed the new proposal to modify the separated cycleway in response to community concerns.

Community feedback:

Approximately 15 community members spoke at the meeting with the following feedback.

In support of proposal to modify the separated cycleway:

- The separate cycleway presents a pedestrian hazard, particularly the concrete road blocks bordering the cycleway
- Cycleway as it stands is catering to non-residents
- Residents along the cycleway highlighted feeling unsafe entering and exiting their driveways by car due to the cycleway and parked cars causing blind spots
- Rickard St resident reported near collisions with drivers due to lack of sight lines
- Residents questioned how many cyclists per week were using the cycleway as they only see them sporadically
- Corner of Heath St and Henley Marine Drive residents oppose the loss of parking surrounding their properties because of the cycleway, cannot enter their driveway safely
- Requests for refuge island at the Henley Marine Drive end of Heath St to also be removed or size of the island reviewed as vehicles are hitting it on right hand turns into Heath St
- Separated cycleway is having knock on effects for the wider neighbourhood
- Resident believes Council did not listen to the community and should have interrogated the original designs further
- Cycleway is being used for two-way travel despite being a one-way lane
- When vehicles parked on the western side of Heath St, the passenger doors open onto the cycleway
- Request for interim treatment once Council makes decision (given construction timelines are 3-4 months)
- Request to review associated costs

In opposition of proposal to modify the separated cycleway:

- Cycleway is a regional link and a project that will support the area and greater Sydney as road congestion increases; this is a strategic plan for the future of everyone

- Population growth is causing increased street congestion, and the regional cycleway is a solution
- Many cyclists are already using Heath St and feel safer with the dedicated cycleway
- The goal of the cycleway is to encourage less confident riders, and a dedicated cycleway supports this goal
- Removing the dedicated cycleway would reduce availability of safe routes for cyclists and is a retrograde step in promoting safe active transport

Separate points made:

- Concerns about speeding traffic on First Avenue
- Maintenance concerns for the existing median strips
- Council should review the rest of the cycleway
- Divert the route to Barnstaple Road

Appendix B.

N.B. 1 participant submitted twice, and another participant submitted three times. Their submissions were combined into one when reporting. This resulted in 118 final submissions.

