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Sutherland Cycleway Network: Steps towards completion

SharkBike (the Bicycle NSW affiliated Bicycle User Group for Sutherland Shire) is pleased that Sutherland Council has long recognised the contribution cycling can play in improving our community's health, environment and economic well-being. Increased participation in cycling, both for recreation and as a transport option, has consistently been included as a goal in Council planning and policy documents over the past 10 years.

The Sutherland Bicycle Network when completed will provide an extensive network of on and off road paths which will make cycling in our Shire a very enjoyable activity and provide a valuable alternative to motor vehicle use for residents.

However, implementation of the plan is a huge task and some priorities need to be set in regard to its completion. As regular bike users (for a variety of purposes: recreation, commuting, general transport) we believe that SharkBike is in a very good position to suggest to council which sections of the Cycle Plan should be given priority.

The following projects taken together provide an improved connection between Sutherland, Cronulla and also to the Botany Bay cycleway which links to other parts of Sydney, and add to the recently completed work in the Menai area.

While the routes involve some on road cycling and therefore may not be suitable for unsupervised young children (who are however permitted to ride on all footpaths), they rely primarily on light trafficked roads and footpaths/shared paths and provide routes which would be very suitable for older students, families, people wishing to ride to work and those choosing to ride for "utility" trips such as shopping.

Every effort has been taken to make use of existing RTA and council facilities (to minimise the scope of work involved) and suggested routes have been based on Council's (adopted) Cycle Plan. Some modifications have been suggested, especially where adherence to the Plan would involve expensive property acquisitions and/or infrastructure provision.

These routes (Projects 1-3) connect many of the major trip generators of the Shire and are therefore a key part of the Sutherland Shire bicycle network. The recommended projects are all possible without purchase of any land or rezoning and require only minor construction works, signposting and road markings.

Project 1: Sutherland to Sylvania (Belgrave Esplanade)

<http://www.bikely.com/maps/bike-path/229586>

Trip generators: Sutherland Station, Menai cycleways, Engadine Cycleway, Council building Sutherland Entertainment Centre, Sutherland Library, Sutherland Leisure Centre, Loftus TAFE, Wollongong Uni Campus, SSHED, Cycle track, Kirrawee Brick Pit development, Gymea TAFE, Hazelhurst, Bellingara Oval, Sylvania Athletics Field, Taren Point Bridge

1. Flora Street on-road cycle lane Sutherland Station to Acacia Road. Cross at cycle lights.
2. Use RTA shared path to Princes Highway,
3. Continue shared path along Princes Highway to Kingsway (southern side) then to Sylvania Road. End shared path.
4. Bicycle stand up box at traffic lights in Sylvania Road (north/south).
5. Bicycle lanes in Sylvania Road (Kingsway to Garnet Road).
6. Bicycle lanes in Garnet Road/Bellingara Road/Box Road.
7. Intersection of Box Road/Port Hacking Road. "Bus Only, Bicycles excepted"?? Bike lights?? Shared path?? (Needs consultation and engineering suggestions.)
8. Belgrave Esplanade to Holt Road (signage required?) then to Taren Point Bridge to join Woollooware Bay Cycleway/Botany Bay Trail.

Project 2: Gymea to Miranda

<http://www.bikely.com/maps/bike-path/229588>

Trip generators: Gymea TAFE, Hazelhurst, Gymea shopping strip, Miranda centre, Westfield, Miranda medical centres, Karimbla Road Park.

1. Bicycle lanes Sylvania Road (Kingsway to President Avenue).
2. Bicycle lanes/logos Karimbla Road
3. ?? Intersection of Karimbla/Wandella Rds: (*Possibility:* Bicycles to come to centre of road, cut narrow (60cm) gap in median strip.??) (Needs consultation and engineering suggestions.)
4. *Alternative:* Bicycle logos in View St and Animbo St.
5. Left turn at Kiora Road.
6. Bicycle lane to Westfield. Signposting to bicycle parking.

