

21 December 2011

### Lockerbie PSP

#### Submission for the GAA draft Precinct Structure Plans open for public comment

Bicycle Network Victoria supports the provision of cycling networks in new suburban developments and welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the draft Precinct Structure Plan process.

Bicycle Network Victoria is currently working on a three year project funded by VicHealth investigating how to overcome the low cycling rates in outer suburbs.

A key aspect of this, and a focus of the project, is the lack of consistent and appropriate planning and provision for cyclists of all ages and abilities. This has led to poor provision for potential cyclists who do not have the basic infrastructure to use their bikes for the many transport and recreational journeys/trips that can easily be done by bike. People are dependent on the car rather than having it as one of the travel options available to them. Travel and activity data from existing suburbs show that most trips to schools, friends and shops are within 1-6km – an easy distance to cycle. Trips to work and tertiary education tend to be much longer and rely upon good connections to public transport and places to leave a bicycle securely for the day.

Key deficiencies we have observed in existing suburbs are:

- Schools are not well connected to the wider path network with children expected to ride on busy connector streets with motor vehicles;
- train stations and other public transport hubs not connected to the cycle network;
- arterial roads above 60k/h with on-road bike lanes that only suit a small percentage of the population;
- lack of bicycle paths along rail reserves which would provide connections to stations for many people;
- widely spaced crossings of major barriers such as freeways and railways that mean long detours for bicycle trips; and
- a general deficiency of cycling infrastructure leading to a piecemeal, unconnected series of lane and paths that are not used (a bit like an incomplete water supply network made of a series of unconnected pipes that is expected to provide people with drinking water).

The project has developed a draft Planning Checklist for Cycling that aims to prevent these deficiencies and allow a quick assessment of whether the basic requirements for cycling have been met in development proposals. The Checklist covers the three basic criteria of:

- **Connectivity** (is it physically possible to ride to key destinations?);
- **Permeability** (encompassing directness and choice of routes –is cycling an attractive choice); and
- **Quality/Appropriateness** (does the cycling facility suit the people using it and the trip purpose?).

At **Precinct Structure Plan** level the checklist seeks to establish a finer grained network that allows access to local destinations as well as connections to surrounding areas. At PSP level there is an increased focus on the permeability and appropriateness of the bicycle network routes. Connector streets are usually shown at this level and many key destinations such as schools, community centres and Local Town Centres will be located on these streets.

Using the Planning Checklist for Cycling as an evaluation tool, Bicycle Network Victoria offers the following suggestions for the draft Lockerbie Precinct Structure Plan (see attached assessment table and annotated plans):

## **Lockerbie**

### **Connectivity –**

Network of bicycle routes - bicycle routes (on-road lanes and/or off-road paths) are provided along connector and arterial streets and local access streets are configured to limit speeds and volumes. This provides connectivity to most destinations, including school, parks and Local Town Centres but lack of paths along the Hume Fwy and Outer Metro Ring road mean that areas in the NW are more than 400m of a marked bicycle route. The figures on Page 23 show paths on both side of Merri Creek but these are not shown in Plan 9.

Connections to destinations – Lockerbie Township is connected via the Merri Creek off-road path and on-road lanes though an off-road bike path on High St through the town centre should be provided to allow connection to the Merri Creek path. Lockerbie Station and Donnybrook stations are isolated due to a lack of path alongside the railway line past the stations – the Merri Creek path is more than 400m from the stations at these points and a path along the railway line is needed to allow connection. The southern and northern LTC are connected via off road paths and on-road lanes.

### **Permeability –**

Access into Town Centres – Detail of access for bikes within the Lockerbie Principal Town Centre show reliance on the Merri Creek shared path to the east with no marked bicycle facilities into the town centre or to local destinations. A continuous shared path or bike only path on High St from Lockerbie Station to the Local Active open space to the west with connections to the Merri Creek path would remedy this. Detail for access for bikes in the south LTC also shows the off-road shared path skirting to the south of the LTC. This path can be used for access into the centre. Detail for access for bikes in the north LTC does not show the shared path shown on Plan 9 which can be used for access into the centre.

Access to Schools, Parks Community Centres – All the schools, community centres and active open spaces proposed have at least one off-road path connection to the wider off road path network.

