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## **WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL CYCLING NETWORK DRAFT FRAMEWORK**

### **Introduction**

The Newtown Residents' Association is the Incorporated Society representing the suburbs of Newtown, Berhampore, Mt Cook and parts of Melrose. We are an active local group of residents and businesspeople, concerned with maintaining and improving our suburb's liveability, connectedness and sustainability. For more than 100 years our organisation has worked actively to make our community a thriving, diverse, great place to live. We care passionately about the design, function and ecology of our urban and natural environment. The Association has a long history of contributing design ideas and pro-actively lobbying for cycling initiatives that connect our community, the central city and the South coast.

The Newtown Residents' Association applauds the WCC and its officers for finally getting serious about catering for cycling in our streets. A safe cycling corridor has the ability to transform our part of the city.

### **Submission**

The Newtown Residents' Association supports the overall concepts of a cycleway network in Newtown, Berhampore & Mount Cook. We are very supportive that the Draft Cycling Framework recognises Newtown Berhampore and Mount Cook as a key cycling corridor from the outer suburbs, and a key catchment in its own right. (as we have long been advocating for)

We strongly suggest that the only way to increase cycling is to provide safe, separated cycle lanes. This is alluded to on page 18, “*Where there are viable routes within the existing road space, we will implement protected bike lanes.*” Protected bike lanes will broaden the pool of people prepared to cycle.

***Summary of points raised:***

The wider membership of our Association, including lots of non cyclists, strongly support implementing 30 km/h along main cycle avenues: Rintoul Street, Riddiford Street, Russell Terrace, Wilson Street in Newtown; and Luxford Street, Adelaide Road south of and including Berhampore. We support the way WCC currently delineates this clearly at the entry thresholds to such slow zones elsewhere in the city, and feel additional reminder speed limits need to be painted at regular intervals within cycle avenues, mid block, along with the cyclist welcome / priority graphic also in the traffic corridor. Please do this NOW.

Shared paths, where pedestrians and cyclists share need to be more than 3 metres wide to be any good for pedestrians and cyclists. Generous shared paths, 3.5m and wider, also allow scooters, skateboards, roller blades – and other slow wheeled personal transport to successfully share as well. These kinds of generous shared paths provide space and flexibility for residents to negotiate their driveways and garages in a slow safe environment. Urban Activation Lab’s 2014 study recommended a two way cycleway, which leaves one footpath exclusively for walkers, was ideal for Newtown, particularly important for the elderly, or walkers with impairments, or walkers who are nervous of skateboarders and scooter riders. Cycleway designs need to consider all of society and footpaths reserved for walkers are very important, a consideration that in turn benefits cycling where shared paths are created. If sufficient width to share is not available scooters, skateboards, roller blades, and mobility scooters should be encouraged on footpaths, rather than in cycle lanes.

Green paint between northbound lanes on Riddiford Street would improve access to the advanced stop boxes.

We support clearer paths for decision-making by the Council on cycling infrastructure. Our experiences with past WCC cycling consultations have been generally negative, with poor communication, changing criteria, and lack of follow-up by Council. Participating in the Citizens

Advisory Panel of 2014 carefully considering local cycleways was a huge disappointment, as their report of July 2014 was never implemented and seem to have been largely disregarded.

As an Association we were very disappointed that WCC also shelved the innovative community sourced designs for Island Bay - Berhampore - Newtown - Mt Cook devised by the Urban Activation Lab summer 2013 – 14. This scheme provided a protected safe cycleway for slower cycling right through our community while maintaining or increasing on-street carparking in every street it carefully passed through. Boosting car parking in both residential and commercial streets at the same time as creating a cycleway safe for novices was an innovative solution. This sort of design that caters for cycling, walking, shopping and motorist parking ie all of society, should be at the core of the Draft Cycling Framework.

Carparking is important for residents and businesses that are along route corridors. As well as positive community buy in supporting cycleways if residents can leave their cars at home they are much more likely to cycle. Retailers who gain a cycleway and keep customer car parking are likely to champion the project.

As a community we have always sought traffic calmed streets. Residents and retailers benefit from slower traffic and safer streets for pedestrians. Our community is in favour. of preserving carparking and reducing the vehicle corridor if space for adding a cycleway is scarce. The WCC draft framework creates a hierarchy which we mostly approve of, however car parking is at the bottom of this hierarchy. We would rather that traffic flow was underneath car parking in the hierarchy. The Urban Activation Lab's design proposal in the wider part of Riddiford Street in front of Wellington Hospital even shows how this can work in busy traffic corridors.