Project 3: Miranda to Cronulla

<http://www.bikely.com/maps/bike-path/229589>

Trip generators: Sutherland Hospital, Taren Point business centre, Toyota Park, Caringbah centre, Caringbah/Endeavour High Schools, Cronulla CBD, Cronulla beaches, ferry to Bundeena, Woollooware Bay cycleway, Kurnell.

1. Miranda Station to Kareena Road. Bicycle lane/logos on Karimbla Road. (Improved access through traffic calming squeeze points?)
2. Signpost route round back of Big Sister Hostel (shared path through park), Broula Close, Binalong, Taren Rd South.

3. Access ramp to DOH (shared) path beside rail corridor. (Widen path? Trim foliage?)
4. Signpost route through car park, left up walkway ("Cyclists dismount"?) to ped crossing (provide bicycle lights?).
5. Caringbah Station to Gannons Road. "Cyclists dismount to Denman Avenue" (signposting, avoid conflict with pedestrians)
6. Shared path Denman Avenue (south side) to Gannons Road. (Signpost at Cawarra Road "to Taren Point")
7. *Alternative:* Bicycle lanes Denman Avenue (both sides)
8. Bicycle lanes Denman Avenue (both sides) to Franklin Road
9. Left, right through to Phillip Street (signposting, access ramp required)
10. Right, left to Burke Road.
11. Right at roundabout to Dunningham Park.
12. (Return route to avoid Burke Road uphill: Croydon Road: signage indicating bicycle route to Sutherland)

Project 4: Bicycle Parking

Lack of parking facilities can be a deterrent to repeated cycling. There are a number of places in the Shire that require more/more obvious/more appropriate parking. Parking should always be placed in highly visible, accessible locations as close as possible to destinations. Where parking is provided its existence should be highlighted so that not only current cyclists, but also prospective cyclists are aware of it. If possible parking should be well lit and protected from rain.

- *Sutherland Entertainment Centre*
- *Hazelhurst* (the small old fashioned rack provided is inappropriate and badly located. It should be replaced for use by studio patrons and an additional rack provided near the coffee shop).
- *Westfield*. Easily accessible and obvious bicycle parking should be provided. If parking cannot be easily seen then it should be clearly signposted.
- *Supermarkets* (Franklins, Supabarn @ Sutherland, Supabarn @ Gymea, Woolworths, Coles @ Caringbah, etc.)
- *Sutherland Hospital*. Secure parking for staff. Clearly visible, easily accessible parking for others.
- *Council leisure centres* (Sutherland, Caringbah, Engadine).
- *All council facilities* (libraries, swimming pools, playing fields) etc. should be audited and further/updated bicycle parking provided where the current provision is inadequate.
- Requirements for provision of bicycle parking should be included in all major DAs.

Project 5: Bicycle Signage

Signposting is a very effective way of encouraging increased cycling. It raises awareness of bicycles as a possible alternative form of cycling.

One of the biggest deterrents to increased cycling is lack of confidence. Signposting of low stress (both in terms of traffic flow and topography) routes can help to increase riders' confidence. This can be achieved in a number of ways: small low cost signs on telegraph poles indicating the preferred streets to be used; direction signage indicating "Cronulla", "Botany Bay", etc.; bicycle logos painted on roadways can be subtle pointers as to which way to go. On busier roads, signs advising cars to "Watch for Bicycles" can be helpful.

Consideration could be given to reduction of speed limits along the cycle routes. (This is happening in a number of towns and cities in the UK, for example – Newcastle has recently reduced its local road speed limit to 30kph.)

Where appropriate, especially where routes need to go through more heavily trafficked areas, "green lanes" can draw attention to that part of the roadway that is recommended for use by cyclists.

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Subsequent projects which could be considered are Sutherland to Engadine and Sutherland to Como (providing access to Mortdale, Hurstville, etc.)

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Providing clearly marked low stress routes between Sutherland and Cronulla (and linking to the existing routes in the Menai area) will provide a valuable "skeleton" on which to hang future works.



Life's better on a bike!