Crossing of barriers – The Hume Freeway to the west, the railway and Merri Creek to the East and Outer Metro Ring road to the north are all potential barriers. There are no crossing points of the OMR in the north shown despite Lockerbie North PSP showing linkages south to Lockerbie. Crossings are also lacking across the Merri Creek to Donnybrook and Lockerbie Stations and then

across the railway to the east. Green Gully Rd and the central arterial will provide connections to the west.

#### **Quality/Appropriateness –**

Off-road paths - the plan does not seem to specify a minimum width for paths which should be 3m for shared paths (2.5m for local access paths) with a metre clearance on both sides to obstacles.

Connector streets with schools, parks, community facilities – most schools, parks and community facilities will be located on connector streets. These streets are likely to carry significant motor vehicle traffic volumes at moderate speeds (50-80km/h). On-road bike lanes on these roads are unlikely to be used by school children, family groups or novice riders and separated off-road paths, with clear and unhindered crossing of minor streets, are more appropriate. They also serve to connect to the wider off road path network alongside parks and green corridors. Most connector streets in the plan area propose on-road lanes and many also have parallel shared paths especially past schools. The exception is the eastern north south connector which passes the State Secondary school and community facility and the southern connector street which links Kalkallo township to Donnybrook station via the southern LTC and Primary School. This impacts planning permit application P15826-96A – see below.

Connector streets with buses and bikes - Many of the connector streets have marked on-road bike lanes on potential bus routes. This may lead to conflict between buses and bikes as buses must cross and recross the bike lane to load and unload passengers. Off-road bike paths are more appropriate on these routes as bicycles can run behind stops and high frequency bus services will not be hindered in their operation. Off –road bike paths also mean a narrower paved road width which is easier for pedestrians and potential bus passengers to cross. One connector street in the south eastern corner has no bicycle facility indicated.

Bike lanes on high speed roads – Stewart St, Green Gully Road and the central east west arterial and Donnybrook Road are higher speed arterial roads which propose on-road bike lanes alongside motor vehicles travelling above 70-80km/h. Austroads Guides to Road Design (2009, 2011) recommend separated bike paths for these traffic regimes and these are much more likely to be used by less confident and novice bike riders such as children and family groups who do the majority of riding in the community via short trips to school, shops and friend and for recreation. Separated, bike only paths are more appropriate for these roads but care needs to be taken to design intersections and cross overs (driveways etc.) to provide clear and unhindered passage for bike riders. A bike path that stops and gives way at minor intersections does not properly provide or encourage bike riding. Stewart St, Green Gully Road and the central east west arterial are especially important as they provide direct connections from north to south and east to west past several schools and parklands and into Lockerbie and Kalkallo townships. The northern end of Stewart St and the southern arterial do not have any bicycle facility indicated in Plan 9.

Separated bike paths from pedestrians – where high volumes of bikes riders and pedestrians are expected, especially at peak times such as before and after school, there is the potential for conflict on shared paths. This can be seen on some of the most popular existing shared paths in Melbourne such as the Main Yarra Trail and the Inner Circle Trail where high volumes of bike

riders and walkers mean both are disadvantaged. This can discourage walking and cycling; especially by the more vulnerable who may be fearful of venturing onto a busy shared space. Widening of the path only works up to a certain point and then it makes more sense to provide separated bike and pedestrian paths. Experience and modelling has shown that where peak bicycle volumes exceed 200 bikes per hour with more than 100 pedestrians per hour then separate bike and pedestrian paths are appropriate. The links from Lockerbie Station into Lockerbie Township and past the schools as well as the link from Donnybrook Station to Kalkallo Township past the Primary School would be candidates for separate bike paths.

Undercover bicycle parking at public transport hubs – many local trips can be made by bike but longer trips using a bicycle, especially to distant workplaces and tertiary education, rely upon connections to public transport and leaving in a secure place for the day. The current Parkiteer cages at train stations are an example of secure, undercover bicycle parking that allows people to ride to the station and leave their bike. Similar facilities should be provided where public transport connections for bike riders are expected. Lockerbie and Donnybrook Stations should have such facilities.

#### **Planning Permit Application**

**Application: 1450 Hume Highway, Kalkallo VIC**

**Application Number -P15824 (Hume) & P306760/11 (Mitchell)**

The application plan does not show enough detail to comment on bicycle provision. Comments provided above recommend an off-road path along Green Gully Road.

