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Road improvements for Cyclists – Recommendations to Parramatta City Council CAMWEST

Synopsis:

CAMWEST calls on Parramatta City Council to build on cycling initiatives already underway by making council's entire road system cyclist friendly.

Opportunistically retrofitted off-road cycleways will never provide adequate access to destinations for cyclists to use them exclusively. The road network is public property providing legal right of pass and repass. Road authorities have a duty of care to all road users to provide safe passage. As the RTA promotes: "**The road is there to share**". Cyclists require space to cycle, not compete unequally with motor transport for the same road space.

Introduction

CAMWEST appeals to Parramatta City Council to remove dangerous situations for cyclists.

This report details several instances where roads have been made unsafe for cyclists, through the width and positioning of curb blisters and centre islands. They are ranked into three categories:

- Extremely dangerous - requiring immediate attention.
- Very dangerous - requiring attention in the very near future.
- Dangerous - need to be scheduled for work in the short term.

This report is not comprehensive; CAMWEST will also raise the issues of roundabout design in the future.

To begin with, however, we show an example of a treatment that is acceptable for cyclists, at Wentworth Ave, Wentworthville.



Wentworth Avenue Wentworthville looking east

CAMWEST asks Council to adopt designs such as this for all road calming across the LGA, and to correct those shown in this report.

1. Clyde St, Granville

Classification: Extremely Dangerous.



Clyde St looking south from William St Granville

Speed Limit: 60km/h

Cycle Route: No

Problem:

- The wide curb blisters create repeated squeeze points and the wide centre islands remove the road space once available to cyclists, forcing cyclists to choose between riding the very narrow section between parked cars and the traffic lane and continually being squeezed or taking the whole traffic lane.

Recommendations:

- Remove the wide centre median
- Reduce the size of the blisters so that they extend no further than 1.8m from the curb.
- Incorporate a cycle lane on each side of the road.

Comment:

This was a favoured north-south route for cyclists because it was wide enough to provide space to ride, is flat with few interruptions, and so provided almost ideal conditions for fast commuting.

2. Oakes Rd, Old Toongabbie, south of Toongabbie Creek

Classification: Extremely Dangerous



Oakes Road looking south to Old Windsor Road

Speed Limit: 50km/h

Cycle Route: Parts of Oakes Rd are on Local Route 9.

Problem:

- The wide curb blisters create squeeze points, forcing cyclists into the path of the traffic. This is particularly dangerous in a left curve as shown here.

Recommendations:

- Re-design the blister shown to allow cyclists to ride inside it, to provide protection against vehicles cutting the corner, and provide barriers or "No Stopping" signs so that parked cars cannot block cyclists' access.
- Reduce the size of the other curb blisters so that they extend no further than 1.8m from the kerb.

3. Caroline Chisholm Drive, Winston Hills

Classification – Extremely Dangerous



Caroline Chisholm Drive looking east uphill from Old Windsor Rd

Speed Limit: 50km/h

Cycle Route: Parts of Caroline Chisholm Drive are on Local Route 11.

Problem:

- The wide curb blisters create squeeze points and the wide centre island removes the road space once used by cyclists, forcing cyclists into the path of the traffic.

Recommendations:

- Reduce the size of blisters so that they extend no further than 1.8m from the kerb.
- Remove the wider centre median
- Move the centre line south
- Provide a bicycle lane in the uphill direction.

Comment:

"It may be appropriate to provide a bicycle lane treatment in the uphill direction only, where width constraints exist and there is no opportunity for the provision of a bicycle lane in the downhill direction".

AUSTROADS Guide to Traffic Engineering Practice; Part 14, Bicycles (4.2.5 Speed Issues).

4. Caroline Chisholm Drive, Winston Hills

Classification – Very Dangerous



Caroline Chisholm Road looking west uphill from Churchill Road

Speed Limit: 50km/h

Cycle Route: Parts of Caroline Chisholm Drive are on Local Route 11.

