



Attachment 4 to Item 10.3.2.

Submission and Officer response - Nepean Blue
Mountains Local Health District

Date of meeting: 9 July 2024
Location: Council Chambers
Time: 6:30pm

17 April 2024

CM Ref: 24/16498

Ms Elizabeth Richardson
General Manager
Hawkesbury City Council
Email: council@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au

2024 Draft Hawkesbury Active Transport Plan

Dear Ms Richardson

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the 2024 Draft Hawkesbury Active Transport Plan.

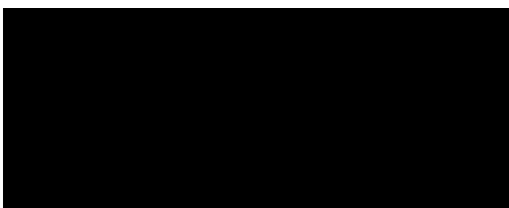
Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District (NBMLHD) recognises that the built environment can significantly influence health outcomes and acknowledges the important role the Hawkesbury Active Transport Plan will have in creating safe and supportive environments for people to walk and cycle for local trips.

Please find attached NBMLHD's detailed list of comments and recommendations on the Plan.

Population Health, NBMLHD is committed to working with Hawkesbury City Council to improve built and social environments that negatively impact on health outcomes for people living and working in the Hawkesbury local government area. I would like to introduce Alison Dunshea, our new Healthy Places Manager who is developing a portfolio of work focused on healthy environments that address the social determinants of health.

For further information regarding this submission or the Healthy Places portfolio, please contact Alison Dunshea, Manager Healthy Places, NBMLHD at alison.dunshea@health.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Eloise Milthorpe
Director Population Health

Detailed comments and recommendations for 2024 Draft Hawkesbury Active Transport Plan

Page number/section	Comments/recommendations
<p>Aims (Appendix D)</p> <p>Vision (P. 31)</p>	<p>NBMLHD strongly supports the project aims outlined in the background paper - to encourage mode shift away from private vehicles; connect centres, parks, and facilities; improve safety and wellbeing of people walking and cycling.</p> <p>We also support the vision for action plan to provide safe, reliable, and resilient active transport network that is accessible for all in the community.</p>
<p>General</p>	<p>Whilst schools were considered as potential active travel destinations and relevant infrastructure has been recommended, a more detailed assessment of active school travel gaps and safety issues would be beneficial, especially considering the new funding being made available by Transport for NSW for active school travel. The street environment directly outside a school is important, but the surrounding streets are equally important in encouraging children and their carers to walk or cycle along safe routes.</p> <p>Population Health NBMLHD could support Council in implementing a Healthy Streets approach to active school travel. This could include supporting school communities with co-designed solutions, active travel communications, education, and incentives.</p>
<p>General</p>	<p>The background paper and infrastructure action plan have a lot of different maps outlining the current, planned, and recommended walking and cycling infrastructure. It would be helpful for these maps to be made available online for the community to access and understand broadly how it all fits together. This could include short-, medium- and long-term walking and cycling infrastructure commitments from council, and Transport’s commitments as well.</p> <p>NBMLHD is also interested in how active travel infrastructure connects across LGA boundaries, ensuring communities are connected and accessible.</p>
<p>General</p>	<p>We support the approach taken for infrastructure provision (i.e. focusing on short local trips for walking and cycling). There is strong evidence that this is where the greatest health outcomes can be achieved through making walking and cycling a part of everyday trips to school, work, shops, and regular activities.</p>
<p>Cultural shift</p>	<p>The community feedback in pinpoint and the survey highlights a culture of “roads are for vehicles”, and it’s not the space for walking and cycling. Council may need to begin communicating an alternative narrative around “streets are for everyone”. A shift in attitude is going to take time and may be built on by success stories, where road space is successfully shared between all modes of travel.</p>

