

15 May 2017

Mr Jon Whelan
General Manager
Infrastructure Delivery
Dept Planning, Transport and Infrastructure
c/- dpti.communityrelations@sa.gov.au

Dear Mr Whelan,

Main Road Belair – safety “improvements”, Main Road, Belair

Thank you for the advice concerning the planned changes to Main Road in Belair. Whilst we welcome changes that will improve road safety for all road users, we feel that cyclists have been completely neglected in the planning of this upgrade, and will be significantly and negatively impacted.

This stretch of road is used by most cyclists riding between Belair and Blackwood and forms part of most route options from Blackwood towards the city, including the Lynton Bikeway. There are no practical alternative routes; most possible alternatives are steep and indirect. Some parts of Main Road have good quality bike lanes and we would have hoped that any works on the route would have taken the opportunity to improve the safety and connectivity for those who chose to travel by bicycle.

Unfortunately, it appears from the plans circulated that conditions for cyclists are about to become much worse. This is especially true in the northbound direction, where cyclists climbing towards Belair triangle currently share a wide lane with motorised traffic after Penno Parade North, allowing motorists to safely overtake without crossing the centre line as cyclists start to slow for the incline. The addition of a pedestrian refuge with what appears to be a very narrow single lane, followed by a section where the lane is narrow due to the addition of turn lanes, will reduce cyclist safety and comfort and lead to driver frustration.

From a driver point of view, it is already difficult to overtake cyclists on the railway bridge, so there will be an immense temptation for some drivers to overtake in the short distance before the pedestrian refuge or to squeeze past cyclists at the refuge itself (with much less than the legal minimum 1m clearance). Once clear of the refuge, drivers may be tempted to use the edge of the oncoming right turn lane to overtake, bringing them into the possibility of a head-on collision with right turning traffic. Needless to say that these are intimidating and unpleasant situations for even an experienced cyclist to be put in, and they are also unreasonably frustrating for motorists. The situation for cyclists heading south is similar, but in reverse, with an increase in risky overtakes on the railway bridge itself the likely outcome.

We would like to suggest one of two simple alternatives to remove the increased risk to cyclists. In either case, enough width for a compliant cycle lane alongside the general traffic lane at the pedestrian refuge would be provided:

- at the location of the turn lanes, road width could be maintained through road widening
- the turn lanes could be removed completely – traffic heading into Penno Parade North would be barely inconvenienced by having to use the existing turn lane into Elliott Avenue if that turn were banned, and the six properties that are accessed from Gooch Court can hardly generate enough traffic to justify a dedicated turn lane.

We look forward to hearing that you are committed to a good result for all South Australians and in keeping with your government's aim of encouraging cycling in the state. We would like urgent discussion on these suggestions, for which our contact is Paul May, 0424 564 425.

We would also like to request that the Bicycle Institute be asked for our comment on plans *before* they are finalized for issue. Main Road, Belair, is one of some half a dozen communications we have received in the past year where the impacts on pedestrians and cyclists have not been considered, or considered well. To be presented with fait accompli advice about a worsening of safety conditions when we have had no opportunity for consultation is dismaying.

This contrasts to plans and projects we've been involved in or commented on at the concept stage, where we have been able to suggest small changes that greatly improve the design outcome for cyclists and pedestrians. We would much prefer to be commenting in advance rather than protesting after the fact. The situation of having to call for remedial works on newly constructed "safety improvements" to offset their increased crash risk is frustrating for us as well as politically embarrassing for DPTI.

Yours sincerely,



Fay Patterson BE MAITPM
Chair, Bicycle Institute of South Australia
e: fay.patterson@bisa.asn.au
m: 0409 284 165