#### **Planning Permit Application**

**Application: 40 Dwyer Street Kalkallo VIC**

**Application Number - P15826**

The application applies to land to the east of Kalkallo township and lies on the connector street which connect Kalkallo to Donnybrook Station. The PSP shows an off road path alongside the school and to the south of the LTC. This alignment is not shown on the application plan. Also comments provided above recommend an off-road path on the connector street past the primary school and community centre to the LTC. This is not shown on the application plans. These recommendations are shown in Figure 2 attached.

Regards

Bart Sbeghen  
Healthy New Suburbs  
Bicycle Network Victoria

Figure 1: Annotated PSP plan with bicycle comments

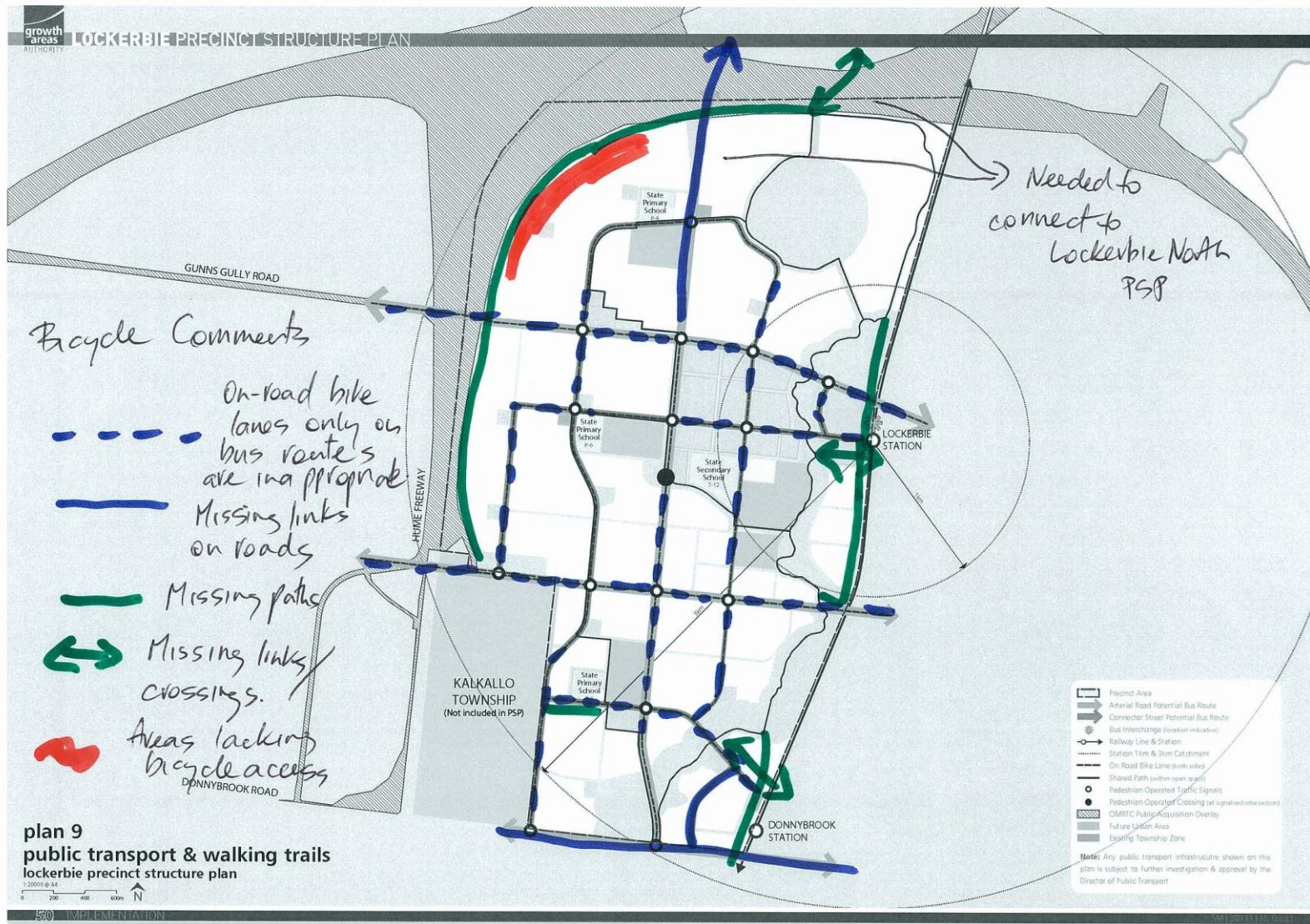


Figure 2: Annotated Permit application plan P 15826 with bicycle comments.

