

24 May 2021

To:

The Honourable Mark Bailey MP, Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Cc:

Cr David McLachlan, Infrastructure Committee Chair BCC;

Melanie Castles, TMR Metropolitan Region;

Anna Campbell, Queensland Walks

Dear Minister,

Last week I contacted your department regarding the pedestrian crossings on Webster Road at Gympie Road in Aspley. I include a copy of the letter I sent for your reference.

The North Brisbane Bikeway extension through Marchant Park is a fantastic facility, both as an active transport link and as a recreational resource for walkers and cyclists. I commend the Brisbane City Council and the State government for their ongoing commitment to improving it. However, the free-flow slip lanes at Webster Road remain a considerable hazard to vulnerable road users.

I am pleased to say the response I received to my letter was extremely positive. In phone conversations on Friday 21 May, I was reassured to hear that the TMR project team agrees both with my assessment of the situation at Webster Road and with my concerns, in particular:

Replacing the zebra crossings on the slip lanes with signalised crossings will make an already dangerous situation worse, but retaining the current crossings is not legally possible due to sight lines and traffic speed.

There is no treatment of these slip lanes which is safe besides removal.

I was told that removal of these slip lanes is TMR's policy and intent, but is not possible in the short term because there is no budget in the current financial year for building a new left turn lane on Gympie Road.

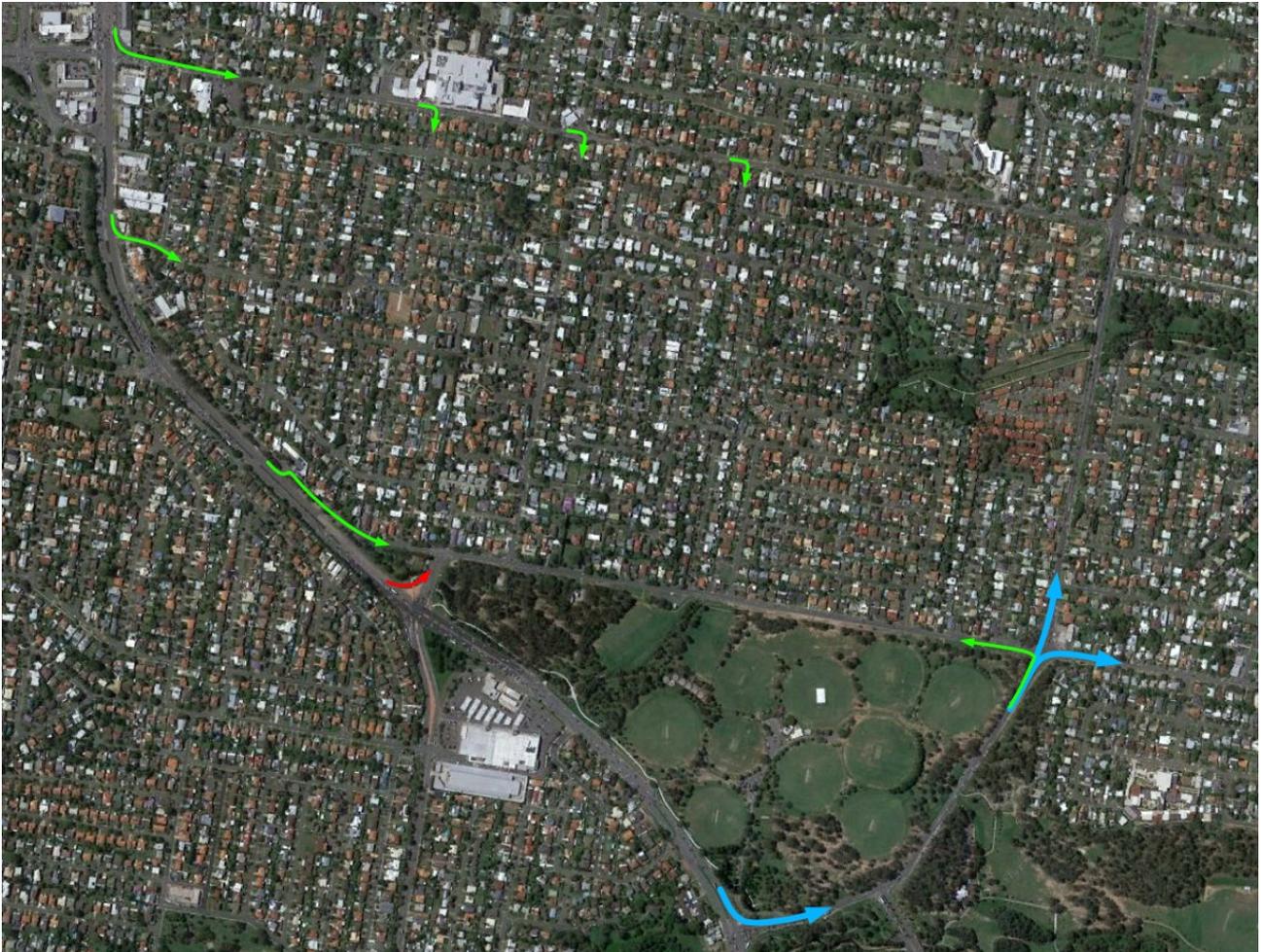
Minister, I hope you agree that making this intersection more dangerous for vulnerable road users is not an acceptable outcome of the current bikeway upgrade, even if there is a plan to fix the problem some time in the future. Therefore, I am writing to you today to offer some local perspectives which will hopefully help TMR to close the slip lanes as part of the current project.

