

Hyde St Bristow St Intersection

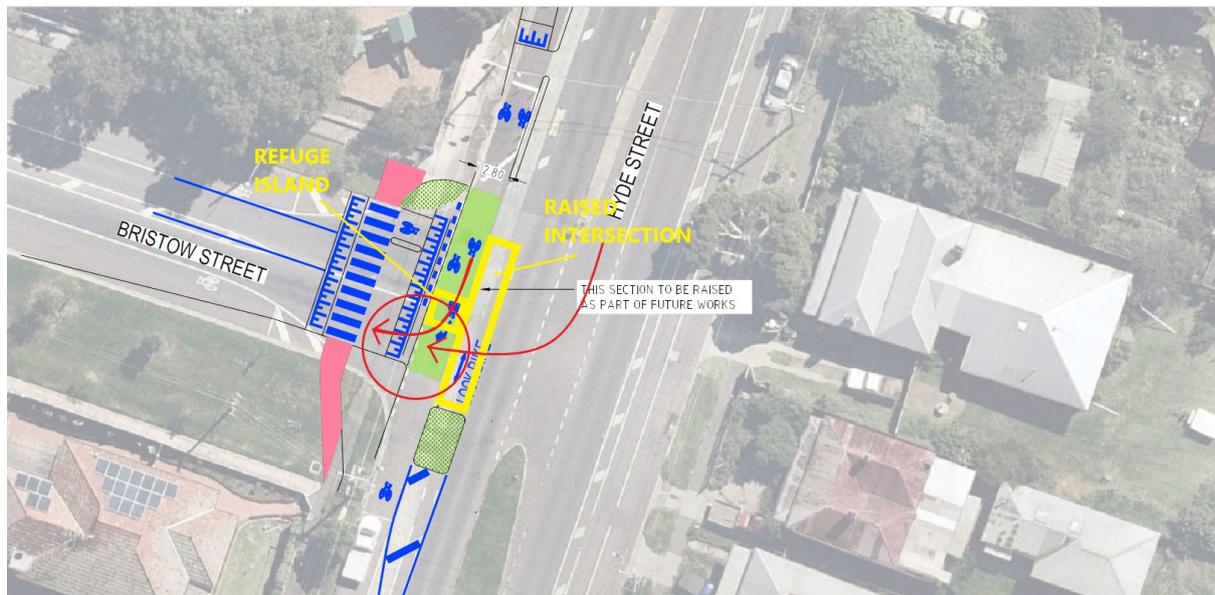
– BikeWest Feedback

BikeWest have grave reservations about the safety of the current design.

The way people behave in this intersection and its lack of safety is determined by people in motor vehicles travelling southwards and turning west into Bristow St.

Currently southbound drivers will wait for gaps in cycling and motor vehicular traffic travelling northwards to turn into Bristow. This can be quite a busy intersection in the afternoon peak hour, however, often there will be enough gaps in traffic to enable drivers to travel through the intersection without slowing down. Motor vehicles commonly pass through this intersection at 40km/h due to the large radius of the corner and long sight lines. (BikeWest members have passed through this intersection in a car several times following the speed of the car in front to obtain the observed speed). It is this combination of speed and traffic volume that makes the intersection particularly dangerous for cyclists and we don't feel the intersection is safe as is presented and modifications must be made to guarantee safety of vulnerable road users (both pedestrians and cyclists). This speed may be lower with a raised intersection but current usage suggests it would be very difficult to encourage drivers to look for cyclists travelling southwards on the bidirectional lane and turning into Bristow (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Hyde St Bristow St intersection



It is our understanding that this is a temporary solution and that a permanent arrangement with the bidirectional path continuing on the northern side of Bristow St is planned. This permanent arrangement is strongly supported by BikeWest.

If the proposed arrangement is acknowledged as temporary and a guarantee is provided by council to upgrade this intersection as soon as possible, then BikeWest can support the proposed intersection treatment with some alterations.



The main alterations include adding a refuge island as well as a painted treatment on the raised intersection on eastern side of the intersection. While this goes against most recommendations of cycling infrastructure as cyclists would be expected to stop and give way to motor vehicles, however, the particular characteristics of this intersection offers little alternative other than the proposed permanent extension of the bidirectional path along the northern side of Bristow St.

It is expected nearly all existing commuting cyclists will continue to use the main travel lanes on Hyde St and cross into Bristow St with motor vehicles. This is because the proposed arrangement is slower and more dangerous than their current experience and as a consequence offers no benefits, but rather offers some disincentives. The new infrastructure may encourage a few people to start cycling but this is unlikely as there are too many dangerous gaps for the “Interested but Concerned” (~60%) members of community to get on their bicycles. This route will remain the preserve of the “Strong and Fearless” (~0.5%) in its current form.

As a consequence BikeWest is concerned even with the proposed alterations the opportunity cost will be too high for the given benefit and the scheduled budget should be allocated to other projects with a greater likelihood of success, eg Pentland Parade/Albert St especially with the Pilgrim St Campus of Footscray High School opening in the new year.