<p>Alternative strategies to address walking and cycling environments.</p>	<p>Many of the issues raised by the community can be addressed without big infrastructure budgets, but these haven't been discussed anywhere within the action plan. These could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintenance programs to address overgrown verges and vegetation on footpaths/cycle routes - Slower speed limits for local streets (30km/h) reduce the risk of injury and feel innately safer for people walking and cycling. - Quietways are streets with 30kph or less located away from trucks and buses and encourage slow speeds and sharing of road space by users with signage and different coloured street markings. - Greater monitoring/policing of parked vehicles on footpaths, verges, cyclepaths, etc. - Policing of speeding on local streets, aggressive driving near cyclists and enforcement of 1metre/1.5metre rule for passing cyclists. - Community tree planting along identified walking routes. - Seating along identified walking routes to local centres and key destinations. This could be aligned with bus stop seating and shelters. - Quality, secure bike parking in and around local centres – work with community organisations (e.g. Men's Shed, local artists) to make these unique and attractive for Hawkesbury community. - Step-free access off cycle path or road to bike parking, which is vital for bike deliveries, people cycling with disabilities, etc. - Removal of off-set barriers on cycle paths. These are commonly used to slow down people cycling or remove access for unwanted dirt bikes, but the barriers are a big disincentive for people to cycle in these locations, especially with cargo bikes, child trailers, etc. - Modal filters to remove local rat-runs (through traffic) and slow down vehicles.
<p>P. 87 – 92 Prioritisation</p>	<p>Healthy Streets is an excellent approach for addressing all aspects of street space to determine their impacts on health outcomes for local communities. It considers the breadth of stakeholders involved in creating and maintaining streets and the broad range of strategies that can be used to improve walking and cycling conditions - other than purely infrastructure.</p> <p>For actions that are seeking to develop concept designs for cycling routes, we recommend conducting Healthy Streets assessments to ensure health outcomes are considered at this early stage of planning. Population Health NBMLHD has expertise in this area and could support Council with this.</p>
<p>Alignment with Walking Space Guide and Cycleway Design Toolbox</p>	<p>We strongly support alignment of recommendations with these key Transport for NSW guidance documents. There are occasional discrepancies between the various infrastructure guidance documents available for street design and engineering, but these two Transport for NSW walking and</p>



	<p>cycling guidance documents consider health outcome best practice. The recommended widths for footpaths and cyclepaths are wider than most councils currently provide but are the right way forward in providing walking and cycling accessibility for all abilities, ages, and communities.</p>
<p>Alignment with NSW Movement and Place guidance</p>	<p>We strongly support alignment of action plan recommendations with Transport for NSW’s Movement and Place guidance documents. Understanding movement and place function on roads is important for improving walking and cycling access, especially when recommendations include more costly options such as the replacement of roundabouts with traffic signals, and installation of traffic signals at busy intersections. Severance is a big health issue for communities where roads are too busy to cross and force children, young people, seniors, and people with disabilities into cars to get around locally when walking or wheeling should be the natural easy option.</p>

Attachment 4- Assessment of Industry Submissions – NSW Health Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District

Submission 7

Key Issue	Officer's Comment
All comments made have been noted with specific comments required listed below.	
Response 1	
<p>Page 2</p> <p>Comments regarding Transport for NSW Active School Travel funding and a detailed assessment of school active travel gaps and safety issues.</p>	<p>These comments have been noted.</p> <p>Council is aware of the Transport for NSW Active School Travel program and has conducted a number of school reviews prior to the Hawkesbury Active Transport Plan project. Where suitable grant applications for this program have been submitted.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this, when preparing detail design drawings for the proposed routes in the Hawkesbury Active Transport Plan, Council can include additional legs where required to address linkages such as those mentioned in the submission and others identified at that time.</p> <p>These designs can include review of the external facilities surrounding schools such as the streets as raised in this submission.</p>
Response 2	
<p>Page 2</p> <p>Availability of Hawkesbury Active Transport Plan maps to be made available online for the community to access and understand.</p> <p>Active travel infrastructure connections across LGA boundaries.</p>	<p>The maps within the Hawkesbury Active Transport Plan will be made available online for public access once the Plan is adopted by Council, including the prioritisation plan within the Plan.</p> <p>Council and Transport for NSW work together to identify and submit funding applications for projects across local, regional and State assets to ensure connectivity and accessibility across LGA boundaries.</p>
Response 3	
<p>Page 3</p> <p>Alternative strategies to address walking and cycling environments</p>	<p>These comments have been noted and will be addressed where relevant as each of the projects progress to design stage.</p>