The Eastern Slip Lane (Webster to Gympie)

There is surely no reason this slip lane cannot be closed immediately, with provision for left-turning traffic added to the leftmost of the three lanes at the traffic lights. On Friday, the project leader suggested that the need for buses to turn this corner might be an issue. This surprised me: as a former Brisbane City Council bus driver myself, I can't imagine a square turn into the three lanes of Gympie Road would present any difficulty for a standard bus at all. If it really is a problem, it could be solved by redirecting the single bus route that currently turns here straight along Webster Road.

The Western Slip Lane (Gympie to Webster)

As Gympie Road is a major arterial, closing the slip lane prior to constructing an additional turn lane would necessarily remove the left-turn facility altogether: adding an optional turn to a general traffic lane would not be feasible. However, there are several alternative routes available to drivers who currently turn here.



On the map above, the slip lane to be closed is indicated by a red arrow.

Local access routes, indicated by green arrows, include:

- 1) Left then right into the Gympie Road service road.
- 2) Left into Nevin St.
- 3) Left into Robinson Road West, then right into Kirby Road or an appropriate side street.
- 4) Continuing to Murphy Road, then left into Ellison Road.

Through traffic intending to travel along Murphy or Ellison Roads can continue to Murphy Road, then turn right or continue, as indicated by the blue arrows.

There are no bus routes that require this turn, so that is not a consideration. Traffic passing through the intersection in any direction other than turning left from Gympie to Webster would, of course, be entirely unaffected by the slip lane closure.

Given the large number of alternative routes, and the recent widening of Murphy Road with an additional lane, the local network can surely handle the redirected traffic of a single slip lane with no ill effect – either temporarily until a new turn lane on Gympie Road is funded and built, or permanently.

Permanent removal of the left turn from Gympie to Webster would not only avoid the considerable cost and disruption of constructing a new turning lane, but would also allow for a longer, automatic green phase on the bikeway crosswalk with no conflicting traffic, further improving the compliance and safety of pedestrians and cyclists at this intersection.

I hope this letter is of use to you and the project team. Please let me know if I can provide any more information: if it would be useful, I would be happy to meet with you, staff from your office, or members of the project team on site at Webster Road to discuss the issues in situ.

Yours sincerely,

David Dallaston
Aspley, 24 May 2021
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