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Cycling for the Environment, for Health, for Pleasure

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What we want to see in a state bicycle strategy

What we want to see…. in brief

A target for increasing the amount of cycling

- Doubling the percentage of South Australians who cycled in the previous month from 2013 to 2023.

A commitment to spending more money on cycling

- 2% of the transport budget and 5% of any major project budget should be spent on cycling

Safer roads

- 40kph speed limits for residential streets and main street zones within the outer ring route.
- 50kph speed limit on arterial roads within the outer ring route
- 40kph speed limit in the CBD
- Variable speed signs to lower speed limits when roads are congested.

Transport infrastructure that caters for cyclists

- Strong bike lanes on all arterial roads
- Allowing the use of cycling on footpaths, especially when there is no bike lane
- Progressive replacement of part time bike lanes with permanent bike lanes.
- Enforcement regulations requirement parking to be at least 10m from intersections
- Better maintenance of facilities though and getting rid of the excuse of nonfeasance for roadways.
- Bike lanes that reach intersections
- Safe road crossings of arterial roads on all bike direct routes

A bigger bike network

- The Greenways program completed by 2020
- The bicycle boulevard concept extended by creating 12 evenly-spaced radial bike boulevards within the outer ring route to access the city.
- Safe cycling routes within 5km of all "super" high schools.

Cycling integrated with public transport

- more conveniently located bicycle parking
- free carriage of bicycles on trains in peak periods in the contra-flow direction
- trialling of bicycles on buses, via racks or luggage trailer, with priority routes being to the Interchanges and to the Adelaide Hills

Improved driver behaviour

- Better training for learner drivers
- a minimum one metre passing distance, with 1.5m in 60kph or more zones

Better decision-making

- a joint local/ state body to promote innovation in the provision of bicycle infrastructure

Better promotion of cycling

- a fully-funded signage/wayfinding strategy for all cycle ways (bike boulevards, veloways and shared use paths)

Better land use planning

- A state government guide to promote sustainable transport, including templates that can be easily dropped into council development plans
- Developers encouraged to provide/ upgrade residential streets that welcome pedestrians, cyclists and children at play

Introduction

The State Government is preparing a bicycle plan to replace Safety in Numbers, which expired in 2010. We outline below what we want to see in such a strategy, in terms of safe streets, a more extensive bike network, better driver behaviour and other matters. But more than this, we want to see a new approach to cycling taken by the state government.

An environment that encourages high levels of bicycle use means more than just flat terrain with good weather. It requires a whole range of interconnected factors to be in place and strengthen each other, starting with the leadership and impact of a local politician, the competence and commitment of his/her staff, through to the construction of a high quality cycling/ cycling-friendly infrastructure.

This degree of interconnectedness is greater than has been apparent in our planning for cycling so far in this state – and in Australia in general.

Our approach to date follows the "four Es" approach (education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering) creating a static plan of what is required during the term of the plan. But this addresses only some of the issues.

A better model, developed through an EU project to identify the most effective ways to achieve cycle uptake, is based on three major arenas for action with a total of nine subject areas that dynamically interact over the course of the planning document:

- Monitoring: evaluation and effects
- Leadership: capturing user needs; leadership and coordination; policy on paper; means and personnel
- Actions: infrastructure and safety; information and education; promotion and partnerships; complementary actions.

We would like to see this more extensive and holistic model adopted in the new bicycle strategy for the state, and we would be happy to take part in (or even facilitate) a process to identify how to best move forward on the basis of such a model. The model should also be user-centric rather than framed around bureaucratic priorities and ideology.

Within this context, the following is the agenda for the next 10 years. It is not our ideal, but points to matters that haven't been well addressed so far.

