

Brisbane West Bicycle User Group is a community based, volunteer run organisation lobbying for improved active transport infrastructure for the Brisbane inner city and the Western suburbs. All new infrastructure should be suitable for users of all ages and abilities and recognise the need for active and public transport and to be prioritised over private motorised traffic where possible.

www.brisbanewestbug.org.au | brisbanewestbug@gmail.com | 0429194392



West BUG Submission on Proposed Master Plan for South Bank

Introduction

The South Bank Corporation Area (SBCA) consisting of South Bank and the Cultural Centre Precinct – is bookended by the Goodwill and Kurilpa Bridges. These are major bicycle links for the inner southern suburbs. Additionally, the Victoria Bridge is used by cyclists on both the general traffic lanes and the shared path on this bridge.

In the past, the South Bank Corporation Board has recognised this Precinct must be bike friendly and has actively encouraged cyclists to visit and use their parkland facilities.

Some of the desire lines for travel for cyclists are:

- access to Kurilpa and Goodwill bridges
- travel north-south through the Precinct
- travel to the Precinct to use facilities particularly the cafes, restaurants, cinema, TAFE and University.

The first two of these desire lines for travel are characterised by conflicting paths with pedestrians and, in the case of the Goodwill Bridge, vehicles.

Safety and comfort for cyclists and pedestrians must be paramount.

The growth in number of people visiting the Precinct and the increase in casual footpath dining and bars rather than fine dining is putting pressure on the different travel modes in the Precinct.

Currently there are two north south routes through the South Bank Corporation Area (the Precinct), one along the Boardwalk, and the other along Grey Street and/or Little Stanley Street.

The number of people using the Boardwalk means there is significant conflict between pedestrians and cyclists movements. The movements of pedestrians are random and erratic as their attention is drawn to the surrounding sights and activities. These movements are at odds with those of cyclists. This conflict is likely to increase in the future. This is particularly so between the Victoria and Goodwill Bridges where high pedestrian volumes make cycling through this area undesirable for utility trips other than leisure. Grey Street is more suited to bicycle trips for people accessing the South Bank precinct however current conditions are not suitable for bike riders of all ages and abilities. In other words, most potential cyclists will avoid riding on Stanley St.

Members of West BUG are concerned about their safety when using Grey Street. Pedestrians, wishing to cross the road, emerge suddenly from between cars, the bike awareness zone is narrow, taxi drivers chat while standing in the area designated for cyclists and construction works have meant poor road surface and lack of space for cyclists. As well, the constant dropping off of visitors from cars, means cars pull out without due attention for cyclists.

Little Stanley Street is used by cyclists to gain access to cafes along the street as well as entrance to the pool and other parkland facilities. This road space could readily be improved to increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

The second Master Plan should address these issues and improve the environment for cyclists and pedestrians in the Precinct. The first step would be to quantify the number of cyclists and identify their desired paths. A similar study of pedestrian desire lines should be undertaken. Planning should be predicated on a doubling of these numbers in the next 5 years.

[Proposed and completed projects around South Bank](#)

[Queens Wharf Brisbane Priority Development Area](#)

The proposed Queens Wharf development includes a pedestrian bridge from the new Casino building to South Bank. The exact location for the landing of the bridge has not been clarified. The Casino is a private space. West BUG firmly believes that any new bridge over the River must be public infrastructure and one that permits cyclists. The proposed public easement through several storeys of the private Casino building and/or a building within the South Bank precinct is unlikely to be sufficient to establish public access and use.

West BUG remains committed to more cross river pedestrian and cycle bridges, but we cannot support this proposal. Further, prior to proceeding to design phase of the bridge, South Bank Board should impress on the State Government to establish if there is a demand for Casino patrons to have a direct access to South Bank. Generally, casinos are enclosed enclaves. So, is there a need for a bridge between South Bank and the Casino?

West BUG understands a new theatre complex is being considered for the South Bank Precinct. Bicycle infrastructure must be part of this proposal. If increased car parking spaces are proposed, access to that car parking should minimise conflict with desired bicycle and pedestrian routes. Easily accessible bicycle parking facilities should be located near the theatre entrance.