Problem:

- The wide curb blisters create squeeze points and the wide centre island removes the road space that cyclists once used, forcing cyclists into the path of the traffic.

Recommendations:

- Remove the centre islands.
- Reduce the width of the curb blisters to a maximum of 1.8m from the curb.
- Create a cycling lane on either side of the road with the space made available.

5. Caroline Chisholm Drive, Winston Hills

Classification: Very Dangerous



Caroline Chisholm Drive looking west uphill to Hillcrest Rd

Speed Limit: 50km/h

Cycle Route: Parts of Caroline Chisholm Drive are on Local Route 11.

Problem:

- The wide curb blisters create squeeze points, forcing cyclists into the path of the traffic.

Recommendation:

- Reduce the size of the blisters to a maximum of 1.8m from the kerb. This will generate an acceptable cycling lane.

6. Wentworth Ave, Toongabbie

Classification: Very Dangerous



Wentworth Ave Toongabbie, looking east

Speed Limit: 50km/h

Cycle Route: Parts of Wentworth Ave are on Local Route 4.

Problem:

- The wide curb blisters create squeeze points, forcing cyclists into the path of the traffic.

Recommendation:

- Reduce the size of the blisters to a maximum of 1.8m from the kerb.

Comment:

Further east, Wentworth Ave is part of a local route, and the treatment here is much better (as described in the introduction of this report).

7. Wentworth Ave, Pendle Hill

Classification: Very Dangerous



Wentworth Avenue Pendle Hill looking east

Speed Limit: 50km/h

Cycle Route: Parts of Wentworth Ave are on Local Route 4.

Problem:

- There is no room on the road for cyclists to ride except to compete with motor vehicles in the narrow traffic lane.

Recommendation:

- Widen the road to create a cycling lane on both sides of the road.

Comment:

This is a favoured cycling route. The road corridor is wide enough to provide a cycling lane on each side of the road. This may reduce parking on the railway side but this should be only a minor inconvenience.

8. Cycleway at Toongabbie



Looking from Station Rd to Portico Parade Toongabbie

Speed Limit: Not applicable

Cycle Route: Yes (Local Route 13)

Problem:

- Barriers across the cycleway force dismounting to pass through and/or lifting of unconventional cycles (tricycles for the disabled, or tandems) over the barrier.

Recommendation:

- Remove these barriers

9. Hawkesbury Rd, Westmead

Classification: Dangerous



Hawkesbury Rd Westmead, looking south

Speed Limit: 40km/h

Cycle Route: No, but if the roads were cyclist friendly it would encourage some workers at the four hospitals to cycle to work.

Problem:

- The wide curb blisters create repeated squeeze points and the wide centre islands remove the road space once available to cyclists.

Recommendation:

- Reduce the size of the blisters.
- Remove the centre island.
- Create a cycling lane on each side of the road.

Comment:

It is likely that in the near future a cycling route along the Parramatta River and Toongabbie Creek will be installed, and Hawkesbury Road may become a major cycling route to provide a link to the south of the railway line.

10. Lanhams Rd, Winston Hills

Classification: Dangerous



Lanhams Rd looking west to Buckleys Road

Speed Limit: 50km/h

Cycle Route: Parts of Lanhams Rd are on Local Route 11.

Problem:

- The wide curb blisters create repeated squeeze points and the wide centre islands remove the road space once available to cyclists.

Recommendation:

- Remove the end islands and the wide centre median leading to the final refuge islands.
- Reduce the intrusion of the curb blisters to 1.8m from the curb.

Conclusion:

There are many beneficial reasons to provide safe, on and off road cycling facilities throughout Parramatta City Council.

- Improvements to community health through active transport.
- Reduction in pollution.
- Reduction in traffic congestion.
- Equity of transport options.
- Increases road safety for all road users.
- Council's legal responsibility of duty of care to all road users.

By making all roads in Parramatta City Council, cycling friendly, the whole community will benefit in a range of ways.