A target to aim at

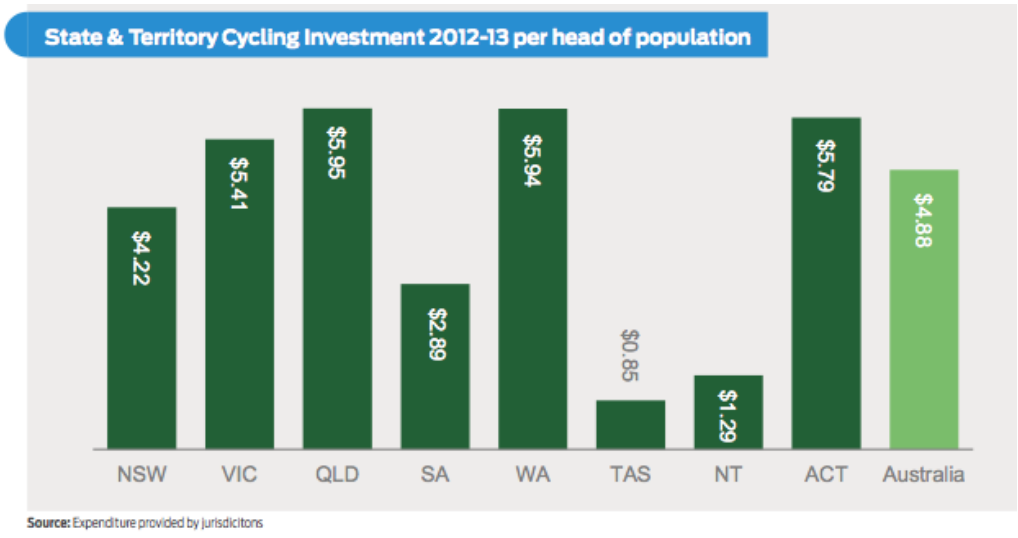
Strategies are measured by the amount of resources used, what is done with those resources, and what are the outcomes achieved. Arguably the last of these is most important, though we accept that matters like how much cycling is done will depend on a lot of matters outside the bike strategy.

But most of these matters, such as the density of development and the ease of driving and parking, are matters that are also subject to influence by the state government. It's no good having money spent on promoting cycling being undermined by policies that encourage car use.

For this reason a target to aim at is important. *The State Government should aim to double the amount of cycling undertaken by South Australians from 2013 to 2023.* We use 2013 as the base year because this is the date of the most recent Australian cycling participation survey. It showed South Australia as having the smallest proportion of residents who cycled in the past month and past year. In that survey only 20% of South Australians cycled in the previous month. By 2023 the figure should be 40%.

More money to promote more and safer cycling

A report commissioned by the Australian Bicycle Council reveals that the SA government spends less per capita than any other mainland state.



Given that the State Government has a goal of increasing cycling but no goal of increasing car use, you would think that it would make sense to spend a greater share of the budget than the current share of trips. But in South Australia we spend much less.

Bringing us up to par with the other States should be a bare minimum. That would increase expenditure from $4.8m to $8.1m. This would still be only 0.6% of the money spent in 2012-13 on transport operations and new transport

projects, compared with cycling's current 1.3% share of South Australia's commuting trips as measured in the latest census.

The government should spend at least 2% of its transport budget on cycling.

This includes increasing employment of knowledgeable and committed staff. Currently, within the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, there are about four people out of over total 3,300 who area tasked with progressing the cycling agenda.

Huge amounts of money are spent on major projects, such as turning South Road into an urban freeway. The goals of such projects are always to increase the capacity for and speed of motorised traffic. Non-motorised modes are almost inevitably marginalised, even if it is recognised early on that the project will have a major impact on local accessibility or includes an opportunity to significantly improve cycling infrastructure. (The converse is not true: major cycling projects such as bicycle boulevards involve 'balancing' cycling aims with traffic priorities).

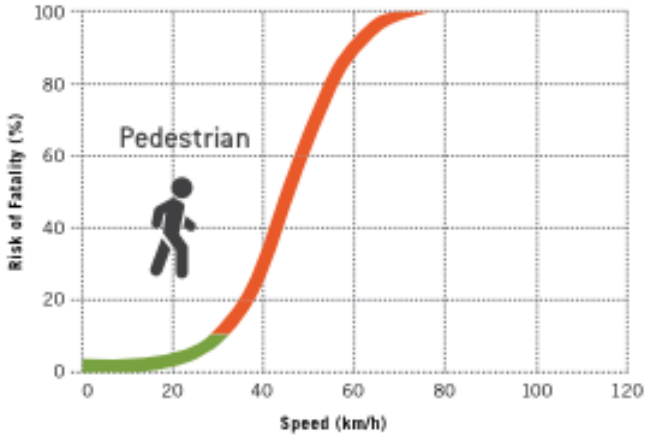
To assist in re-balancing this, *5% of the any new project should be quarantined for cycling or shared use facilities*. This reduces the problem of cycling/ shared use facilities — the lowest-priority element of the project — being the first to be removed or designed to the lowest standard allowable. 5% is proposed as the cycling network is not mature and therefore requires higher levels of investment than the road network.

