



Airport BUG & PED



Brisbane Airport Bicycle User Group & Pedestrians
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Mr David Salisbury
Deputy General Manager
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Dear Sir,

Re: Airport regulation needs to be improved to ensure equitable provision for users of active transport modes (walking and cycling) at Brisbane Airport.

Currently 20,000 people work at the Brisbane Airport precinct. Brisbane Airport Corporation (BAC) say that less than half of one percent of these people walk or cycle to work (information received in an email from BAC). This may be compared to the walking and cycling mode share of 11.6% for the Brisbane Local Government Area (Transport and Main Roads, 2010). When these two figures are compared it is apparent the mode share for cycling and walking at Brisbane Airport precinct is very low.

It is a concern to us that more people do not choose to use the active transport modes of walking and cycling at the Brisbane Airport for health, environmental and social equity reasons. The choice of mode of transport has been shown to have an effect on the risk factors for cardiovascular disease as people who choose active commuting (walking or cycling) are less likely to be obese and have lower cardiovascular disease risk factors (Gordon-Larsen et al., 2009). Walking and cycling are low polluting transport modes and are also low cost modes of transport for people who cannot afford a car or who do not have a drivers licence. Over 30% of Brisbane Residents do not have a drivers licence (Transport and Main Roads, 2010).

The terrain and distances at the Brisbane Airport are suitable to support walking and cycling. The area in and around the Brisbane Airport precinct is flat which makes it favourable for cycling and walking. In addition, many of the workplaces at the Brisbane Airport precinct are less than 5km from residential areas (and only 13 km to the CBD). These are distances suitable for cycling. Using a bicycle to travel distances up to 5km can be faster door to door than in a car (Dekoster & Schollaert, 2000). Also many council and state government roads outside the airport have bicycle lanes. The section of Airport Drive outside the airport has on-road bicycle lanes up to the airport boundary. Considering the existence of these favourable factors which would facilitate walking and cycling, we believe the low walking and cycling transport modeshare at the Brisbane Airport Precinct is due to the lack of support for these modes by the current airport management.

Despite the 2009 Brisbane Airport Masterplan containing plans for a walking and cycling network and espousing support for active transport modes, we have seen very little on-the-ground support for walking and cycling in the last 5 years. What walking and cycling infrastructure has been built is of a poor standard, not connected (see attached photo) and unsuited to the types of users at the airport. (Most cyclists at the airport are commuter cyclists who travel at speed and need direct routes which maintain priority at cross streets and driveways). With the closure to cyclists of both inbound and outbound sections of Airport Drive (due to the construction by BAC of a bridge on the inbound route which has bicycle unfriendly expansion joints) the total roads and connections available to cyclists has decreased over the last 5 years.

A case study

In June 2012 Airport BUG and PED identified that a planned upgrade of an intersection at the Brisbane airport could be improved to make the intersection more bicycle friendly. We made suggestions to BAC which included: elimination squeeze points; inclusion of on- road bicycle lanes where traffic lanes converge and diverge and incorporation of a sealed road shoulder suitable for cycling. These suggestions were initially rejected by the BAC.

After a campaign of spirited lobbying by airport cyclists, local politicians and a federal senator, BAC reconsidered their position on this issue and had their road designers look at removing the squeeze points and incorporating a sealed shoulder.

We were unsuccessful however, in convincing the Brisbane Airport Corporation to include bicycle lanes on Lomandra Drive, a route well used by commuter cyclists. We pointed out to BAC that on-road bicycle lanes are common on similar intersections in Brisbane and throughout Queensland. We argued that cycle lanes, are recommended by Austroads Guides (2011) for road design at signalised intersections, particularly where cyclists must ride through converging and diverging lanes such as the lanes which converge and diverge from Lomandra Drive to Qantas Drive. Despite our lobbying and rational justifications, BAC refused to replace the chevron markings with a bike lane. The BAC seem to be fundamentally opposed to bicycle lanes on Airport roads, which would explain why there are no bikelanes on airport roads to date.

Can we fix it?

It is time consuming for us to lobby for equitable provision for active transport users for every development at the Brisbane Airport. . There are so many issues for us to address: the closure of existing roads to cyclists: construction new roads and road upgrades with no provision for cycling; poor design of shared paths; construction of one way streets which make access by bicycle longer and more difficult; inappropriate speed limits; industrial estates with lack of connected footpaths and circuitous roads which provide poor pedestrian and cyclists permeability; lack of pedestrian and cyclist access to passenger terminals; lack of end of trip facilities at the domestic terminal; no options for secure or undercover bicycle parking at the domestic terminal; no safe cycling or walking routes to the domestic terminal; no signage or directions on how to cycle to and from the domestic terminal for travellers and cycle tourists as well as many, many more issues.