[Brisbane Metro Subway System](#)

While the Brisbane City Council (BCC) is yet to complete a feasibility study or strategic planning for the Brisbane Metro, it was declared an election commitment by incumbent Lord Mayor Graham Quirck at the 2016 local government election. The proposal involves converting the existing busway that transverses the periphery of the SBC area to a metro system (excluding buses) with an underground section in the CBD connecting the system to

King George Square. The cultural centre will remain open to buses while the adjacent section of Melbourne Street will be converted from general traffic to metro-only.

If the project were to proceed, amenity for people walking and cycling over Victoria Bridge will be reduced. The two general traffic lanes on the Victoria Bridge would be converted into metro-only infrastructure. This would impact general traffic volumes, access and turning movements for Grey Street. General traffic access on Melbourne Street between Grey Street and the Victoria Bridge would likely be completely removed. Under this scenario, capacity for bicycle users on the bridge would be reduced. Bicycle users using the general traffic lanes will be required to use the shared path on the North side of the bridge. This will increase pressure on the existing active transport connections to South Bank including the Kurilpa and Goodwill Bridges.

In the opinion of West BUG, new configurations to Victoria Bridge should include increasing space for pedestrians and bike users.

[Woolloongabba Bikeway Project](#)

The Brisbane City Council has committed to the construction of a new protected bikeway along Stanley Street connecting to The Arbour at the corner of Vulture and Dock Streets in South Brisbane, to Ipswich Road in Woolloongabba, with additional bikeway infrastructure on Annerley Road to access the University of Queensland, St Lucia. Construction is likely to complete within the next two-three years. This project will increase bicycle traffic into the SBCA via the Arbour. With increasing density in and around the SBCA, a future protected/separated bikeway link on Vulture Street connecting to the Woolloongabba Bikeway and Grey Street then through the heart of West End will be required.

[Footpath bicycle exclusion on Grey Street](#)

Signs indicating that no cycling is permitted on footpaths have been installed relatively recently on Grey Street. Separation of bicycle users and pedestrians is desirable where there are large volumes of traffic for these user groups. However the existing road conditions on Grey Street are not suitable for bike users of all ages and abilities. Excluding bikes from the footpath without improving conditions for bike users on the road may discourage some users from riding to destinations in South Bank.

[Recommendations](#)

One of the principles for guiding future development in the South Bank Master Plan should be to make South Bank and the Cultural Precinct an exemplar for an integrated cycling and pedestrian precinct. This means that priority is given to create spaces for cyclists and pedestrians. While vehicle access to the precinct is necessary, their impacts should be minimised by slow speed environments, design of public spaces that encourages pedestrian to loiter and enjoy the experience and high levels of permeability for cyclists and pedestrians. It means that vehicle traffic is relocated, in the main, to Merivale and Cordelia Streets. Vehicle use within the precinct should be restricted to service vehicles, deliveries (preferably early morning only) and access to car parking.

It is acknowledged that this is a major change from the current traffic environment. But South Bank has the planning controls and legislative framework to deliver this next generation approach to mobility in the Precinct. Such an approach is common in the vibrant “centrum” spaces of many European cities.

West BUG advocates for this approach but does not presume to have the skills or resources to detail specific improvements. South Bank Board would have access to considerable local and international expertise. The draft plans for the Vulture Street portal, prepared by Jan Gehl, an international expert on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in urban environment, might guide this Pedestrian and Bicycle Precinct approach for the future development of South Bank.

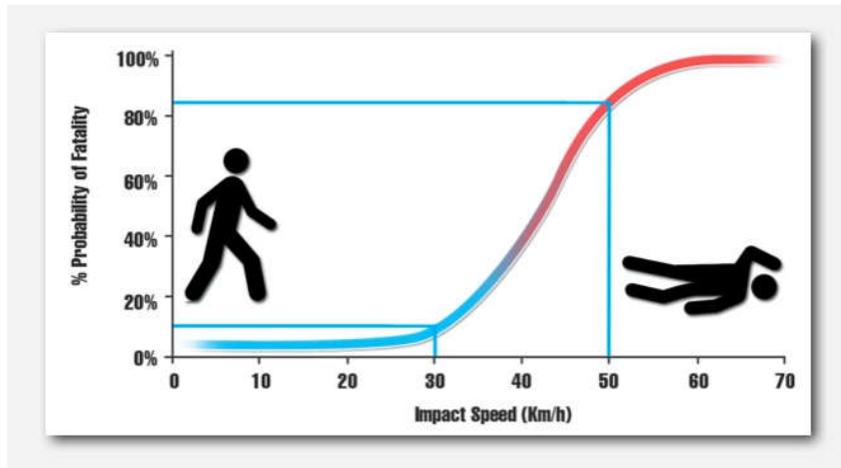
There is increasing support within planning fraternity and the broad community for urban place making similar to what West BUG is proposing. South Bank is, in fact, Queensland’s example of excellence of such place making. West BUG argues that the same forwarding thinking that development South Bank initially is the driver for our bicycle and pedestrian strategy as the basis of the Master Plan.