Make our roads safer

Lower speeds on residential streets

We know that lowering speed limits on residential streets is politically sensitive before it is done. But the reality is that the actual impact on the time taken to drive from home to the arterial network under different speed limits is negligible, typically a few seconds. It's only the rat runners speeding through whole suburbs who would really be affected if speeds limits were lowered.

However the impact of different speeds for crashes is dramatic. This graphic, from the state government's road safety strategy, shows that the government knows that the chances of a child being killed if hit by a car travelling at 50kph is twice that of being hit at 40kph and **six times** that at 30kph.



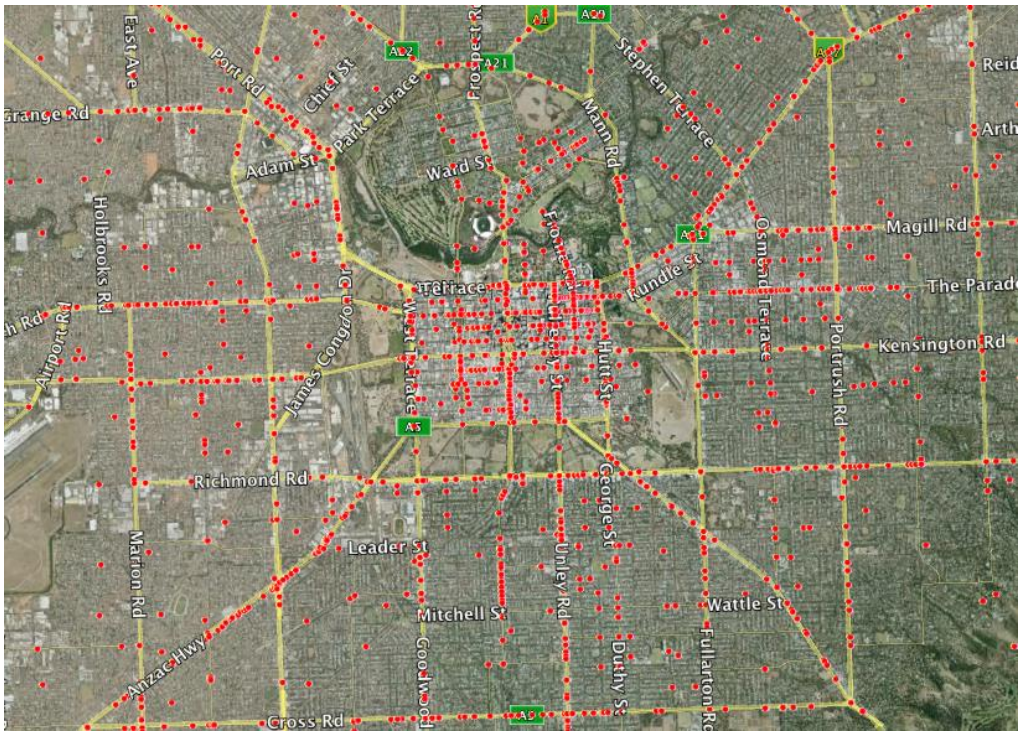
The Bicycle Institute believes that eventually Adelaide will have 30km/h, 50km/h and 70km/h as the typical speed limits. Our residential streets should no longer be just the domain of the car. Speeds of 30km/h or less on residential streets will be necessary before parents are comfortable with their children walking unsupervised along streets. It is also the speed that would entice many more people onto their bicycle, to take advantage of the plentiful number of routes that don't need to use busy arterial roads to access most destinations.

However, the Bicycle Institute also recognizes the current political climate will not be changed quickly and accepts that it will take a number of years before 30km/h is regarded as the appropriate speed limit on our residential streets.

In the meantime, *the bicycle strategy should indicate measures to support a reduction of current residential speed limits*, instead of creating a barrier by requiring 'super majorities' of residential support before a council is allowed to lower residential speed limits, as has happened recently in the case of Norwood Payneham and St Peters council. It should also promote longer term redesign of our residential streets using the principles of the Streets for People guide.

Lower speeds in the city

A glance at a crash map of cyclists from 2009 to 2013 indicates just how many crashes occur in the city centre. Probably a map of crashes involving pedestrians would be even more concentrated in the CBD.