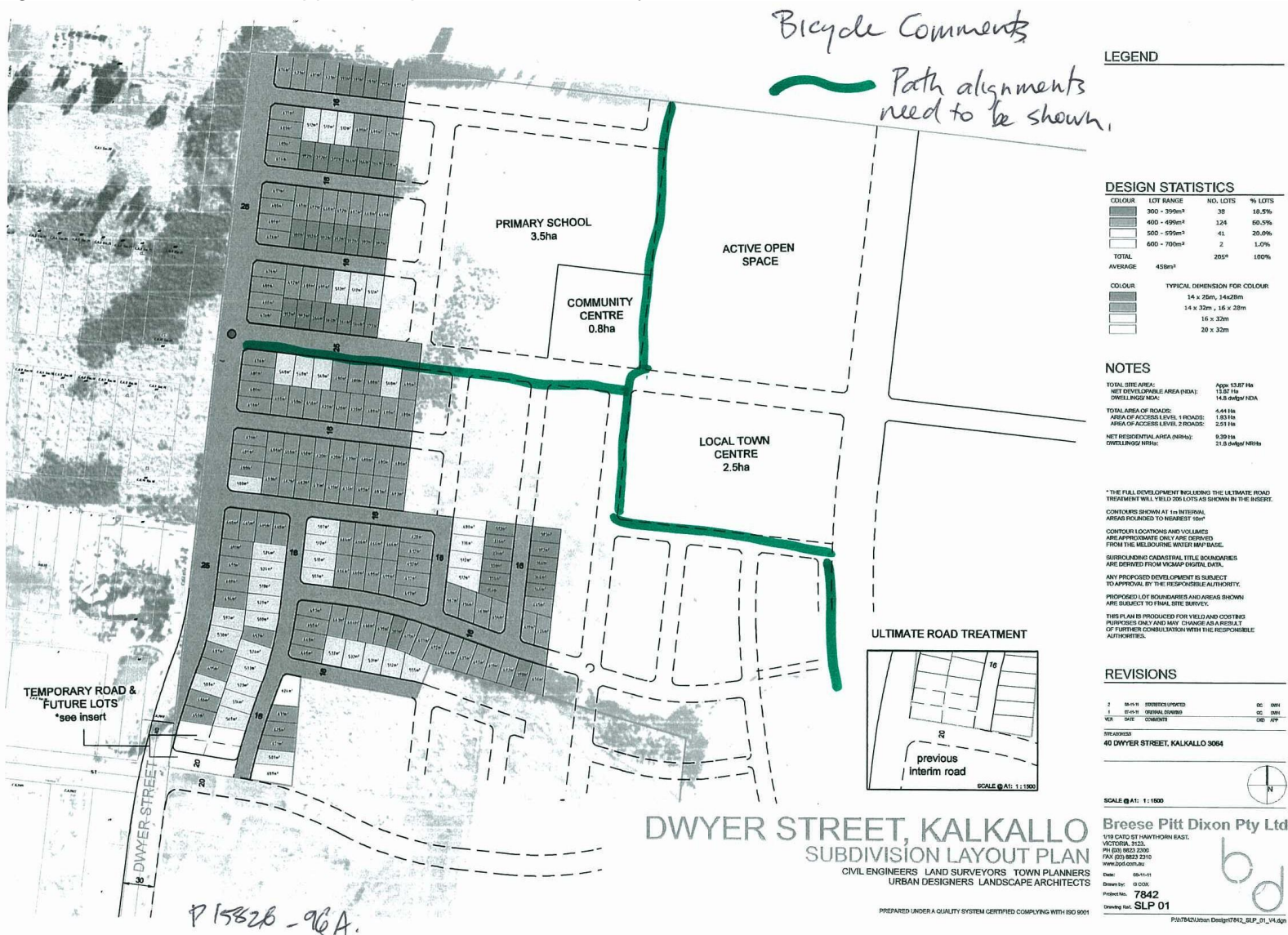


Table 1: Planning Checklist Assessment

Precinct Structure Plan		Lockerbie Precinct Structure Plan		
		Yes	No	Response
<b>Item 1</b>	<b>Corridor routes</b>			
<b>Connectivity</b>				
	Are separated, continuous paths provided alongside all freeways, railway reserves and other green corridors?		1	Does not show paths along OMR or Hume Fwy. No path shown along rail line though Merri Creek path is parallel in some sections
	Are bicycle routes provided along major roads (Principal Bicycle Network routes and other major roads)?		1	North south central road (Stewart St) has no provision in north that connects to Lockerbie North PSP area
	Are paths provided along all Metropolitan Trail Network Paths (MTN)?	1		Merri Creek Path
<b>Item 2</b>	<b>Local destinations</b>			
<b>Connectivity</b>				
	Are bicycle routes provided along all connector streets?	1		Mostly on-road bike lanes
	Are bicycle routes provided to parks, shops, schools and community services etc.?	1		Specific plans shown for Lockerbie Principal Town Centre (page 21) and two LTCs
<b>Item 3</b>	<b>Residence connections</b>			
<b>Connectivity</b>				
	Are all residents within 400m of a marked bicycle route?		1	NW corner along precinct boundary does not have access as no path shown along OMR or Hume Fwy
<b>Item 4</b>	<b>Choice of routes - activity centres</b>			
<b>Permeability</b>				
	Is there a choice of bicycle routes into and through activity centres to suit a range of trip types and purposes?		1	Lockerbie PTC relies upon major cycle route with on-road lanes. Others have fringing shared paths
	Are there connections to minor and major destinations within the activity centre?		1	Internal access to local destinations relies on local access streets. Bike lanes only through TCs
<b>Item 5</b>	<b>Choice of route - separate paths</b>			
<b>Permeability</b>				
	Have direct routes for transport cycling been provided that are not shared with other path users on foot?		1	Merri creek path has nor parallel alternative

# Precinct Structure Plan

## Lockerbie Precinct Structure Plan

		Yes	No	Response
<b>Item 6</b>	<b>Barriers and crossings</b>			
<b>Permeability</b>				
