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## Cumberland Council Draft Walking and Cycling Strategy Feedback

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Cumberland Council Draft Walking and Cycling Strategy (referred to in this document as 'the Strategy').

These comments have been prepared on behalf of CAMWEST, a Bicycle NSW affiliated Bicycle User Group with a focus on advocating for and encouraging cycling in the Penrith, Blacktown, Parramatta, and Cumberland council areas of Western Sydney.

While we welcome the broad direction of the strategy, it is still very high level, and we were a little disappointed to see that it was lacking any real detail. We broadly agree with the 18 corridors of the strategy, although would like to see a couple more added and one extended slightly.

CAMWEST were invited to a meeting with Transport for NSW during the development of the Central River City Corridors. We were disappointed to see that two of our requests – essentially corridor 10 and connections from Regents Park through to the Cooks River path – didn't make their final cut. While acknowledging that council are trying to align with the agreed Central River corridors, we still see the Regents Park to Cooks River connection as one of the most important regional active transport links for Western Sydney – and so propose it as one of CAMWEST's additional corridors.

We've previously made comments on projects within the LGA which have a cycling-related component, including the Prospect Pipeline Corridor Masterplan <sup>[1]</sup> (Corridor 6, with a mention of sections of Corridors 9 and 10), Duck River Parklands Masterplan <sup>[2]</sup> (Corridor 2), Pippita Rail Trail <sup>[3]</sup> (Corridor 13 and sections of Corridor 14), Lidcombe Town Centre Public Domain Plan <sup>[4]</sup> (Sections of Corridors 13 and 14) and separate correspondence with council regarding safety concerns with the Silverwater Rd and Stubbs St crossings of the Adderley St shared path <sup>[5]</sup> (Small section of Corridor 7). In this document we highlight a few of the points previously raised, but largely try to avoid the detail presented in the previous submissions.

The general asks that we'd like to reiterate are that any routes developed be suitable for riders aged 8 to 88, provide enough lighting so that those riding at night feel safe, and the route designs should be suitable for people using longer and wider mobility vehicles than standard bikes – like tricycles, cargo bikes and mobility scooters.

While individual projects are great, we're yet to see how they link into and through town centres – such as through Lidcombe, Auburn and Merrylands. The strategy doesn't seem to address this current lack of connectivity.

### Note:

*Some of the map images in this document are taken from the 'Cycle Map' layer (or rendering) of Open Street Map – see <https://www.openstreetmap.org/#map=13/-33.8292/150.9557&layers=C>. The map is edited by community members - including CAMWEST members – and may not be 100% correct. The thin blue solid lines represent existing paved shared paths. The quality of the paths may vary. The dashed blue lines represent unsealed or unspecified surface paths. The background colour on some of these lines and roads supposedly represent whether they are part of 'official' local or regional networks, although sometimes people specify their own 'unofficial' routes.*

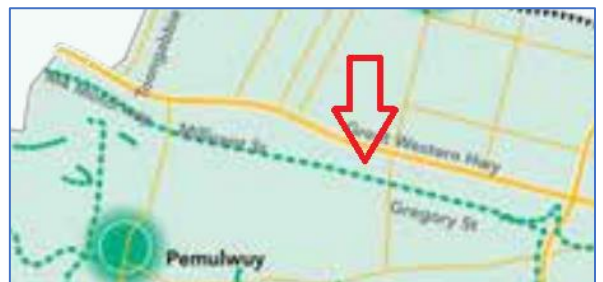
## ➤ Concerns with the Strategy Document

As outlined below, we are a little disappointed with the presentation of the strategy document, believing the background preparation has been sub-optimal in several areas. We hope this hasn't impacted on the recommended corridors.