This is not because city streets are inherently dangerous. It's because there are a simply so many more pedestrians and cyclists interacting with cars.

There should be a blanket 40km/h speed limit in the square mile at least. Once again, it's only the drivers passing through the city who would notice, and that's only when traffic volumes are low.

Make arterial roads safer

The map above also makes it glaringly obvious how many crashes occur on our arterial roads (the yellow ones on the map).

One obvious way to make our arterial roads safer would be to lower speeds. We realize that this is sensitive, and that the government is keen to maintain the ability to move quickly about the metropolitan area. But in the trade-off between speed and safety, we believe that a *general 50km/h speed limit is justified on arterial roads inside the Portrush Road/Grand Junction Road/ South Road, Cross Road ring route and 40km/h on main street zones within this area*. Lower speed limits in the main street zones would not only improve safety where it is most needed, but also calm traffic, making shops, restaurants and cafes more attractive and economically viable.

Variable speed limits using LED signage, with a maximum 40km/h speed limit during peak hours should be considered on a case-by-case basis, with the intention being to make crossing arterial roads safer. In congested conditions, road capacity is actually greater at lower speeds. This would discourage rat running on local streets and ease frustration by making the traffic flow better. The argument against this — being that speed limit consistency is desirable on arterial roads — is nonsensical when the design of these arterial roads varies so much that they are not intuitive in any case.

There are still arterial roads where the kerb distances create 'one and a half' traffic lanes in each direction (e.g. Fullarton Road past Norwood). This creates jostling traffic and dangerous conditions for cyclists. These should be changed to one lane only, plus a bike lane.

The Bicycle Institute recognises that there are some parts of the arterial road network where protected bike lanes cannot be provided without taking away a traffic lane. Where this is the case, and the removal of a traffic lane is considered an unacceptable reduction of traffic capacity, *cyclists should be allowed to use the footpath, with carefully designed ramps to allow safe access on to and off the path*. (The following photo is of a German example of this.)

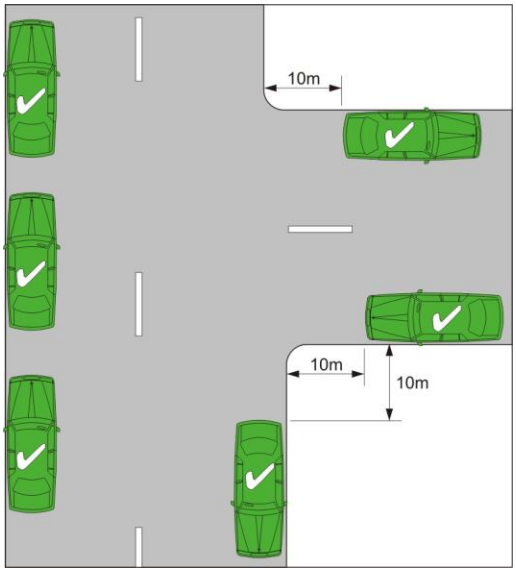
While pedestrian actuated crossings provide safe crossing points of arterial roads, these are not aligned with side streets, creating difficulty of access. Allowing cyclists to use footpaths would help to address this. Also, since parking is banned on the approach and departure to the pedestrian crossing and within 10m of side streets, bicycle lanes are often possible between the crossing and the side street, and should be provided.

Perhaps the most dangerous feature of our arterial roads for cyclists is the way they have to abandon the bike lane and swing out into the traffic to pass the occasional parked car. *The Bicycle Institute calls on the government to progressively replace all part-time bike lanes on arterial roads with full time bike lanes. These should be protected with more than just paint:* buffering, vibra-line, riley kerb, back-to-back kerbing, etc should all be considered.

We are aware this may well be contentious. We note that in some locations, few cars use the part-time bike lanes for on-street parking, but these few cars compromise the lane full-time. The Bicycle Institute would be prepared to accept trialling 'permit vehicles excepted' as an interim solution if this ameliorates resident concerns (residents would be given resident permits), on the basis that it is often the occasional need of the resident that is the loudest voice against full-time bike lanes in residential areas, but it is often not the resident whose parking causes the greatest issues. This would also raise awareness with residents, hopefully leading to longer-term acceptance.

Enforce existing regulations regarding parking at street corners

More than ten years ago the state governments adopted Australian Road Rules specifying that vehicles are not permitted to park less than 10m from a street intersection. This was an increase over the previous standard of most states of 6m and 9m and was adopted as a safety measure, as parked cars obstruct the view of motorists (and others) trying to join or cross the road. Cyclists might add that they force motorists to pull out from side streets and stand over the bike lane so they can see on-coming traffic.



