



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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Mr Mark Bailey

Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply

Level 15, Capital Hill

85 George Street

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Lord Mayor Graham Quirk

Office of the Lord Mayor

GPO Box 2287

Brisbane QLD 4001

My dear Lord Mayor and Minister

This letter concerns the design of the intersection of Herschel Street and North Quay, a key entry and exit point between the Bicentennial Bikeway and Central Business District (CBD).

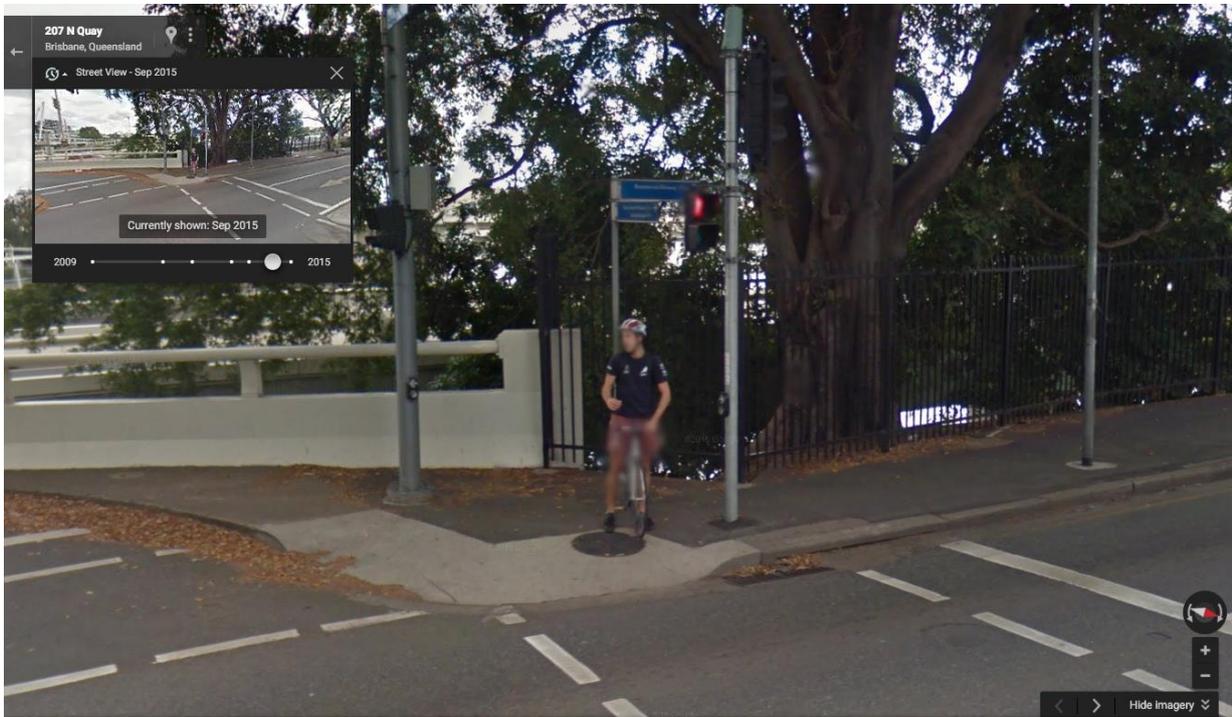
The Brisbane CBD BUG is a grass roots volunteer organisation of more than 700 members, representing the interests of the very large number of residents who ride bicycles to, from and within the city of Brisbane. The Brisbane CBD BUG actively seeks policy decisions at all levels of government that support cycling. In particular CBD BUG seeks improved infrastructure, end-of trip facilities, integration of cycling with other transport modes and a cyclist-friendly regulatory environment.



Advocacy

Advice

Action



Members of the BUG are greatly concerned by the lack of amenity in the area around the Herschel St ramp since a redesign around 2012. The width between the pictured poles (street views shown from 2009 and 2015) where people riding bikes must pass is 1.4 metres with the entire width between the surface changes around 1.1 metres. This is less than half of the “desirable minimum shared path width” of 2.5 metres specified in Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides 2014¹ (Tables 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7) for this bidirectional path and in addition a sharp 90 degree turn is required in both directions. This area and the shared path at the east end of the Botanic Gardens are the narrowest bidirectional shared paths in the CBD and their width becomes continually less acceptable with cycling traffic growth.

The difficulties have become more acute since the recent regular closures of Bouquet Street in South Brisbane during business hours due to the construction of the Spice Apartments there. Many more riders are choosing to use the Herschel St ramp to enter and exit the CBD from the Bicentennial instead of the longer option of the Go-Between and Kurilpa Bridges, as crossing the three Go-Between Bridge signalized crossings instead of using Bouquet Street results in a wait time of approximately a minute per phase.