Our concerns include:

- Poor resolution in maps and images within the document. It is difficult and time-consuming to discern detail.
- Some of the definitions of 'existing', 'partially completed' and 'new' corridors differ from what we believe they should be. These are highlighted in the next section of this document.
- In spite of including Action 3.2 'Collaborate with other Councils to improve connections in walking and cycling routes across boundaries', both the 'Existing Cycling Routes' map and the 'Cumberland Active Transport Corridors' maps fail to show proposed or even existing paths just outside council boundaries.
- The 'Existing Cycling Routes' map makes no differentiation between shared paths or different 'difficulty types' of on-road facilities – everything is lumped in together. We're guessing that it may be based on data from an older version of the Transport for NSW Cycleway Finder webpage<sup>[6]</sup>. Two examples of information which may be dated:

- The map indicates 'an existing cycling route' along the M4 shoulder west of Cumberland Hwy - where Transport for NSW are actively discouraging riders from the M4 shoulder (see 'Cyclists' sub-section of <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/current-projects/m4-smart-motorway-project>). The current versions of the Cycleway Finder webpage<sup>[6]</sup> don't show this route.



*Map shows M4 shoulder as an existing cycling route.*

- The route between Merrylands West and Merrylands omitted the shared path (approximated with the red line below), but showed the on-road route along Sheffield St. One issue with this route is that at the corner of Sheffield and Pitt Streets (indicated by blue arrow), riders crossing Pitt St are confronted with a low-level barrier up the centre line of the 4 laned Pitt St.



*Low level barrier on Pitt St for riders crossing or needing to cross when turning.*

- It would be helpful to delineate existing and proposed routes in the markings of the Active Transport Corridor map – maybe dashed lines for proposed.

- More of a curiosity than a concern – but why is part of the existing Lower Prospect Canal shared path not shown on the ‘Footpath widths through Cumberland’ map?



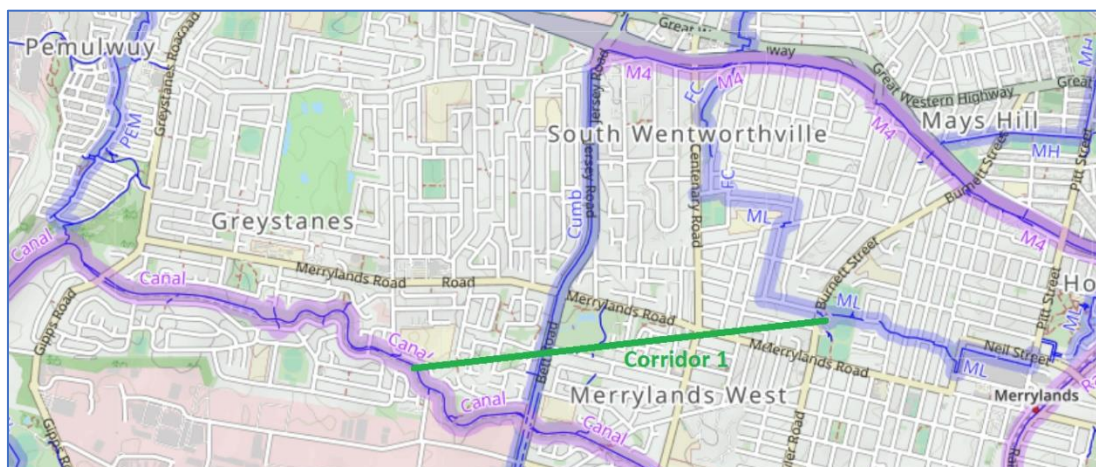
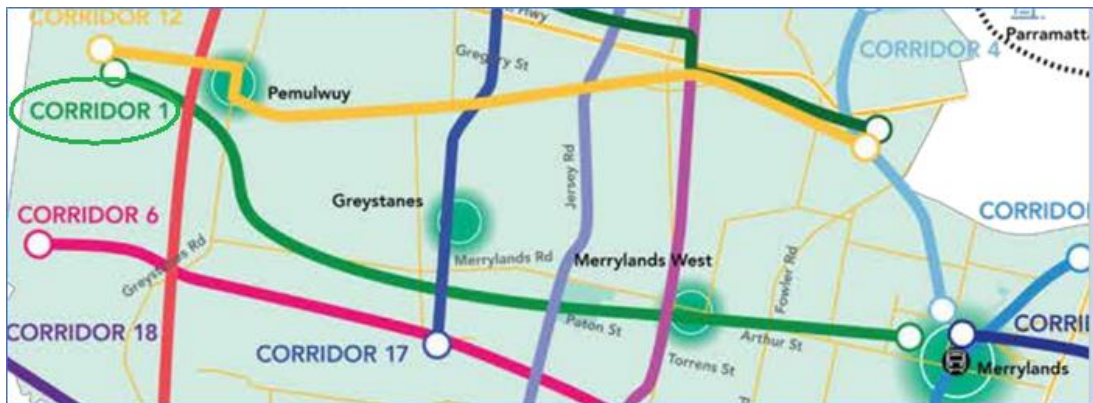
*Apparent missing section of the existing Lower Prospect Canal shared path on the ‘Footpath widths through Cumberland’ map.*