We believe the only way forward is for the Federal Transport Minister to devise regulatory mechanisms to ensure the Brisbane airport community is provided with

equitable access and good provision for active and sustainable transport. Hopefully, once better regulation is enacted, we will not have to lobby for equitable provision for active transport for each and every development at the Brisbane airport. Instead equitable provision for active transport users will be a requirement of all developments at the Brisbane airport.

Current policy is ineffective

We were initially encouraged by the 2009 National Aviation Policy White Paper and welcomed the White Paper's calls to "*ensure that the airport planning system is properly integrated with the off-airport transport planning system and contributes to a coordinated transport system that supports our cities' broader economic productive capacity and avoids imposing unnecessary social and economic costs*". We hoped that the transport system referred to in the White Paper would include walking and cycling transport modes. We were hopeful that the White Paper would stimulate Brisbane Airport Corporation to provide facilities for cyclists and pedestrians similar to those found on the roads and suburbs surrounding the airport and reduce the car dependence of airport workers. We had hoped the current obesogenic design of airport industrial estates would be improved with connections which encouraged walking and cycling.

Unfortunately this has not been the case. This year is the final year of the Brisbane Airport's 2009 Airport Masterplan's 5 year timeframe and we have seen little or no improvement in the cycling and walking infrastructure and little or no increase in the walking and cycling mode share at the Brisbane Airport. One of the reasons for this poor performance we believe is the failure of the Brisbane Airport Corporation to implement the recommendations of the 2009 National Aviation Policy White paper.

The poor state of cycling and walking at the Brisbane airport is the product of transport policies that prioritise access and parking for motorised vehicles and do not provide equitable provision for active transport users. This 'vehicle first' approach to transport policy is a threat to national efforts to tackle health and environmental problems including air pollution and climate change. These are the some of the social and economic costs referred to in the White Paper.

Provision for sustainable transport must be mandated in Airport developments.

Airport corporations are obliged to maximise profits for shareholders. Last financial year the Brisbane Airport Corporation made \$84 million dollars from car parking* (Brisbane Airport Corporation, 2011). This includes parking by travellers at the terminals and also car parking charges levied on businesses in the industrial estates at the airport. (I am aware my employer pays BAC over \$1200 per year for each carpark in excess of what is available on our industrial site). It would be reasonable to assume that Airport corporations are not going to spend money to enhance the social, health and environmental capital of Australian communities by providing for active transport users unless they are obliged to do so. Unless the federal government is prepared to carefully monitor the performance of airports to ensure the equitable provision of safe sustainable transport, this should be made a requirement of any development plans. The provision of active and sustainable transport is an area which lies outside the narrowly focused economic reviews of airports conducted by the Productivity Commission. This is an area which also lies outside the current directions relating to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) role in airport regulation which is restricted to aeronautical and car parking services. We believe the current regulatory regime at Brisbane airport is not effective. If it were, the Brisbane airport would not have been

allowed to degenerate into its current poor state which is essentially a 'black hole' for walking and cycling as a means of land transport compared to the surrounding local government area.

There is a need for new and alternative quality of service measures which evaluate airport performance in regard to provision for active and sustainable transport modes at Australian Airports. It is important for health, environmental and social justice reasons that the 20,000 members of the Brisbane airport community, as well as travellers, have equitable access to active transport modes to travel to and within the Brisbane airport precinct. Some other major Australian airports provide better provision and routes for active transport than Brisbane airport, however we believe that there is room for improvement in most major airports in regard to provision for active and sustainable transport.

Yours sincerely



Mitchell Bright
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* Item listed as 'Landside Transport Revenue' comprises income from public and staff car parks, ground facilities fees and car rental operators.

Photos to accompany submission to ACCC.



Above- A shared path on Lakeside Drive at Brisbane Airport which ends abruptly and does not connect to the road or another pathway. The path has remained this way for many years



Above- Bicycle unfriendly section of Lomandra Drive at Brisbane Airport where concrete curbing and lack of a road shoulder creates a squeeze point. There is also no connecting footpath along Lomandra Drive.

Below – In comparison, good facilities provided for cyclists and pedestrians outside of the airport precinct at the adjacent Trade Coast Industrial Estate. Note the wide path and on-road bicycle lane.

