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Tasmanian Planning Policies Scoping Paper  
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Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Tasmanian Planning Policies Scoping Paper.

### **Bicycle Network**

With over 48,000 members, Bicycle Network is one of the top five member-based bike riding organisations in the world.

With a proud history reaching back more than 40 years, we are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all Australians by making it easier for people to ride a bike.

Operating nationally, we have a measurable and large-scale impact in community participation and the promotion of healthy lifestyles through bike riding.

We achieve this in Tasmania through:

- improving the bike riding environment by working with government at all levels to provide better infrastructure, data, policies, legislation and regulations
- delivering Ride2School, Ride2Uni and Back on your Bike programs to get more people riding
- providing services that support bike riders through membership
- encouraging more people to ride by providing free social rides, bicycle valet parking and tailored riding education.
- being a key spokesperson on issues related to cycling and physical activity.

### **Planning scheme background**

Bicycle Network would like to see a planning system that encourages street and building design that makes it easy and safe for people of all ages and abilities to ride a bicycle for transport. The sort of cycling infrastructure that is seen as safe and encouraging for all users is commonly known as All Ages and Abilities (AAA) infrastructure and is that which separates riders from moving vehicles via off-road or on-road separated lanes/paths or uses quiet, very low speed (30 km/h), low traffic volume (less than 1000 cars a day) street routes.

While the state and federal governments have invested heavily in Tasmania in mountain biking facilities, there has been much less investment in transport riding infrastructure or recreational paths that could double as transport routes. This is despite the increase in sales and usage of electric bicycles which have

been shown to get people of all ages out of cars and onto bikes for work commutes, errands and shorter trips.<sup>i</sup> As these bikes continue to decrease in price it's likely more people are going to want to use a bicycle for transport in the coming years.

Currently, new residential and commercial developments are being built without dedicated cycling paths or wide enough shared paths, residential apartment buildings are being built without adequate bicycle parking facilities or maintenance areas, and commercial buildings are being built without adequate end-of-trip facilities for staff.

In terms of land use planning in general we query the preferential treatment given to on-street car parking, especially in residential areas with off-street parking, when some of that road space could be used to provide safe cycleways separated from moving vehicles.

We see the TPPs as the mechanism to set the direction for the statewide planning scheme so that riding a bicycle becomes one of the easiest transport options for all Tasmanians.

The benefits of bicycle riding cut across the three legislated goals of our planning system: the sustainable use, development, protection or conservation of land; environmental protection; liveability, health and wellbeing of the community.

Riding a bicycle improves people's mental<sup>ii</sup> and physical health<sup>iii</sup>, it reduces air pollution, it does not produce greenhouse gas emissions, it is an efficient use of space compared to motor vehicle infrastructure,<sup>iv</sup> it causes less damage to surfaces than motor vehicle traffic, and provides a cheap means of transport for those who can't afford to own a car or unable to get a driver's licence.

### **Scope of proposed topics**

The Scoping Paper suggests two policy topics which could cover the main elements mentioned in terms of cycleways and bike parking: Liveable Settlements, and Infrastructure to Support the Economy and Create Liveable Communities. The division between the two policies seems a bit clunky and confusing as to what sits in either policy.

The original draft TPPs included a Transport and Infrastructure Policy and included a section on active transport, which was an obvious structure and inclusion.

We understand the desire to minimise the number of TPPs for clarity, but transport planning is a wide ranging and complex area and deserves its own policy. Having a dedicated transport and mobility policy is a more direct and obvious approach. You could then just have a Liveable Communities Policy rather than Liveable Community goals spread across two policies.

A sustainable transport and mobility policy can make it clear that one of the transport goals to be implemented through the planning system and land use strategies is to create safe networks that encourage people to walk, ride or catch public transport as their first transport choices within urban centres. Private vehicle use is space inefficient, polluting, noisy, expensive, can lead to people not getting enough daily physical activity, and contributes to hundreds of serious injuries and some 30 deaths every year. While there will always be a need for private vehicle use, especially between major centres and on some routes across urban centres, it shouldn't be prioritised over other forms of healthier, more sustainable transport choices within urban centres.

A sustainable transport and mobility policy could ensure integrated transport planning is developed for all new developments. So, if an industrial park is developed that requires frequent freight movement there are still cycling and walking networks in place for staff to get to work and for lunchtime recreation and adequate space for bus stops or other public transport stations, such as ferries or light rail.

Other countries and Australian states have seamless networks and structures which allow people to easily switch between transport modes, e.g. cycling to a train station, parking the bike or taking it on board, alighting at the other end to walk or pickup a shared bike. In Tasmania we still operate as though people only use one transport mode to get places. Having cycling and walking networks that are direct to bus, ferry and potentially light rail/rapid bus hubs with secure bike parking or ability to carry bikes on board would help people extend their transport choices.

We'd also like to see a sustainable transport and mobility TPP reserve cycling corridors in the same way that has been done for rail and road corridors, and cycling network plans so any new development bordering or connecting to a designated cycling corridor is responsible for building the new cycleway/path in that section or upgrading a cycle lane/path that is not up to the AAA standard. And current state government positive cycling provision policy could be included in a transport TPP and also applied to local roads.