## ➤ Cumberland Active Transport Corridor Comments:

While acknowledging that the corridors listed were high level, to determine their ‘completion categorization’ status we need to try and marry corridors with existing routes. The following are some comments on the current corridors as we understand them:

### **Corridor 1 (Pemulwuy to Merrylands via Central Gardens):**

Corridor 1 from Pemulwuy to Merrylands is classified as a ‘New’ route, but as far as we see would probably use a reasonable amount of existing infrastructure at either end of the route.



*Possible ‘New’ section of Corridor 1, linking Central Gardens, Merrylands West shopping precinct and existing paths.*



## Corridor 2 (Clyde to Regents Park via Duck River):

Corridor 2 is another 'New' route which could use a reasonable amount of existing infrastructure – although some of that infrastructure along the Duck River path has been slated for an upgrade as per the Duck River Parklands Masterplan.



## Corridor 3 (Merrylands to Auburn via Duck River):

We're assuming the 'partially completed' sections of Corridor 3 are referring to sections of the Duck River path (which were classified as 'New' in Corridor 2).....

## Corridors 4, 5 & 6:

No comments at this point.

## Corridor 7 (Prospect Pipeline Corridor to Olympic Pk via Berala):

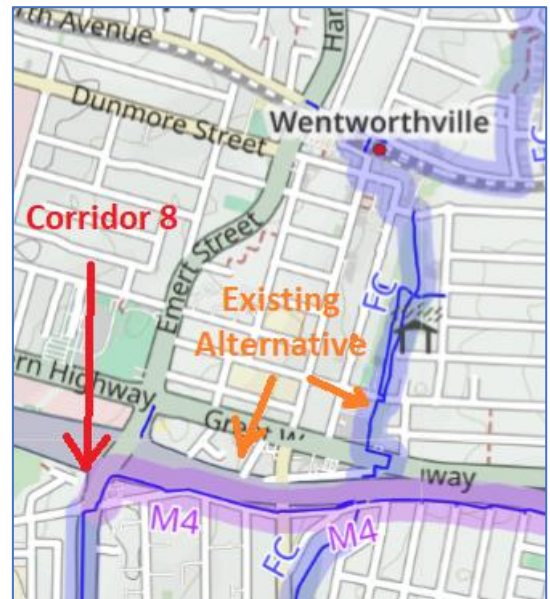
- Although defined as a partially completed corridor, there appears to be virtually no off-road sections completed south of the Adderley St shared path alongside the M4.
- As mentioned in previous correspondence with Council <sup>[5]</sup>, we have some safety concerns with the crossing of Silverwater Rd and Stubbs St along the Adderley St shared path.
- A lot of the route is outlined as 'General Roads' on the Cycleway Finder webpage <sup>[6]</sup>. We're not currently familiar enough with the roads from Auburn Town Centre moving south to make further meaningful comment.

