



My Dear Lord Mayor,

Thank you for your letter of 28 September about cyclist safety along Bridge and Dickson Streets in Albion and Woolloowin. Brisbane North Bicycle User Group (BN BUG) welcomes Brisbane City Council's interest in the work by the Queensland Government's Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) to develop the North Brisbane Bikeway.

Since you wrote, TMR has confirmed at an update meeting with NorthBUG and other groups that it plans to complete the bikeway as far north as Rigby Street, near Woolloowin train station, by the end of 2018. This is great news and we expect this will help to increase the modal share of cyclists riding into the city.

Our concern, therefore, is about a well-designed, convenient connection from Rigby Street to the Kedron Brook Bikeway and beyond. This connection will deliver an important strategic outcome by helping people from a wide area of north Brisbane gain safe access to the city centre and points along and near the bikeway.

The reason we are concerned is that all the existing bicycle access along that corridor is dangerous, so it is used only by the brave and determined. Most people in Brisbane will refuse to use a bicycle route unless they feel safe - protected from passing traffic and other hazards.

The standout hazard along the route is Dickson Street between Rigby Street and Price Street. It is a busy road with no space for cyclists, as the 'bicycle lanes' are filled with parked cars. Cyclists are therefore forced to ride in the traffic lane to avoid the door zone. The speed limit on Dickson Street is 60 kilometres an hour - a speed at which a pedestrian or cyclist hit by a motor vehicle has a less than 10% chance of surviving.

Yet Dickson Street is designated as a District Road on the Brisbane City Planning Scheme (see http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/v1_201406_om0182-20.pdf). This makes it an ideal route for 'buses, pedestrian and bike facilities' according to your planning documents (see <http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/sites/default/files/tt-latm-roadclassification.pdf>).

District Roads can have a speed limit of as much as 60 km/h, but are allowed to have lower speed limits.

We are bringing this to your attention as your letter of 28 September says that 'Dickson Street is classified as a Suburban Route within the Brisbane Road Hierarchy Plan'. The letter goes on to say that Brisbane Council has rejected a petition asking for a reduced speed limit along Dickson St as the minimum speed on a Suburban Route is 60 km/h.

Given that Dickson Street is in fact a District Road, and can therefore have a lower limit, we ask that Brisbane Council lower the speed limit on the street to 40 km/h as soon as possible.

We note that Dickson Street is narrow, winding and not designed to be driven at 60 km/h. Almost all motorists who drive past Woolloowin Station at 60 km/h cut the corners and drive in the bicycle lane in order to stay in control of their vehicles (see <https://youtu.be/EsYDD1z8QFM> for a video of the bikeway where Bridge Street becomes Dickson Street across from Woolloowin Station).

At this time, the TMR sections of the North Brisbane Bikeway are only funded as far as Rigby Street, and it will be three years before those sections are completed. Given that the path along Dickson Street between Rigby Street and Price Street is not funded, it is likely to be substantially more than three years before there is a safe off-road option past that dangerous section.

We encourage Brisbane City Council to do what it can to work with other levels of government to help implement the off-road route on Dickson Street sooner. But in the meantime, the lower speed limit would increase the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers of motor vehicles.

Another measure that would make cyclists riding along Dickson Street more likely to arrive home alive is curbing or some sort of physical barrier along the sections of the existing on-road path where drivers consistently cut the corners, as shown in the video. This too would make drivers more likely to slow down.

We are keen to meet with you or your staff to discuss this issue further, and work toward a resolution of a longstanding safety blackspot. This is likely to include immediate, inexpensive and easily achievable measures such as curbing and lower speed limits, as well as work toward the longer-term objective of a safe off-road path to the Kedron Brook Bikeway.

Regards



Andrew Methorst

BNBUG Co-convener

6 January 2016