
KU-RING-GAI BICYCLE PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To consider the submissions from the public exhibition of the draft Ku-ring-gai Bicycle Plan.

BACKGROUND:

On 26 June 2012, Council resolved to place the draft Ku-ring-gai Bicycle Plan on formal public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days, and that a report is brought back to Council at the conclusion of the exhibition period.

COMMENTS:

The draft Bicycle Plan was placed on public exhibition from 10 August 2012 to 7 September 2012. 22 submissions were received, including from residents, local bicycle user groups, State agencies and surrounding councils. Individual submissions have been summarised and tabulated, and a response to the issues raised has been provided.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt the Ku-ring-gai Bicycle Plan, to guide the provision of cycling facilities and to support a culture of cycling in Ku-ring-gai.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the submissions from the public exhibition of the draft Ku-ring-gai Bicycle Plan.

BACKGROUND

Through the Ku-ring-gai Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS), Ku-ring-gai Council, in partnership with all levels of government, community and other stakeholders, aims to put in place and facilitate good practice transport planning by setting out:

- desired outcomes that provide a consistent framework to focus planning on achieving good outcomes for the community and the transport system; and
- directions and principles that provide guidance on how to achieve the desired outcomes.

The Ku-ring-gai ITS is a guide for transport planning in the Ku-ring-gai local government area (LGA). It sets out a collaborative, consistent and sustainable approach to transport planning for use across the LGA.

The ITS acknowledges that developing actions to encourage cycling (and walking) has the potential to make significant changes to transport patterns by shifting a high number of short car trips to cycling (and walking), and that cyclable (and walkable) environments facilitate greater public transport use and also contribute to healthy communities through the encouragement of physical activities. One of the short term actions of the Ku-ring-gai ITS is that Council prepare and progressively implement a Ku-ring-gai Bicycle Plan.

GHD consultants were commissioned to review the 1995 bike plan, taking into account changed community expectations, as well as changes to technical specifications, Council, State and Federal policies.

A series of workshops were undertaken in February 2012 with relevant stakeholders to form the development of the draft Bicycle Plan. Feedback from these sessions was incorporated by GHD into the development of a vision for cycling in Ku-ring-gai and the formation of a draft bicycle plan.

On 26 June 2012, Council resolved to make amendments then place the draft Ku-ring-gai Bicycle Plan on formal public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days, and that a report be brought back to Council at the conclusion of the exhibition period.

COMMENTS

The draft Bicycle Plan was placed on public exhibition from 10 August 2012 to 7 September 2012.

22 submissions were received during the public exhibition period, including from local interest groups, and transport stakeholders such as Roads and Maritime Services and Bicycle NSW.

Individual submissions have been summarised and tabulated, and a response to the issues raised has been provided. The submission summaries are attached (**Attachment A1**). Key themes that have emerged from the consultation are divided into the various categories below:

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Routes

A number of submissions questioned the appropriateness of several routes and suggested alternatives, to provide a better riding environment. Others requested the inclusion of additional routes, to provide better connection to trip attractors. The suggestions were considered, and in a number of cases were accepted.

Costings

Additional detail and clarity on the cost estimates was the focus of a number of submissions. This issue was also raised by members of the former Bicycle Reference Committee. The feedback was taken into account, with an updated cost estimate table.

Priorities

While the priority criterion sets out a rational method for prioritising the projects, there are many projects with a high priority which also have a high cost. It was suggested in a number of submissions and the former Bicycle Reference Committee that low cost projects could be undertaken early, providing "quick wins". While it was preferred to retain the recommended prioritisation, Council has the discretion to implement projects in the order it prefers or sees fit.

Issues on existing routes

Many submissions raised issues on existing routes, some of which relate to maintenance. While the bicycle plan deals with new routes, improvements to existing routes could be considered as part of an audit/review of existing facilities, or when works are scheduled to be undertaken on that route.

The final Ku-ring-gai Bicycle Plan is shown in **Attachment A2**.

GOVERNANCE MATTERS

The ITS is a key strategy within Council's Principal Local Environmental Plan (PLEP) program, which was adopted by Council on 14 December 2010. The Ku-ring-gai Delivery and Operational Plan 2010-2014 includes the finalisation and implementation of the new Ku-ring-gai wide PLEP and Principal Development Control Plan (PDCP), along with the 1 year action of completing Stage 2 (key planning strategies including Integrated Transport Strategy).

The review of the Bicycle Plan is a key short term action arising from the ITS and is seen as a high priority.

The outcomes of the plan will form the overall bicycle transport planning requirements for Ku-ring-gai. In addition the Bicycle Plan will strengthen Council's ability to lobby for regional and state cycling improvements and funding opportunities.

RISK MANAGEMENT

An updated Bicycle Plan will further assist Council in providing an informed and balanced approach to dealing with bicycle infrastructure/programs for Ku-ring-gai.