## Corridor 8 (Wentworthville to Smithfield via Cumberland Hwy):

Corridor 8 along Cumberland Hwy between Wentworthville and the Prospect Ck is marked as an existing corridor. We feel there are a couple of minor issues with this classification:

- The section between the Great Western Hwy and Wentworthville doesn't exist. However, using the top section of Corridor 9 and a section of either Corridors 11 or 12 the same practical effect can be achieved.
- Sections of this route along the Cumberland Hwy appear to have a width less than the recommended minimum of 2.5m.

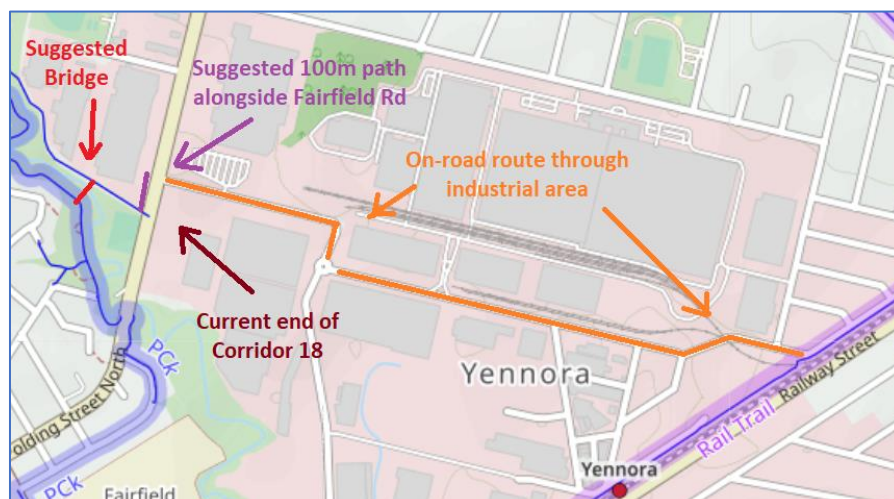
This corridor is not liked by a lot of riders. It's alongside a busy road with very little separation from the roadway in parts, is quite hilly with a lot of driveway crossings and often cars parked on or across the shared path.



Map showing the existing 'alternative' to the top section of Corridor 8 leading into Wentworthville.

## Corridor 9 (Wentworthville to Fairfield via Finlaysons Ck):

- As mentioned in our feedback for the Prospect Pipeline Corridor Masterplan <sup>[1]</sup>, CAMWEST are keen for the connection between Finlaysons Ck and the Prospect Canal path, which Corridor 9 incorporates (partly because this is an easier to ride and more pleasant alternative to Corridor 8 alongside the Cumberland Hwy).
- As also mentioned in the above Masterplan feedback, we would be keen to see a route to the Woodpark shops. The anticipated route of Corridor 9 goes closer to the shops than the Canal path but doesn't quite reach them. A 'local' route would help solve this issue.
- As mentioned in comments for Corridor 18 below, we would be keen for an extension of Corridor 9 across the Prospect Ck to join up with an existing path on the southern side of the creek (in Fairfield LGA) which would effectively continue Corridor 18 into Fairfield and join it up with the Rail Trail (Corridor 5). The existing path alongside Fairfield Rd is too narrow to fulfill the function of joining the two existing paths via shared path.
- Constructing the southernmost 100m or so of Corridor 9 between the shared path and the Dursley Rd traffic lights would provide some utility to riders. Dursley, Pine, Loftus and Military Roads in Yennora provide a reasonable on-road 2km route to the Rail Trail – particularly on weekends when there is reduced vehicular movements in this industrial precinct.



Suggested Bridge across Prospect Ck and southernmost 100m shared path of Corridor 9 alongside Fairfield Rd



## Corridor 10 (Toongabbie to Prospect Ck via Pemulwuy):

Corridor 10 is one of CAMWEST's priority routes. We believe it should be seen as a Strategic/Regional Corridor rather than a district one as it is a vital link in a wider north-south network. It was identified as a 'New' corridor in the strategy, but we believe it should be recategorized as 'partially complete'.

