

**Making Cycling Better  
in Northern Sydney**

Mr Steven Head  
The General Manager  
Hornsby Shire Council  
PO Box 37  
Hornsby NSW 1630

22 December, 2020

Dear Steven,

Members of Bike North residing and using the roads in Hornsby Shire have in recent weeks had the opportunity to examine the documentation relating to Hornsby Shire Council's proposed Pennant Hills to Epping - Shared Footpath and Cycleway - Route B (Beecroft to Cheltenham).

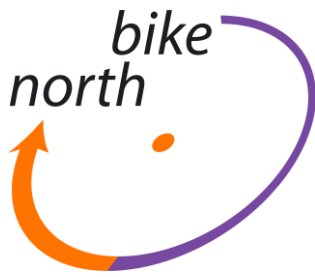
As a result of that examination we support Council's preferred route options of BC1 (through Beecroft Village Green) and BC1A (off-road along the northern/railway side of The Crescent) as suggested in the GTA Consultants' report to Council and we submit the following reasons for our support:-

- the gradients involved through Beecroft Village Green and along the designated section of The Crescent are 'manageable' by the greatest number of users;
- the widths of the paths and materials to be used in their construction are appropriate;
- the pathways are safely separated from motor vehicle traffic;
- the measures that have been taken to eliminate or minimise the pathway's impacts on local flora are credible and demonstrate a high level of concern by Council officers and consultants alike for the preservation of significant established trees. Bike North notes that these measures include the use of 'Filtapave' flexible surfaces and raised grated pathways to avoid damage to exposed tree root areas;

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Bike North  
(02) 8188 2084  
info@bikenorth.org.au  
PO Box 719 GLADESVILLE NSW 1675

[bikenorth.org.au](http://bikenorth.org.au)



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- Council's preferred options succeed in connecting two strategic centres (Beecroft and Cheltenham Railway stations) in accordance with the Transport for NSW criteria for a Principal Bicycle Network (PBN) Tier 1 route;
- for the future, the project does appear to tie in successfully with the proposed Routes A and C of the overall Pennant Hills to Epping Cycleway.

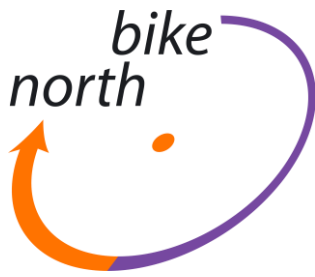
Bike North does however have concerns about the Beecroft to Cheltenham Route B component of the Cycleway in relation to its funding.

It was always going to be a challenge to make the original 2018 State Government \$5.1 million grant cover the entire cost of building the Epping to Pennant Hills Cycleway. But how much more of that Cycleway could have been built if the cost (reportedly \$4.5 Million) of the Cheltenham to Beecroft Route B was only being expended on cycleway construction exclusive of 'associated' kerbing and guttering costs ?

Bike North understands the design integration logic of installing kerbing and guttering on the northern side of The Crescent at the same time as the SUP but shouldn't the cost of that kerbing and guttering come out of the Council's normal kerbing and guttering budget and not from a precious State Government grant intended for the improvement of Hornsby Shire's active transport infrastructure ?

It may be a long time before more such grants are made to Hornsby Shire to complete the overall project. If a substantial portion of the original shared Footpath and Cycleway funding is being diverted to Council's ongoing kerb and guttering construction program it will prolong the period during which the usefulness of its Route B stage will be less than optimal. Bike North would like to see the best quality AND quantity outcome achieved from cycling infrastructure expenditure.

Furthermore, the poster map of the Beecroft to Cheltenham Route B project published in the Council's website contains in its top right hand corner a drawing of a 'typical section of The Crescent' on the southern side of which future kerbing and



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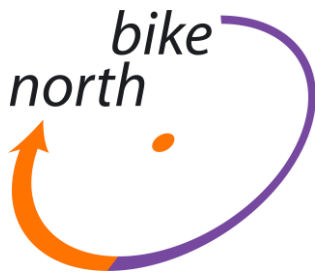
guttering work is displayed. Can Council give an assurance that no cycleway grant money will be used to fund this work as well?

Another concern that Bike North has about the Cycleway project overall relates to its intended users in certain areas. Earlier in this submission, reference was made to the criteria that Transport for NSW applies to the analysis of a corridor proposed for a Tier 1 Principal Bicycle Network (PBN) route. It has been noted that those criteria include the idea that such a route should be “fully separated from pedestrians and motor vehicles wherever possible”.

While it is acknowledged that at every stage the Pennant Hills to Epping Cycleway has been described as a ‘shared footpath and cycleway’ and not exclusively as a cycleway, it has to be conceded that ‘shared user paths’ are always a compromise in terms of safety, especially where they pass through high pedestrian areas or parks used by people of all ages and stages of mobility. As such, they do not appear to fully meet the criteria for a PBN Tier 1 cycleway. However, Bike North also acknowledges that treating this project as a shared footpath and cycleway is likely to gain greater community support (and funding for the future) and what is being proposed between Beecroft and Cheltenham is better than any ‘on-road’ or steeper alternative.

Nevertheless, the part of the Cheltenham to Beecroft Route B stage of the Cycleway project that involves an enhancement to an existing pedestrian pathway in Beecroft Village Green is an example of how a shared user path could easily become a contested area as different users such as children, mobility scooter users and adult walkers come into conflict with seasoned bicycle commuters seeking to transit the park at a quicker pace on much longer journeys.

Bike North members who attended the community consultation sessions became aware of this potential hazard from concerns expressed by local residents familiar with the scope of local usage of the Beecroft Village Green. The solution to this problem might be something as simple as erecting some signage but the temptation to deploy physical devices such as speed humps and/or bollards should



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be resisted at all costs as these solutions have been proven time and time again not only to be dangerous but costly if court action ensues.

Bike North appreciates the opportunity to comment on Hornsby Shire Council's proposed Beecroft to Cheltenham shared path project and looks forward to providing any further feedback or advice to Council on it. Should you wish to contact Bike North further about any of the issues raised in this letter please do so through Justin Holmwood via his mobile phone 0417 654 076 or his email address [jplholmwood@bigpond.com](mailto:jplholmwood@bigpond.com) as he is our contact officer in the Hornsby area.

Yours faithfully,

Phillip Hart  
President  
BIKE NORTH

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