



Better by Bicycle

Safer, sustainable streets for Port Macquarie

Better By Bicycle Port Macquarie Submission on the Draft PMHC City Heart Master Plan

December 2025

General Comments

We commend the council for engaging in the process of master-plan development. This submission relates particularly to bicycling within the central precincts addressed in the master plan. Our lack of comment on other aspects of the plan should not be taken as support or acceptance of those other aspects.

Yet again, we are encouraged by council's recognition of the importance of facilitating walking, cycling, and mobility scooter use within and between our central precincts. We share the vision expressed in this document of improved connection "by strengthening safe, convenient, and welcoming routes for walking, cycling, and public transport". We recognise that this is a document to guide development into the long term and, as such is broad, visionary and not meant to focus on the details of that development. Much of what we would recommend is stated or hinted at in the draft, in broad statements and maps without detailed explanation. To be more than aspirational, though, we would like to see more detail added to guidelines that will facilitate the establishment of a safe, comprehensive and integrated network of active and public transport. As the city centre grows in density, as envisioned, then "liveability" will depend greatly upon the management of motorised traffic and enabling of human movement in a healthy and stress-free manner.

Some of the below recommendations have already been made in our submission to your Walking and Cycling Review but bear repeating as guiding principles; others are of broader perspective.



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Traffic Management

We believe that passenger and goods vehicles will need to access the city centre with as little stress and interruption as possible, while allowing space for safe “active transport” within these precincts. To maintain that access and flow:

1. Traffic should be enabled to cross the city without need to transit these central precincts
2. Alternatives to car use within the centre should be facilitated wherever possible to reduce traffic pressure.
3. In particular, development should be guided by the need for a convenient and efficient system of public transport, with “park-and-ride”, express corridors accessing a central interchange, and further shuttles bringing drivers from peripheral car parks into the centre. We would like to see such corridors, exchanges and connections specified.
4. We would like to see a clear policy for parking on streets in these precincts and plans for peripheral carparks. We support the recommendations in the document for basement parking in new developments.
5. Major pieces of infrastructure such as public transport exchanges and car parks are missing and need to be added to this plan as they are the foundation and framework around which human movement, including cycling, will be structured. They would be difficult to retro-fit once development progresses.
6. To re-allocate street-space for public spaces and for safe walking and cycling, traffic and parking lanes will need to be reduced. Every effort should be made to establish a system of one-way circuits within the centre. We would like to see future traffic flow mapping as part of the plan.
7. Lower speed limits in the city, 30 km/hr on most streets and 50 km/hr on central arteries, will allow cyclists and pedestrians to justifiably feel safer, further easing residents’ use of cars and, hence, traffic congestion.



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Integrated Cycling Network

Good design principles for a cycling network are implied in the document but not spelt out. Principles should include that:

1. Not all cyclists have the same needs.
2. Commuting and sporting: segregated cycleways and cycle lanes, without the dangers of parked cars and with minimal interruption, will encourage bicycle access to the centre and minimise traffic congestion. Traffic lights and other crossings need to be cyclist friendly and infrastructure, such as traffic-calming or pedestrian islands, should be designed so as to avoid gathering debris or pushing cyclists into traffic. To be fully utilised, these access arteries need to link to those in the suburbs without interruption by unsafe stretches, however short.
3. Short-journey, school journey and family friendly: paths shared with pedestrians, scooters, dog-walkers etc are appropriate. These need to be wide enough to accommodate passing modalities, well maintained and separated from faster traffic. Again, uninterrupted connection with the suburban network is vital for public utilisation.
4. All paths and crossings need to be well signposted and regularly cleaned, particularly of metal and glass debris that will cause punctures or worse.
5. While recognising that there is a Port Macquarie Walking and Cycling Plan, we would like to see these cycle routes and their suburban and satellite community connections more clearly specified within this master plan.