



Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group

CBD BUG

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The Right Honourable Graham Quirk
Lord Mayor of Brisbane
GPO Box 2287
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Lord Mayor

This letter seeks your action to correct the serious shortcomings the Brisbane Central Business District Bicycle User Group (CBD BUG) has identified in the Brisbane City Council (BCC) consultation on proposed traffic calming for Gray St, New Farm.

The CBD BUG is a grass roots volunteer organisation of more than 700 members, representing the interests of the very large number of people riding bicycles to, from and within the Brisbane city centre. It is 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.

The CBD BUG hold a number of concerns regarding the way the consultation process is being conducted. This approach is particularly disappointing in view of the calls for BCC to address safety and amenity concerns held by local residents dating back as far as early 2012 attributable to motorist rat running along Gray St, New Farm.

1. Failure to consult broadly with stakeholders

Gray St, New Farm is listed in the *Brisbane City Plan 2014* as a secondary cycling route and as such the CBD BUG is a stake holder. Accordingly, the CBD BUG views this matter as one on which it should be consulted, along with other projects affecting primary and secondary cycling routes within a 5km radius of the CBD.

2. One-sided BCC literature

The BCC literature (copy attached) distributed to Gray St residents only mentions negative impacts of the proposal and neglects to identify the numerous benefits of the proposal e.g. reduced motor vehicle speeds, enhanced livability etc. This approach appears to be intended to prejudice local opinion against proposed traffic calming. The distribution of such one-sided information is commonly described as propaganda and is illustrative of BCC's underlying car-centric agenda.

3. Property franchise requirement

The pamphlet states "If you are not the property owner, it would be appreciated if you would pass the section of the newsletter on to your landlord or rental agency". This

statement gives the distinct impression that residents who are renting premises on Gray St are not entitled to express an opinion on this matter. This is a highly selective approach to consultation and will exclude many Gray St residents. As just one example the "Freshwater" complex alone has a 50% rental occupancy rate and it is highly likely such a residency profile would be repeated in other apartment complexes along the street.

It could be suggested that people renting premises may not be long term residents of Gray St. However, the same could just as easily be said of people who own investment properties on Gray St, with many never living there and having to endure the negative consequences of the current rat running along this street. It is highly disappointing that in adopting this approach BCC appears to be seeking to return involvement in public debate to being based on a property franchise.

4. Assumed opposition to traffic calming

The pamphlet states "If no response is received, it will be considered that you are not in favour of any of the proposed options". Considering the high rate of rental occupancy it is highly unlikely all property owners will be aware of the proposal. On that point it should be considered that a property owner has abstained from voting and not be included in the "voting" process.

Further to the points above the CBD BUG strongly supports the proposal for the implementation of traffic calming in Gray St, New Farm.

Gray St should be a quiet local street. However, it is a motorist rat run due to poor transport planning and traffic engineering choices in the past by council. Crossing Gray St where it intersects with Merthyr Rd can be treacherous at times with the poor layout of the road for both people riding bikes and walking. People driving motor vehicles often cross the center white line due to traveling at excessive speeds along Gray Street. As such the CBD BUG supports Option 3 in the proposal. This will improve the ability of people to be able to cross Gray St without having to make a mad dash in fear of being hit by a motor vehicle and discouraging motorist use of Gray St as a local rat run.

The CBD BUG is disappointed that it only became aware of this matter due to one of its members living on Gray St. Not consulting with the CBD BUG on such matters does not correspond with Council's "Better Bikeways for Brisbane" program as projects like this have a clear potential to impact on cycling levels in Brisbane.

I look forward to your response on these issues.

If further clarification is required, please contact me directly on 0402 609 723.

Yours faithfully



Donald Campbell
Co-convenor
Brisbane CBD BUG
27 October 2014

Cc: Cr Vick Howard, Central Ward