	Are crossing points at barriers provided at least every 800m?		1	Not shown for railway or for Merri creek at Lockerbie or Donnybrook stations. No crossing point of OMR to north shown.
<b>Item 7</b>	<b>Topography</b>			
<b>Permeability</b>				
	Does the planned bicycle network take account of topography and avoid hills where possible?		1	Crossing points of Merri Creek not shown. P21 shows paths on both sides but Plan 9 path on only one side
<b>Item 8</b>	<b>Separation and volumes</b>			
<b>Quality</b>				
	Are separated cycling and walking facilities provided on off road paths where cycling numbers are expected to exceed 200 bikes per hour and pedestrian numbers 100 per hour in peak periods?		1	Shared paths only
	Are local streets configured to allow shared use by bikes and motor vehicles (speeds <40km/h and volumes of <3-5000vpd)?	1		
	Are marked bicycle lanes or off –road paths provided for connector or arterial roads up to 60km/h and volumes < 5000vpd?	1		Bike lanes
	Are separated paths provided for arterial roads (speeds over 60km/h and volumes above 5000vpd) and on connector streets with schools?		1	On-road lanes on school connector streets
<b>Item 9</b>	<b>Off-road paths</b>			
<b>Quality</b>				
	Are all off road paths at least 2.5m wide with 1m clearance each side?		1	Not specified
	Are all schools and sporting grounds connected directly to the off road path network via a cycling facility that provides separation from motor vehicle traffic (usually off-road path)?	1		Shared paths past all schools
	Are off-road paths provided on the side of the road or barrier that provides the best connections to destinations?		1	Not specified
<b>Item 10</b>	<b>Bikes and public transport</b>			
<b>Quality</b>				
	Have interactions with the on road public transport network (buses and trams) been catered for?		1	On-road lanes shown on most connector streets with bus lanes
	Is secure parking (undercover locked cage with multiple rails inside) provided at railway stations and major bus interchanges?		1	Only "Bicycle parking should be provided within the street network and public spaces in highly visible locations and close to pedestrian desire lines and key destinations."