Inaction may result in limiting the ability of Council to adequately plan for new cycling infrastructure/programs, or in articulating funding needs or attracting external funding. With surrounding councils progressing their cycling infrastructure at a fast rate, there is a risk that Council could lag further behind in its provision, denying its residents a similar level of infrastructure provision and connectivity as its neighbours.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

A number of proposed bicycle related facilities in the local centres (as part of the *Ku-ring-gai Public Domain Plan (2010)*) have been costed and incorporated into the *Ku-ring-gai Contributions Plan (2010)* works schedules. This includes works such as cycleways, bicycle parking and other facilities, and the estimated total capital cost of these works is approximately \$7.8 million. These are incorporated into Council's Long Term Financial Plan. Some of these projects overlap with the cycleways identified in the draft Bicycle Plan.

The extension to Council's Environmental Levy has \$780,000 allocated over 7 years (or approximately \$111,000 per annum) for sustainable transport initiatives, including cycleways. If dedicated entirely to cycleways, this could potentially be doubled to \$1,560,000 through the Roads and Maritime Services' program funding, which is 50/50 funded.

From the Roads and Maritime Services *Memorandum of Understanding for Works By Council and Funded by RTA*, funding arrangements under the Cycleways program fall into two broad categories:

- State bicycle routes identified in each RTA Region's component of BikePlan 2010. Projects listed within BikePlan 2010 will generally be 100% funded by the RTA [RMS]; and
- local bicycle routes identified in each Council's Bike Plan. Generally all cycleway projects identified in Council Bike Plans will be funded on a shared (dollar for dollar) basis with Councils.

Furthermore, under the RMS' Bicycle User Support program, there is 50/50 funding available for projects such as Bike Week, regional bicycle promotions and development and production of cycleways maps.

Other funding opportunities exist, such as other State or Federal Government grant programs which are typically either 50/50 or 100% funded (depending on the program).

There are also opportunities to develop cycle tourism, through improved access to, and facilities at, key attractions and landmarks in Ku-ring-gai.

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

In terms of social equity for the community, the Bicycle Plan would contribute to promoting an alternative (non-car) mode of travel. Cycling is also a relatively low-cost travel mode which therefore makes it an option for users who do not have access to, or cannot afford the cost of owning and operating, a private motor vehicle. Improved cycling infrastructure also has the opportunity to make better use of available road capacity and improve access to other more affordable (public transport) travel modes.

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There are also health benefits from cycling. Encouraging active transport and active lifestyles contributes to healthy communities and increases social interaction.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Currently, growth pressures, travel habits and car ownership rates contribute to vehicle traffic and associated issues of congestion, loss of amenity, local air quality, urban noise, energy use/greenhouse emissions, safety concerns, health and parking issues. Ku-ring-gai has one of the highest car ownership rates in NSW.

Increasing cycling's mode share of trips to 5% (an objective of the Ku-ring-gai ITS) would assist in the reduction of car dependency while promoting alternative modes of transport.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

As discussed above, feedback from the broader community was invited through the public exhibition process.

In addition, the members of the former Bicycle Reference Committee were invited (as a working party) to a round table session with GHD consultants to view and comment on the public submissions, and discuss outstanding issues raised by the Bicycle Reference Committee at its last meeting on Wednesday 15 August 2012. Comments and feedback from this session were considered in the final version of the plan.

INTERNAL CONSULTATION

Council's Operations Department (Traffic) have been involved during the preparation of the Bike Plan. There has also been participation from staff from Council's Corporate Planning and Sustainability unit (within the Strategy & Environment Department) and Community Department at key stages in relation to behavioural change, events and promotion.

SUMMARY

On 26 June 2012, Council resolved to place the draft Ku-ring-gai Bicycle Plan on formal public exhibition for a minimum of 28 days, and that a report is brought back to Council at the conclusion of the exhibition period.

The draft Bicycle Plan was placed on public exhibition from 10 August 2012 to 7 September 2012. 22 submissions were received, including from residents, local bicycle user groups, State agencies and surrounding councils. Individual submissions have been summarised and tabulated, and a response to the issues raised has been provided.

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. That the Ku-ring-gai Bicycle Plan be adopted, to guide the provision of cycling facilities and to support a culture of cycling in Ku-ring-gai.
- B. That the Ku-ring-gai Bicycle Plan be used as a tool to lobby for regional and state cycling

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improvements and funding opportunities.

- C. That persons who made a submission during the exhibition be notified of Council's decision.

Joseph Piccoli
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Manager Urban & Heritage Planning

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Attachments:	A1	Exhibition Comments - responses and report changes	2012/290114
	A2	Ku-ring-gai Bicycle Plan - Final Report	2012/290138