As far as we're concerned, the main section missing of this 9km route is a 1.5km section between Oklahoma Ave Girraween and Nijong Drive, Pemulwuy.

The path along Portico Parade in Toongabbie between the existing Girraween Ck shared path and Toongabbie Station could also be widened and other sections and crossings upgraded, but these are lower priorities than the missing link.

Note that there are significant issues with the alternative on-road route around the missing link marked on the Open Street Map image.



Marked-up Corridor 10 from Strategy



Solid thin blue lines are existing shared paths.

We believe Corridor 10 should be seen as a strategic/regional corridor. It has relative good connections to a number of existing routes as per the map to the right:

1. To the south, the T-Way path heading to areas such as Wetherill Park, Bonyrigg and Hoxton Park;
2. The Lower Prospect Canal and Prospect Ck paths heading for Guildford, Fairfield, Bankstown and other suburbs further east.
3. Seven Hills, Blacktown and other suburbs West.
4. Old Windsor Rd towards Kellyville and Windsor and The Hills district.
5. Constitution Hill, Westmead and Parramatta.

The route roughly parallels the existing Blacktown to Propspect Reservoir route. However, we feel it has a number of advantages over the existing route:

- Better connectivity.
- Not alongside a busy road.
- Is not closed between late afternoon and early morning.



Map showing some of the main branches off Corridor 10.

## **Corridors 11 & 12:**

Corridors 11 & 12 are also classified as 'New'. Corridor 11 appears to share the existing Girraween Ck shared path with Corridor 10. Both corridors 11 & 12 appear to us sections of the existing M4 shared path between Finlaysons Ck and the Rees St M4 underpass.

Both Corridors would be welcome to aid east-west traversing of the council area. We would recommend classifying Corridor 11 as Regional, as it runs roughly parallel to both the M4 and the Great Western Hwy and probably has the greatest potential for connecting to paths in the Blacktown LGA to form a major East-West Regional route.

## **Corridor 13 (Pippita Rail Trail):**

While the concept behind this corridor is applauded, we can see some major challenges in trying to implement it. There are several questions that we have – The first of which is where is the path proposed to enter the disused rail corridor at the Lidcombe end? We're wondering if the Lidcombe end of the trail may be better through residential streets than alongside the busier Bachell Ave. We also have questions and concerns about the other end of the trail in Olympic Park. The connections here are vital for the success of the trail.

## **Corridor 14 (Auburn to Cooks River via Rookwood):**

This corridor as shown doesn't lead to the Cooks River path. It terminates at a point which we argue should intersect an additional corridor between Regents Park and the Cooks River Path.

## **Corridor 15 (Lidcombe to Duck River):**

This corridor is an existing on-road route. The current route is suitable for riders who are reasonably confident riding alongside parked cars up moderate hills in moderate traffic.

## **Corridor 16 (Guildford to Duck River):**

This corridor has similar on-road conditions to those in Corridor 15. The Guildford end of the current on-road corridor is not marked on the Cycleway Finder webpage<sup>[6]</sup>.