From Australian Road Rules, Reg. 170.

When the new Australian Road Rules were brought in, the State government allowed local councils a phasing in period before all the signs were changed, on the basis of hardship provisions. However, there are still plenty of cases where cars are allowed to park closer than 10m, even on busy locations such as Greenhill Road at Unley. Councils should be told that they've had long enough to adjust and be given until 1 January 2016 (or a six month period from adoption of the new bicycle strategy) to comply with the regulations, after which DPTI will start fining councils whose parking is in contravention with this rule.

Ensure all bike lanes reach intersections

How often do we complain that the bike lanes run out just when we need them? Traffic engineers have created more traffic lanes at the intersections than between the intersections, in order to provide more traffic capacity — that is, more traffic. This has almost become the default position — the new bike lane in Beulah Road stops short of Fullarton Road for no obvious reason. The strategy needs to claw this back, as well as to cater for cyclists by providing more "bike boxes" at the head of the lane, and — for busy intersections with lots of turning movements — bike lanes across the intersection.

Ensure safe road crossings of arterial roads on all Bike Direct routes.

Adelaide's grid network, with several quiet streets running parallel to and between the arterial roads, is perhaps the city's best feature for cycling. There are plenty of flat cities, but not many so well laid out for cycling.

However the arterial roads are the big barriers to cyclists wanting to use the quiet streets. The strategy should focus efforts on building safe crossings that don't need big detours. Where pedestrian actuated crossings are used, they should be linked to Bike Direct streets by footpaths that cyclists can use. Where possible, these crossing points should be designed to hold multiple bikes, cargo bikes, kids in trailers etc.

Encourage better maintenance

In 2001 the High Court ruled that State and local governments could not use as an excuse that they didn't know about dangerous conditions. All other states responded by imposing a risk management approach to maintenance. South Australia simply legislated to restore the old conditions, indefinitely. *We should be joining the rest of Australia and getting rid of the excuse of nonfeasance for its roadways*.

Extend the bike network

Complete the Greenways program by 2020

The concept of greenways was an idea championed by BISA over a decade ago. The government took up the idea and they are now a key reason why cycling has been increasing year by year. The Gawler, Tonsley and Grange greenways should all be completed by 2020, working from the city outward, but also prioritising sections serving education centres.

Another priority would be the Gawler Greenway, as this would provide an excellent tourism facility linking the city with the Barossa Valley bike route and the Mawson trail to Clare and beyond.

This highlights another short-coming of the state's approach to date, being that a metropolitan cycling network is defined, leaving opportunities in regional areas orphaned. We understand that a fine-grained network of the same types as for metropolitan Adelaide may not be supportable, but strategic routes that function as local access, regional access and for tourism further position Adelaide as cycle-friendly and help develop a cycling culture.

In addition to greenways corridors that have already been identified, other opportunities for greenways exist. Notable examples in the western suburbs are Keswick Creek and Brownhill Creek and we would like to see development of (at least) 3.0m wide shared use paths included in the SA Water upgrades, if and when these occur. (This could be facilitated by creating the new culvert at one side of the reserve instead of centrally, as has been proposed.) In the eastern suburbs, Third, Fourth and Fifth Creeks present slightly different opportunities as major feeders into the River Torrens Linear Path.

Extend the bicycle boulevard concept

Adelaide's grid road network creates ideal conditions for bicycle boulevards — local streets where careful road closures and street design creates slow speeds and low traffic levels to encourage cycling. Two of these have been formally adopted by the government planning (Braund Road and Beulah Road), and "quasi" bike boulevards already exist (e.g. Porter Street in Unley).

This concept should be built on by creating 12 evenly-spaced radial bike boulevards within the outer ring route to access the city. They should be complemented by a bike path around the outer edge of the Park Lands.

Provide safe cycling routes within 5km to access all "super" high schools.

The state government is progressively relocating students into fewer, bigger and more distant "super" schools. This will further discourage walking and cycling to school, and encourage being driven or driving to school. Traffic will get worse as a result of this policy. To mitigate this, *the bike strategy needs to pay special attention to the needs of students who still want to walk and cycle to school, working with schools and local councils to identify the best routes and make them safer*.