This Bicycling and Pedestrian Precinct approach could be achieved by:

1. Making Grey Street the main cycling route through the precinct.
2. Transforming Grey Street into a shared space for cyclists and pedestrians. General vehicle restrictions could apply to allow early morning and late evening to permit deliveries only with a low speed limit. This approach should extend to Little Stanley Street. General vehicle access to the car parks would be retained from Merivale or Cordelia Streets via Glenelg, Ernest and Tribune Streets.
3. If general through traffic is still maintained on Grey Street, protected bike lanes would improve conditions for cycling.
4. Major redesign and upgrades to the two portals to South Bank - at Vulture Street and the other at Melbourne Street.
 - a. The complex five-way intersection with Grey Street at the Vulture Street portal does not provide direct safe crossing for cyclists or pedestrians. It is common to observe people crossing informally against the lights due to long delays and confusion about the phasing of the traffic lights. Reconfiguration of the road to create a traditional four road intersection may be the best outcome for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicles.
 - b. There have been a number of fatalities at the Melbourne Street portal and the current configuration does not permit the highly desirable pedestrian crossing at grade between the Museum and the Performing Arts Complex.
5. Reclaim road space in Little Stanley Street for large scale bicycle parking/storage space.
6. New bicycle parking at destinations along Grey Street.

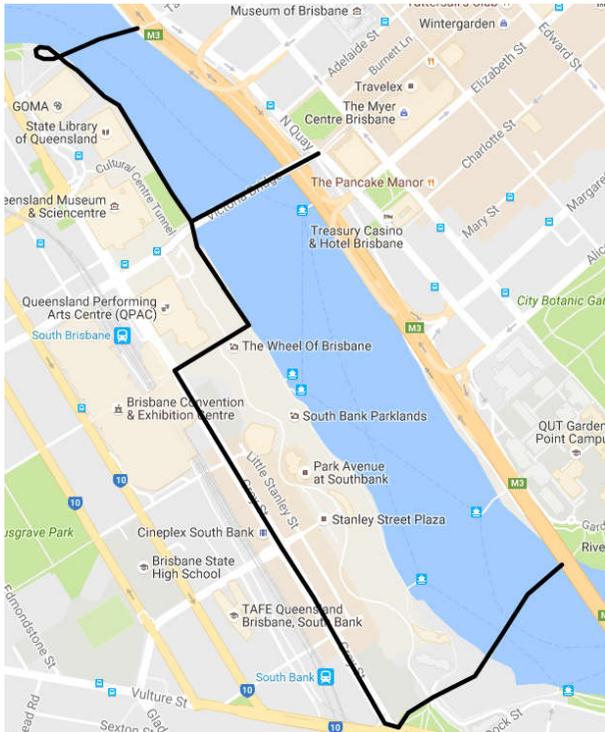
Specific pedestrian improvements could include

7. Reducing vehicle speeds on Tribune, Ernest and Glenelg Streets to 30kph or less. There is strong scientific research to support how effective this measure is to reduce pedestrian fatalities when involved in a collision with a vehicle. As per the below image, the probability of pedestrian fatality in a crash dramatically increases above impact speeds of 30km/hr.

