



9 September 2021

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City Heart Stage 2 consultation

Bicycle Network supports the City of Launceston's efforts to make its city centre accessible by more modes of transport. As the City Heart "mission statement" points out

"The Launceston City Heart project will redefine central Launceston to facilitate its adjustment to a modern regional retail, cultural and business hub for the Greater Launceston region. Through redevelopment and public investment in infrastructure, events and business capability, the project will attract further investment, provide overall improvement to the public spaces and streetscapes, improved connectivity and permeability throughout the heart of the City and **will provide safer, more accessible pedestrian and bicycle modes throughout the City**".

The city's Transport Strategy articulated the need for Launceston to build modern, safer cycling infrastructure to connect to current off-road paths to get people of All Ages and Abilities riding for transport.

The strategy and action plan commits to at least one north-south cycling corridor and one east-west corridor through the city centre:

"Currently, the CBD area (and other regional links) has a large gap in separated cycle lanes. Additionally, the City of Launceston will investigate opportunities to provide the CBD area with at least one north-south and one east-west separated cycle lane".

Exactly where these corridors will be has not been decided by council but the Network Operating Plan nominates Paterson and St John streets to be primary routes, with Paterson nominated to have separated cycleways and St John Street to have cars discouraged to become a cycling boulevard.

We know from other cities that have implemented separated cycleways that doing so as part of an overall street upgrade is much more effective for getting public acceptance than building cycleways in isolation.

This is why Bicycle Network would like to see decisions about the next stage of City Heart put on hold until those cycleway corridors are determined. Ideally, they will be part of City Heart designs so that people can appreciate they are part of an overall change to make Launceston more accessible to everyone.

What cycling could look like in Launceston

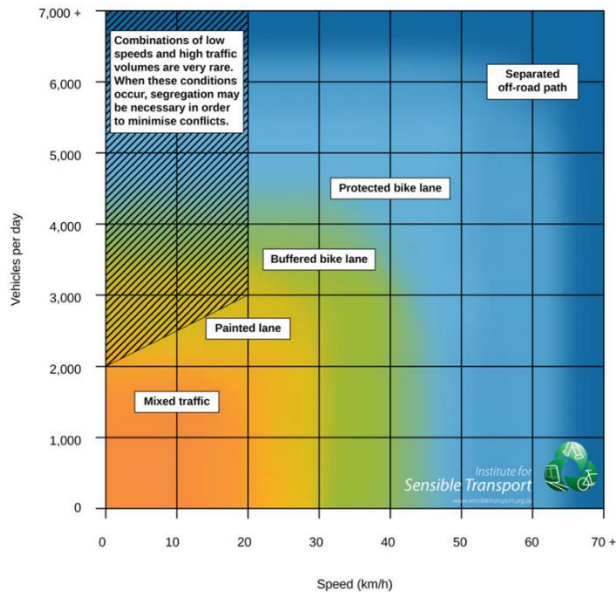
People who ride bikes in Launceston tend to be confident riders because there are only painted lanes or nothing at all on streets through the city centre.

The goal with the City Heart and Transport Strategy should be to introduce a standard of cycling infrastructure that will get people of All Ages and Abilities riding.

This means that cycling routes should be separated from traffic or if riders are being asked to mix with other road users speeds should be limited to 30 km or less and the volume of vehicles should be sharply reduced.

A good rule of thumb is to ask, “would I let me 8-year old son or 80-year old grandmother ride on this route”. If the answer is no, then it’s not AAA infrastructure.

This matrix from the Melbourne-based consultants Institute for Sensible Transport (they prepared the recent sustainability report for the council) shows most streets will require some separation, very few of our streets would meet the mixed traffic threshold of less than 2000 cars a day at 20 km/h, however, if the St John Street changes could achieve these figures then it could be a cycling boulevard:



In terms of what the separated cycleways could look like, there are a lot of good examples coming out of other cities and towns in Australia, including other regional cities like Geelong and Bendigo. This separated lane installed in Bendigo shows that infrastructure need not be expensive:

<https://youtu.be/VpztgM97dFk>

If there is going to be a streetscape redesign like City Heart then the infrastructure for cycling can be more attractive than just bollards and paint, and part of an overall look and feel for the streets. Below is a collage of some separated cycleways installed elsewhere in Australia.



It would be ideal to have designs drawn up and considered for City Heart that include a separated cycleway or at the least a wider footpath with provision for cycling at the edge, similar to what Hobart has attempted with Morrison Street, although signage to indicate which area is for cycling is important so people are not confused.