Integrate cycling as part of multi-modal trips

Apart from providing conveniently located bicycle parking, *bicycles should be allowed free on trains in peak periods in the contra-flow direction.* We understand that capacity is a constraint in peak periods, but significant capacity exists in the contra-flow direction (from the CBD in the AM peak; to the CBD in the PM peak). The state government should be encouraging use of this capacity. Charging for bikes as well as a passenger fare only discourages cyclist use.

The carriage of bicycles carriage on buses, via racks or luggage trailer, should be trialled, with priority routes being to the Interchanges. Hobart's Mount Wellington service has proven popular with tourists and can also service locals. A similar service to Mount Lofty could jump-start cycling for Hills residents.

Improve driver behaviour

Better training for learner drivers

It is apparent from media discussion that many drivers are not aware of cyclists' rights, nor how to deal with cyclists on the street. *These matters should feature in driver training courses*.

For example, a simple feature would be to teach drivers to open their door with their left hand, so that they turn to look behind before opening a door. This could be ingrained in new drivers and followed up with a campaign to target existing drivers.

Introduce a minimum one metre passing distance, with 1.5m in 60kph or more zones

BISA welcomes the announcement from the Premier that legislation will be introduced to provide minimum passing distances. All too often motorists drive too close to cyclists, often without realizing how close they are. There are now many jurisdictions around the world that have minimum distances for passing cyclists. These jurisdictions have noted that such rules are difficult to enforce, but not so difficult as the current situation in South Australia, where there is no guide to a safe distance. We can learn from the experience elsewhere.

Other

Establish a joint local/ state body to promote innovation in the provision of bicycle infrastructure

South Australia has been falling behind other states — let alone northern Europe — in the adoption of new ways to cater for cyclists. Almost all local council engineers are unwilling to be innovative without the support of the state government, and often they cannot be innovative without the state government's approval. *We need some sort of mechanism to promote innovation; a panel to identify innovations in place elsewhere, design the trialling of them in South Australia and to disseminate the results of the trials.*

If created as an 'expert centre', this could enhance South Australia's exposure to the education market. Currently, no Australian universities are positioned in this space, despite the growing interest in cycling Australia-wide. (The University of Adelaide is undertaking research in this area, which could form a basis for claiming the space.) This body could also provide badly needed training of planning and engineering professionals.

Establish a fully-funded signage/ wayfinding strategy for all cycle ways (bike boulevards, veloways and shared use paths)

Our state provides very little encouragement of cycling in the form of signage that points out to people how they can get about by bike. Most regular bike riders will use bike facilities in their local area that they know about, but will — reluctantly — take to arterial roads in areas they don't know. This is simply because they don't know of the facility's existence, or where it goes to, or whether it's going to be continuous. The strategy should include wayfinding signage covering the whole metropolitan area, with 'logo'-style signage of longer-distance destinations such as Mt Lofty, McLaren Vale and the Barossa.

Cyclist (and pedestrian) wayfinding in Germany

Land use planning that supports sustainable transport

Town planners can encourage cycling through the requirements that they put into the council development plans. Matters such as secure parking for staff of

businesses and residents in apartment blocks, showers and lockers, how much customer bike parking is provided (and where), protection of cyclists routes, design standards for driveways to minimize conflicts, etc. can all be specified in the development plan.

But at the moment the degree to which development plans promote cycling varies widely. Councils may have strategic plans that encourage cycling, but they don't have the resources to translate their objectives into practice. *A state government guide, including templates that can be easily dropped into the development plan, would make this much easier*.

More broadly, subdivision and precinct planning currently starts by designating roadways, then designs bicycle facilities at the end of the planning process. This gives rise to the same difficulties as retro-fitting into existing neighbourhoods and is a backwards approach to creating cyclable communities.

The Bicycle Institute has pointed out to *Think, Design, Deliver* reform team that local streets are the public realm residents use and experience on the most frequent basis. They are a major public asset, often in the same built-up areas where achieving new public open space is difficult.

The planning process should encourage developers to provide/ upgrade streets to welcome pedestrians, cyclists and children at play e.g. by allowing developers to claim the space created as part of their public open space requirements.

We also want to see appropriate design guidance developed for local streets having a more balanced function, as occurs overseas. We would welcome the opportunity to contribute to this process.

Again, an 'expert centre' could a basis for such initiatives and provide training to planning professionals in the interpretation of such guidelines.