### **Issues in other TPP topics**

However, as already mentioned, the benefits of bicycle transport cut across most of the topic areas listed and should be acknowledged in each of those topic areas.

- **Economic Development**

Building the economy relies on the efficient and safe transport of customers and the people who work in various industries. Employees who travel to work by bicycle are generally healthier<sup>v</sup>, happier with their daily commutes.<sup>vi</sup>

There are also direct flow-on business benefits from widespread bicycle use: bicycle shops, bicycle mechanics, infrastructure design, infrastructure construction, bicycle parking services, bicycle education, bicycle tourism operators, hire bikes, lease bikes, accommodation and hospitality for touring bicycle riders, bicycle events and potentially manufacturing of bicycles, parts and clothing.

Providing the safe infrastructure we need for more people to ride will help us develop a more sustainable economy and workforce.

- **Environmental Protection**

Providing bicycle transport infrastructure helps to protect our clean air and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. If this is where climate change reduction and mitigation goals are going to be housed, then it makes sense to promote sustainable transport options as part of climate change action.

Providing adequate sized street trees can help cool urban centres but they also provide shade for people walking and riding and as such should be used where possible as separation between people walking and riding or between pathways and motor vehicle traffic.

- **Liveable Settlements**

Even if bicycle infrastructure is put into an infrastructure and transport policy, it still needs to be specifically mentioned within the Liveable Settlements policy, just as the need for public transport connections are mentioned.

Increasing the density of existing urban settlements and activity centres relies on better utilising available land and improving the cycling, walking and public transport connections in these areas so low-value land uses like car parking are less necessary. Increasing density also necessitates building design that makes it easy to ride a bicycle for transport so some of the much needed changes to residential and commercial buildings could sit under this policy.

### **What we'd like to see in the new TPPs**

While the next stage of consultation will focus on the detail of the policies, we'd like to see the following broad elements be able to fit in to the TPP topics and structure settled upon to be enacted through strategic and statutory planning:

A requirement that all new:

- residential and commercial developments include cycleways separated from moving vehicles. In low to medium density residential developments there may be a place for shared pathways of at least 3 metres width.
- residential and commercial development intersections be designed to protect and prioritise people walking and riding.
- residential and commercial development cycleways/paths to provide frequent access points to existing and planned cycleways/paths.
- commercial buildings provide secure, undercover bicycle parking easily accessible from street level, lockers, showers and bathrooms for staff, aiming for facilities that cater to a much greater percentage of staff than is the case under current planning regulations.
- Apartment buildings provide at least one floor-mounted secure, undercover bicycle parking space at street level per apartment.
- Apartment buildings provide shared space next to the bike parking for residents to clean and maintain bicycles.
- Driveways and kerb ramps be built with "no-lip" as the standard to ensure easy access to and from paths and homes unless there is a stormwater issue.

### **Climate Change TPP**

The scoping paper asks whether there should be a stand-alone Climate Change TPP or climate change implications be factored in to the other relevant TPP issues. We would like to see a Climate Change TPP to ensure the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change are an overriding driver across all the TPPs and give us the best chance of a sustainable future.

If you look at bicycle riding, the reason you'd want to ensure all TPPs make it easier to ride a bicycle is because of the overwhelming health and climate benefits from doing so. There are also other climate actions tied up with bicycle riding, for example, providing street trees will be important for bringing down city temperatures but will also provide shade needed to make bicycle riding more comfortable.

Climate Change would ideally be a state policy, just as physical and mental health should be, so it can influence every TPP. If it is just another TPP, there's always a danger that the climate change goals would not have enough influence over other TPP goals. It should be entered as a TPP now, but with the goal of making it a state policy.

### TPP template

This looks like a clear way to set out the policies but it's difficult to say with finality without seeing the extent of the policy detail and seeing the whole family of TPPs.

Yours sincerely



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<sup>i i</sup> Washington, Heesch and Ng, *E-bike Experience: Survey Study of Australian E-bike Users*, Queensland University of Technology for the Queensland Government, 3 March 2020.

<sup>ii</sup> Avila-Palencia, I. et al. The effects of transport mode use on self-perceived health, mental health, and social contact measures: A cross-sectional and longitudinal study. *Environment International* 120, 199-206, doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envint.2018.08.002> (2018).

<sup>iii</sup> Andersen, L. B. et al. Trends in cycling and cycle related injuries and a calculation of prevented morbidity and mortality. *Journal of Transport and Health* 9, 217-225, doi:10.1016/j.jth.2018.02.009 (2018).

<sup>iv</sup> Transport for Victoria, *Victorian Cycling Strategy 2018–28*, 14, (2017).

<sup>v</sup> Andersen, LB et al. "Trends in cycling and cycle related injuries and a calculation of prevented morbidity and mortality". *Journal of Transport and Health*. 9, 217–225, doi:10.1016/j.jth.2018.02.009 (2018).

<sup>vi</sup> Wild, K. & Woodward, A. "Why are cyclists the happiest commuters? Health, pleasure and the e-bike". *Journal of Transport and Health*, 14, doi:10.1016/j.jth.2019.05.008 (2019).