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Mount Nelson–Sandy Bay Discussion Paper

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the *Mount Nelson–Sandy Bay Neighbourhood Plan Discussion Paper*. Our feedback will mostly focus on Direction 4 in the Discussion Paper, which is to “provide accessible and pedestrian-friendly, sustainable transport options.”

The paper begins with a statement of commitment to addressing climate change in Hobart, including to help people “move toward zero emissions as quickly as possible by choosing to ride or walk, using public transport or buying an electric vehicle.”

The project area is in easy riding distance to the city centre but because of a lack of dedicated infrastructure most people choose not to.

Providing safe, separated cycling links will help people choose to cycle or scoot and are a necessary step in cutting our carbon dioxide emissions.

It’s very clear from research that the majority of the population are interested in riding more often but concerns about safety on the roads holds them back. Providing routes on genuine low-traffic, low-speed streets and providing cycleways separated from traffic, either off- or on-road, provides less stressful cycling routes that more people will use.

This sort of approach is commonly referred to as All Ages and Abilities infrastructure – it’s of a standard that people aged 8 to 80 could use.

Separated cycleways

The main proposal is for a separated cycleway to run the length of Sandy Bay Road for use by bicycles and electric scooters and other devices.

The paper also recommends further investigation into a secondary cycling route along streets such as Grosvenor, Regent or Churchill Avenue.

There is a strong need for separated cycleways because of the volume of cars on the major roads through Sandy Bay and the lack of easily connecting lower-volume back streets running towards the city.

A separated cycleway on Sandy Bay Road will be a challenge to implement with some residents but makes sense from the perspective of generally easier gradients, directness and most of the housing is detached dwellings with driveway accesses.

Sandy Bay Road has three secondary schools and the university along the route, and is the main access to Taroona High School. Parents dropping off and picking up

students are a significant traffic generator along the road, so providing separated lanes so more students can ride could help reduce this congestion.

A cycleway on Churchill Avenue–Regent Street would be a steep route, but with so many people using e-bikes it should be well utilised. It's also the only direct route through the middle of Sandy Bay connecting to the city. A challenge here is that there are more apartment buildings and units, but if there was a safe cycleway to get into town then the number of cars parking on the road may reduce.

Grosvenor Street is wide enough for a cycleway but if Sandy Bay Road and Regent Street both had cycleways it may not be needed as it's relatively close to both. It doesn't have signalised crossings at intersections, which increases stress and potentially travel time. And it ideally would connect to Star Street, which would be challenging to build and may require land acquisition.

Ferry terminal

Since the discussion paper was released the Tasmanian Government has released its ferries masterplan which includes Sandy Bay as one of the top 6 potential sites for a terminal.

The council's neighbourhood plan should factor in the ferry terminal when deciding where to build cycleways. As well as links to the terminal from either direction along Sandy Bay Road, there should be at least one clear route to get down to the cycleway and terminal from the upper reaches of the suburbs.

The discussion paper mentions a major path to connect Mount Nelson to Wrest Point, which would be one potential route if it was a shared path.

Public transport

We welcome the paper's suggestion that the council advocates to the Tasmanian Government to allow bikes and scooters on board public transport and for more end-of-trip facilities for riders.

Allowing people to take bikes on board buses helps to provide people with more journey options. While bus services are pretty good through Sandy Bay, it may be that someone works or studies a significant distance from the city bus stop and a bicycle will allow them to stitch together a trip from Sandy Bay using bus and bicycle.

End-of-trip facilities are also important in providing a place to park bikes that is secure. If someone is riding an e-bike into the city or to shopping centres in Sandy Bay and Lower Sandy Bay, they want to ensure they can park it somewhere it won't be stolen or much less likely to be stolen than if they just lock it up in the street.

While e-bikes mean riders are in less need of showers and lockers there will still be people who ride normal bikes who will want such facilities. Such facilities can also help motorbike riders who wear protective clothing which needs to be stored and can get hot.

UTAS campus

Regardless of how the university decides to repurpose its Sandy Bay campus, the council should ensure there are good quality cycling links through the land to provide connections within and to surrounding paths and lanes.

The university's Sandy Bay masterplan in 2021 provided for 3 metre wide, kerb separated active transport corridors on its internal streets and connections to paths into the bushland. This is the sort of planning for the campus we'd like to see into the future as the current campus layout provides a block for people riding through to surrounding streets.

Recreational cycling

The suggested waterfront links mentioned in Direction 3 are also worth supporting for people who want to ride at a slow pace, such as children, less confident riders and some tourists. This looks like a more meandering route that suits such riders and would separate them out from people wanting to get somewhere quickly on the separated cycleways.