A previous official reply to a BUG member seeking changes in the area mentioned that cyclists should be walking across as riding across would not be legal. However, law changes in 2014 as a result of the Parliamentary Inquiry into Cycling made riding across a signalized crossing legal.

Another recent reply from Transport and Main Roads to a BUG member seeking changes (see Appendix) mentioned that cyclists should dismount if they feel uncomfortable performing the sharp right angled turn. This suggested approach to the dismal infrastructure is in complete contradiction to the audit suggested in TMR’s “Cycling Strategy 2011-2021” which acknowledges that legislated dismount requirements make cycling inconvenient.

Audit the Queensland Road Rules to identify those rules which make cycling inconvenient or unsafe. Investigate the feasibility of changes to traffic regulations and associated technical guidance that:

- a. increase safety, accessibility and priority for cyclists on road networks*
- b. create opportunities to provide improved cycle network facilities*
- c. minimise delay and dismount requirements at intersections.*

¹ <https://www.onlinepublications.austroads.com.au/items/AP-G88-14>

The advice also contradicts TMR's "2016-17 Technical Guidelines" for the Cycle Network Local Government Grants Program which states "Path terminal treatments should not be used as slow points or force cyclists to dismount to safely navigate through the treatment."

A small financial investment by TMR and Council could deliver great returns in convenience, safety and time saved here.

The main request is for the black fence and direction pole to be relocated back so that the turn is not so sharp and the path is wider. This might be accompanied by a relocation of the road crossing further back, eliminating the crossing of Herschel St entirely on the south side as it leads to a dead end, with a bike box there for greater safety of riders. Forbidding parking on Herschel Street inbound at all times and providing protected lanes would also greatly lessen the possibility of conflict between bikes and cars in this area. Several options are discussed in an online thread.²

At the moment, bike riders tend to face oncoming vehicular traffic entering the CBD while performing a sharp right angled turn. This manoeuvre is impossible for cargo bikes, bikes with child trailers, or recumbent bicycles with long wheelbases.

The ramp is the best route from the city of many bad options in the area. It is the only route in the vicinity without a sharp "U-turn" and the most direct way, and hence is attracting a growing number of bicycle riders.

The most convenient cycling option between the Bicentennial and CBD is the Kurilpa and Go-Between, but this is much longer; the Queen St and Turbot/Ann St exits require sharp U-turns and are even less suitable for bicycles with long wheelbases.

We also draw your attention to a hazardous groove between the boards and asphalt in the vicinity – see the YouTube video³ and the metal plates on the north west corner of Herschel and North Quay which are slippery after rain. These matter also need to be addressed by the Council.

As the Department of Transport and Main Roads controls the signalized intersection and the Council is responsible for the general area we hope that together you are able to find a satisfactory solution to this issue which is a continual source of frustration for people riding bicycles to and from the CBD.

Regards

Dr Richard Bean
Co-convenor
Brisbane CBD BUG
17 February 2016

² <http://www.brisbanecyclist.com/forum/topics/various-infrastructure-annoyances>

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKYYrO9oNNw>

Appendix

Thank you for your contact on 25 January 2016 concerning bicycle access on the pedestrian crossing at North Quay and Herschel Street, Brisbane City.

An officer of the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) has inspected the site and observed existing signage and signal pole locations concerning this issue.

The pedestrian signal pole under question has been located at this site for the past 4 years and is at the optimum location with the associated pedestrian crossing road markings on North Quay. The signal pole is positioned at the location for both pedestrian and cyclist to access when using the crossing. Additionally, the pole is positioned at a safe distance from the road edge so as not to be hit by passing traffic, especially trucks. If these poles are placed closer to the kerb then the pedestrian signal may get knocked off completely or "spun" around the pole and facing the wrong direction, causing conflicting and unsafe walk signal with the traffic signals.

The signal pole is also at the location acceptable and safe for wheelchair use allowing enough clearance for the user to press the walk signal but not be too close to the roadway. Therefore, this signal pole will not be relocated or removed.

This signal pole location may be perceived to be a "hazard" and difficult for cyclist using the pedestrian crossing and negotiating the somewhat narrow footpath access to the bikeway under the Riverside Expressway. If cyclist feel that they are uncomfortable in making this manoeuvre then they should dismount from their bike and walk the bike around the signal pole to access the footpath.

I trust this information is of assistance. If you require any further information please contact Mr Graeme Daniel, Traffic Investigations Officer, on telephone 3066 5887 or by email at metropolitanregion@tmr.qld.gov.au (mailto:metropolitanregion@tmr.qld.gov.au).