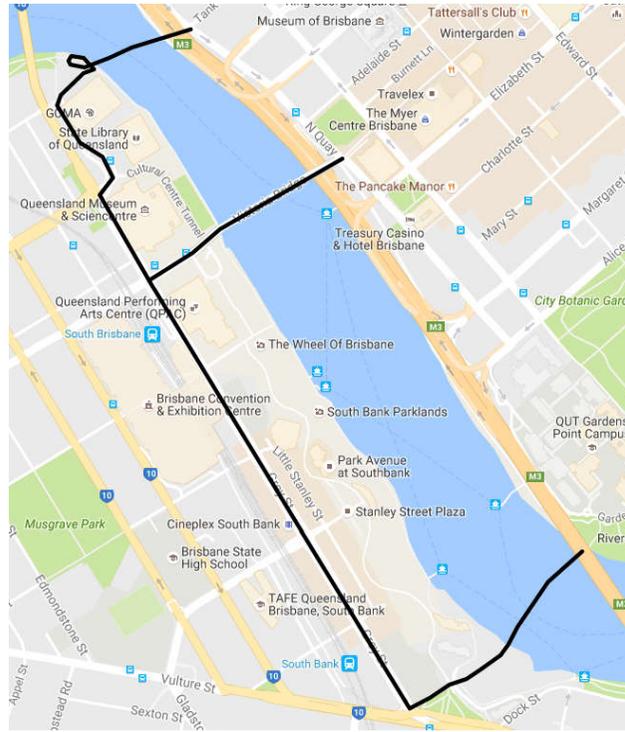


8. Restrictions placed on bicycle users accessing the boardwalk between Russell Street and Sidon Street (such as speed restrictions or exclusion during specific periods).
9. With the rerouting of bicycle traffic onto Grey Street as the new primary route, new treatments will be required to allow for the continuation of bicycle traffic between the SBCA and the Museum, Gallery of Modern Art and Kurilpa Bridge. Three possible scenarios are outlined below (refer to **ATTACHMENT 1** for a plan for each):
 - a. the BCC continuing the shared zone on Grey St up to Stanley Place and Peel Street with bike and walking infrastructure improvements on those streets
 - b. the section of Russell Street between Grey St and the Boardwalk becomes the primary cycle route, continuing north along the Boardwalk
 - c. Melbourne Street bike and pedestrian overpass
10. Converting Russell/Grey Streets, Glenelg/Grey Streets, Ernest/Grey Streets, Tribune/Grey Streets intersection to scramble intersections.
11. The link from Russell Street, West End to Grey Street was designed as dual access to the car park. Yet people are using it as a direct pedestrian link from West End to South Bank via the ground level of the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. Melbourne Street is becoming busier and busier so the need to duplicate this link will become increasingly important. It needs a re-design possibly making all vehicle exit movement left turn only. The Merivale/Russell Streets intersection should permit, as a minimum, a standard four way pedestrian grid crossing.

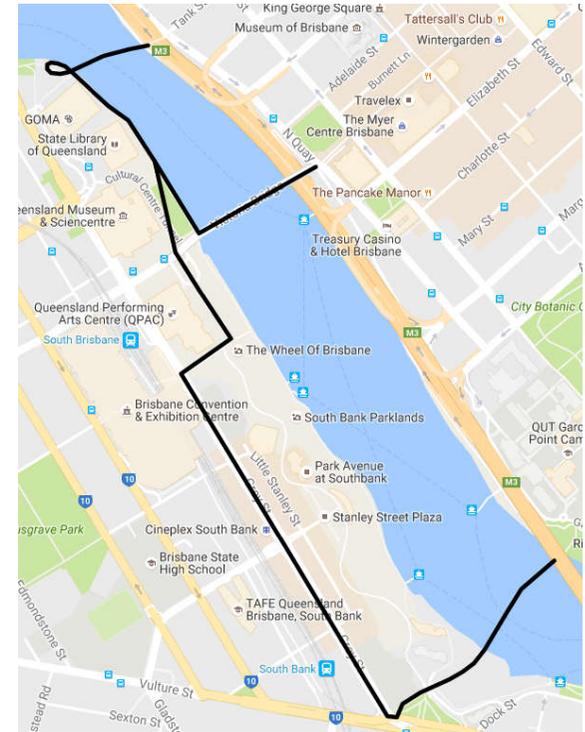
Attachment 1: Alternative primary bicycle routes through South Bank Corporation Area



Scenario 1: Grey Street, Russell Street and boardwalk



Scenario 2: Grey Street shared zone through SBCA. Primary access for Kurilpa bridge via Stanley Place/Peel Street



Scenario 3: Grey Street, Russell Street and walking and cycling overpass over Melbourne Street/Cultural Centre busway station which would connect to the boardwalk