



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

GPO Box 2104, Brisbane 4001

brisbanecbdbug@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/cbdbug/

Mr Bill Delves
Chief Executive Officer
South Bank Corporation
PO Box 2001
South Bank QLD 4101

Via email to: haveyoursay@futuresouthbank.com.au

Dear Mr Delves

Submission on *Future South Bank master plan*

This submission provides the views of the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) on the *Future South Bank master plan*.

As background to this submission, the Brisbane CBD BUG is a grass roots volunteer organisation of more than 800 members, representing the interests of the very large number of people riding bicycles to, from and within the Brisbane city centre. We are active in seeking policy decisions at all levels of government supporting people who want to cycle, and in particular relating to improved infrastructure, end-of-trip facilities, integration of cycling needs with other transport modes and a regulatory environment friendly towards people riding bikes. CBD BUG members meet monthly to exchange information and ideas, discuss issues of relevance and determine the direction of policies to benefit CBD cyclists.

While the CBD BUG focuses on issues affecting people riding bikes for transport, we also strongly support initiatives enabling people to leave their cars at home and instead: 1) walk, and 2) utilise new mobility devices e.g. e-scooters and/or 3) travel via public transport.

With the very large area of South Bank Parklands (SBP) and being positioned on the doorstep to the CBD this precinct is critically important for many of the people riding bicycles between the city and Brisbane's eastern and southern suburbs, as well as for a smaller proportion of bicycle riders residing in the western suburbs.

Therefore, it is disappointing that the needs of people riding bicycles are all but ignored in Business South Bank's *Vision South Bank Report 2017*. However, this omission does not come as a great surprise to CDB BUG members. The South Bank Corporation has had a poor standing among the Brisbane cycling community due to its unfriendly disposition towards cyclists over many years. This perspective was reinforced by the ban imposed from mid-2016 (<http://cbdbug.fea.st/CBD-BUG-letter-re-SBC-no-bicycle-signs-final-20160523.pdf>) on people riding bicycles along the Grey St footpath between Glengelg St and Tribune St. More recently, the taking over of almost the entire footpath on the south-eastern corner of the Grey St and Russel St intersection for footpath dining has occurred with little consideration for bicycle riders who may only feel safe riding on the footpath because of Grey St's hostile road environment.

If SBP is to retain its claimed “position as a world-leading urban precinct” it needs to turn around the message consistently given that cyclists are unwelcome in this precinct – through provision of safe routes that segregate people riding bicycles from pedestrians and motorists. This approach must also be applied not just to people who are travelling to / from SBP, but also be adopted for people travelling through and past SBP.

The unsegregated Clem Jones Promenade located along SBP’s riverfront is suitable for cyclists to use out of hours due to low pedestrian numbers. However, when there are greater volumes of pedestrians present here this route becomes uncomfortable to share, and during events is rendered unusable for people on bikes. Grey St then becomes the alternative route. Accordingly, we would strongly support construction of a more generous riverfront path that would enable the full segregation of cyclists and pedestrians.

For the Grey St alternative for cyclists we note and support the following proposal in the *Vision South Bank Report 2017* “Transform the Grey and Melbourne St intersection into a pedestrian focused plaza through the rationalisation of vehicles movements. Wider footpaths with landscaping around QPAC and Queensland Museum and along Melbourne to Merivale Street will create a welcoming arrival experience and encourage pedestrian movement throughout the precinct”.

However, we call for this pedestrianisation to be more widely applied along Grey St, with as a minimum the closing of Grey St to motor vehicles between Glengelg St and Tribune St.

There is a gross imbalance in the allocation of public space along Grey St, with most of the width of this thoroughfare dominated by motor vehicles. Instead, this precinct should be re-configured to create safe spaces for cyclists and pedestrians. We would point out that more foot traffic equals more revenue for the businesses located along this corridor. This reallocation of space would also make the land along Grey St more valuable and generate more income for the SBP. In contrast, the current arrangement means that the SBP receives no revenue from majority of Grey St i.e. the road space.

We anticipate some vigorous opposition to this proposal from the less informed eatery owners/operators along Grey St. This NIMBYism should be countered by the research performed in Brisbane showing that parking isn’t as important for restaurants as owners think. <https://www.commercialrealestate.com.au/news/parking-isnt-as-important-for-restaurants-as-owners-think-38342/>. Also, research conducted in Melbourne (Lygon St) aligns with these findings http://colabradio.mit.edu/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Final_Thesis_Alison_Lee.pdf.

We welcome the call in the *Vision South Bank Report 2017* for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport to be given priority on the Victoria Bridge. However, such calls only seem intended to serve the SBP agenda of people being able to reach SBP by bike, with no regard to the many more people who need to get through/past the SBP.

Lastly, we call for the mess at the south end of the Goodwill Bridge to be address. This location has been a longstanding problem for pedestrians and cyclists, A large part of the problem here stems from the manner in which people riding bikes, people walking, and more recently, e-scooter riders, are forced to navigate together the narrow bottlenecks created at the south end of the Goodwill Bridge. As a short term solution we would like to see this area made more comfortable for the aforementioned users by opening it up into a spacious plaza. Ideally, the majority of people cycling / and scootering through this precinct are travelling via the V1 Veloway and should be provided a with a more direct route to/from the City though a new green bridge constructed parallel to the Captain Cook bridge.

In closing, many more people can ride bikes in any given area compared to when people are driving and with the regular traffic congestion around the SBP it seems common sense to make it easier and safer for people to reach these facilities by bikes. There is also an equity issue with this approach – by improving access for a wider range of people rather than just those who can drive and who have the means to drive and park there. Recent data indicates younger people are not acquiring a driver’s license or buying cars to the same levels as previous generations, so it is

important that SBP accommodates these societal changes by providing improved connectivity to the surrounding areas for people riding bikes and using other new / emerging travel modes.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the *Future South Bank master plan*.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul French', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Paul French
Co-convenor
Brisbane CBD BUG
9 March 2020

Cc: Bicycle Queensland
 Space4Cycling Brisbane
 Brisbane South BUG