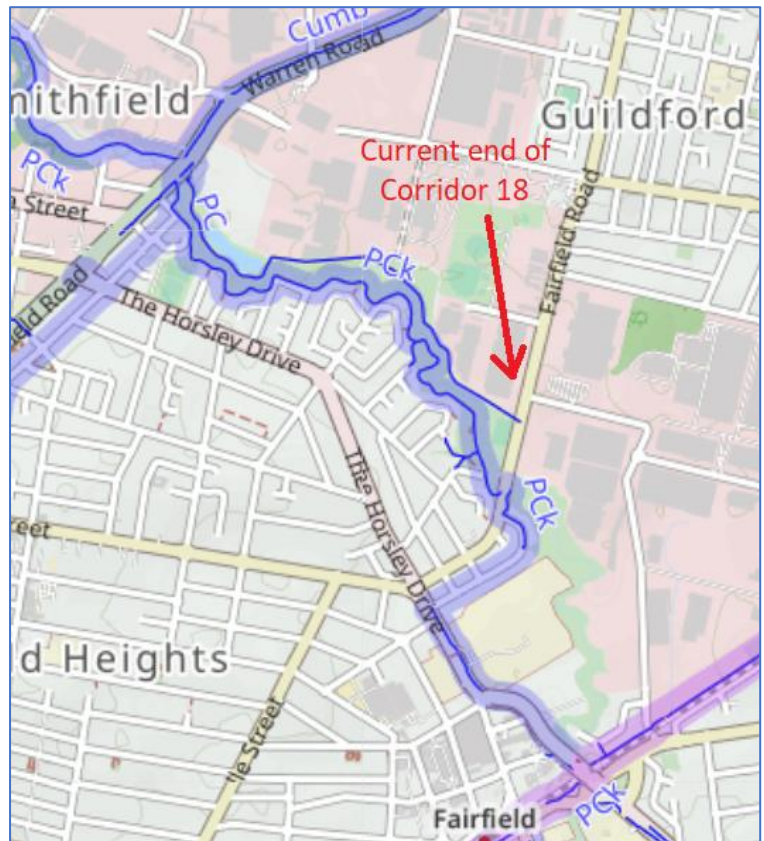
## **Corridor 17 (Pendle Hill to Prospect Pipeline Corridor at Greystanes):**

No comments at this point.

## Corridor 18 (Prospect Ck):

One of the ramifications of not showing existing paths in neighbouring LGAs is that the eastern end of this path appears to go nowhere. On the southern side of the creek there is a reasonable connection to Fairfield and the extension of Corridor 5 (Parramatta to Fairfield Rail Trail). While the existing path on the northern side of Prospect Ck between Cumberland Hwy and Fairfield Rd (in Cumberland LGA) is a lot more direct and quicker to ride, when riding this route, we normally use the southern side in of the creek in the Fairfield LGA as the connectivity between Fairfield and Cumberland Hwy is a lot better<sup>[7]</sup>.

We'd love to see a new bridge built over Prospect Ck just west of Fairfield Rd, so we could use the quicker route in Cumberland LGA then cross to the southern side for connectivity to Fairfield. This is mentioned as a possible extension of Corridor 9.



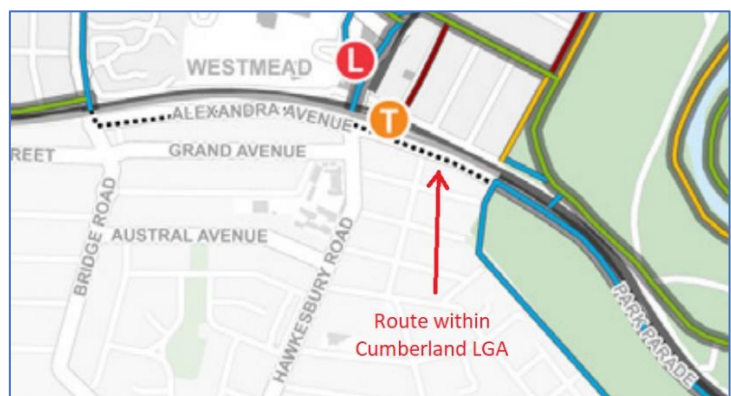
Map showing the winding path on the southern side of Prospect Ck (Fairfield LGA) compared to the more direct path on the northern side within the Cumberland LGA.

## ➤ Alignment with the Central River City Corridors:

There appears to be a couple of omissions in the strategy when comparing with the Central River City Cycleway Corridors.