Local businesses at John Street were very disappointed that the Urban Activation Lab scheme [recommended by the Citizen's Advisory Panel] increasing Riddiford Street car parking in the whole Hospital block, and adding cycling customers has been overlooked. The businesses feel this was a welcome helpful initiative for retail and cafes at Riddiford Street north who had suffered from customer car park removals to do with other roading projects and development work.

In commercial precincts cycleways are best separated from pedestrian footpaths, unless the entire roadway is a shared space.

**Specific to WCC Draft Cycling Framework document of May 2015:**

**Page 2**

We agree with the goal of encouraging less confident cyclists onto the road (page 2).

**Page 4**

Phase 2 of the Framework omits any participation by, or communication with, the local neighbourhood, community groups, schools, businesses, and other affected parties, in the development and assessment processes.

We are alarmed that the Council may not have learned any lessons from the recent fiasco in Island Bay.

If not involved in Phase 2, can we please have some community input during Phase 3, before the Final design and construction.

**Page 5**

Concerned at the reference to “Project proposals will be developed through the delivery model that we have in place.” Does this mean the same consultants will be involved? Will these proposals sink without trace, as the Citizens Advisory Panel report of July 2014 did? Current delivery models are not giving ratepayers great results, as evidenced by the John Street Protocols. We want to see an improved model.

Please clarify the next sentence in the Draft Framework which reads: 'By having the 'package' approach in place we will ensure benchmarking, improvement of cost and non-cost performance and efficiency of delivery increases over time.' We are unable to understand what this means..

**Page 7**

Would much prefer to see Rintoul Street rather than Adelaide Road on the Southern route. This was Option 1 of the Citizens Panel in 2014. Why has this reverted to Adelaide Rd?

**Page 10**

Dimensions of protected bike lanes: We agree with 0.6m width of buffers between cycle lanes and parking lanes. Buffers between cycle lanes and moving vehicles should be wider or solid, eg planted. Two-way cycle lanes can save space, as less buffer width is required.

Thoughtful treatment of intersections is essential for successful, attractive, safe cycling. We want to see a set of generic intersection solutions (T intersection, crossroads, controlled intersections, roundabouts) included in the design guidelines.

### **Pages 12-13**

Where protected cycle lanes can't be accommodated, *off-road or alternative routes will be sought*. This sounds as though there is a real risk of no improvement to current roads.

We support the emphasis on the continuity and linked nature of cycle networks. It is vital that the network is built in places that serve the users, not only where there is space!

### **Pages 15-16**

Levels of service A-D are not defined. Is there something missing from the document?

### **Pages 19-20**

We generally support space allocation principles. Private vehicle travel may need to recognise suburban residential parking, in some situations. For example, single lane slow speed, low volume residential streets, allowing for on-street parking along minor or dead-end routes.

We are suspicious of "*Transport modelling will be used to assess travel time impacts of proposals.*" These models are generally car-centric, and do not reflect benefits to non-car traffic.

## **Conclusion**

On behalf of the wider Newtown community, and on behalf of our youngsters, the future citizens of Wellington, the Newtown Residents' Association thanks you for the opportunity to comment, and for the extension of time to do so. We appreciate the effort to seek feedback from those of us who are directly affected by these policies.

With our suggestions and refinements included we are supportive of WCC establishing a Cycling Framework. Core to a successful policy for transforming this important part of our city's transport network, reducing Wellington's carbon footprint and improving our population's fitness and health is the provision of a safe protected corridor that has continuity through intersections.

The Cycling Framework must provide significant safety that caters for those who are currently reluctant to cycle. The Framework needs to clearly establish a benchmark that defines making it safe for the young, the old, novices, school pupils and relaxed riders to cycle as a priority – “the Wellington way”. Then our population will embrace using their bikes.

The Newtown Residents' Association would like to be heard in support of this succinct submission. Please do not hesitate to contact us at [newtownwellington@gmail.com](mailto:newtownwellington@gmail.com) or leave a message at our Association’s Festival Office, 04 389 7316, if you would like our Association to provide more detail on this important Wellington issue.

**On behalf of the Newtown Residents’ Association**

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