- The strategy omits the corridor from Regents Park to Rookwood, and
- The strategy doesn't include the Toongabbie to Westmead Corridor. We note that the Parramatta Bike Plan includes the link along the northern side of the railway corridor between Toongabbie Station and Bridge Rd, Westmead. However, their bike plan indicates that Cumberland Council is handling the section east of Bridge Rd along Alexandra Ave to the east of Westmead Station.

Why was this omitted? Is it too 'low level' to be displayed as a strategic route or part thereof?

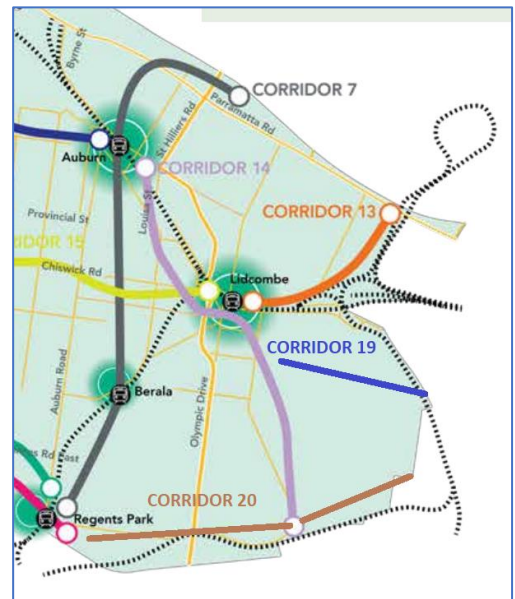


Route along Alexandra Ave and Park Parade mentioned in the Parramatta Bike Plan which doesn't appear to be mentioned in the strategy.



## ➤ Additional Corridor Opportunities:

- As mentioned above in Corridors 9 and 18, a bridge across Prospect Ck to join to the existing path which leads into Fairfield would be a very welcome addition.
- Lidcombe to the east side of Rookwood, labelled here as Corridor 19. Note that while it is probably faster and more enjoyable to ride through Rookwood during daylight hours, a path around the perimeter should be strongly considered for when the gates to Rookwood are closed (or for those riders who may feel uneasy about riding through the cemetery). This could link into the existing combined shared path and on-road route between Sydney Olympic Park and the Cooks River shared path.
- Regents Park to Cooks River path, which I've label here as Corridor 20. This could link in directly with the Cooks River shared path.
- In a previous discussion with a Council staff member, we heard that investigations were underway into the possibility of a bridge across Olympic Drive at Wyatt Park. If this is still an option, I don't see this really reflected in any of the corridors.



*Marked up section of the Strategy with additional routes added.*

## ➤ Existing Corridor Improvements:

There are a lot of improvements needed to existing pathways. Required improvements to the Duck River path and the existing section of the Prospect Canal path have been identified and commented on through the respective masterplans. However, there are improvements required for parts of the M4 path and others within the LGA.

## ➤ Closing Comments:

- We are happy to clarify or elaborate on any of the above points.
- CAMWEST are keen to be involved as the plans for the various corridors mature.
- The feedback has had input from several CAMWEST members and non-CAMWEST associates. It has been prepared by Rob Kemp on behalf of CAMWEST.

## References:

- [1] - <https://camwest.org.au/docs/CAMWEST-Prospect-Pipeline-Corridor-Masterplan-Submission.pdf>
- [2] - <https://camwest.org.au/docs/CAMWEST-Duck-River-Masterplan-Submission.pdf>
- [3] - <https://camwest.org.au/docs/CAMWEST-PippitaRailTrail-Feedback.pdf>
- [4] - <https://camwest.org.au/docs/CAMWEST-LidcombeTownCentre-Feedback.pdf>
- [5] - <https://camwest.org.au/docs/CAMWEST-M4-Path-intersection-improvements.pdf>
- [6] - [https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/maps/cycleway\\_finder/index.html#](https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au/maps/cycleway_finder/index.html#)
- [7] - <https://ridewithgps.com/routes/34807202>