



www.tinyurl/WalkACT

Comments on Draft Variation 348

To: Territory Plan Section
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Dear Territory Plan Team

Please consider our following recommendations, which are further explained in the Attachment:

1. Include a seventh principle, "*destinations are within walking or cycling distance,*" with a corollary that "*each suburb is large enough to support a local primary school and shops as its population ages.*"
2. Ensure that each Development Application is required not merely to acknowledge the principles and relevant zone objectives, but also to actively contribute to their implementation.
3. Re-phrase each reference to "*convenient access to public transport*" as "*convenient access to walking and cycling routes.*"
4. Re-phrase each reference to "*provide safe pedestrian and cycling access*" as "*provide safe, proximate and direct pedestrian and cycling access.*"

Yours Faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leon Arundell".

Leon Arundell B Sc Hons, M Env St, Grad Dipl Appl Econ.
Chair, Living Streets Canberra
10 February, 2017

Attachment: Explanation of recommendations.

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- 1. Include a seventh principle, “destinations are within walking or cycling distance,” with a corollary that “each suburb is large enough to support local primary school as its population ages.”**

If we want people to walk or cycle, we have to ensure that they have destinations within walking or cycling distance.

Walking distance, for a 30 minute walk, means within 2.5 km.

Cycling distance, for a 30 minute cycle, means within 10 km.

Walking and cycling routes are minimised by straight and direct paths to local destinations such as shops, schools, public transport stops and parks.

The first stage of a typical new suburb’s life is young couples who buy houses. In stage 2 they have children who fill the local primary school. In stage 3 the population of the primary school falls as the children leave school and then leave home. In stage 4 the school population recovers as the original couples die or move out and their homes become available to new young couples.

If the child population of a suburb falls below that required to support a local primary school, the result can be closure of the school (which requires children to travel longer distances to schools in adjacent suburbs), and even (as in suburbs like Downer) the collapse of the local shopping centre, with the result that everyone in the suburb must travel longer distances to the nearest available shops.

Further support to the evidence in the Information Paper is provided by graph of journeys according to transportation mode, on the following page.

The proportion of journeys by bicycle falls from 34% for journeys up to 7.5 km to 15% for journeys of 7.5 to 15 km and only 2% for journeys over 15 km.

If cycling journeys in each distance range are expressed as a percentage of all cycling journeys for all distances, we can calculate that 92% of cycling journeys are less than 7.5 km, 6.4% are between 7.5 and 15 km, and only 1.4% are more than 15 km.

- 2. Ensure that each Development Application is required not merely to acknowledge the principles and relevant zone objectives, but also to actively contribute to their implementation**

Principles and objectives will have little impact unless developments are required to contribute to their implementation. For example, prior to DV302 Access Streets A were not required to have footpaths. So a redevelopment on a section of existing street that has no footpaths could be required to build a section of footpath, along the frontage of the redevelopment, that meets the current requirements.

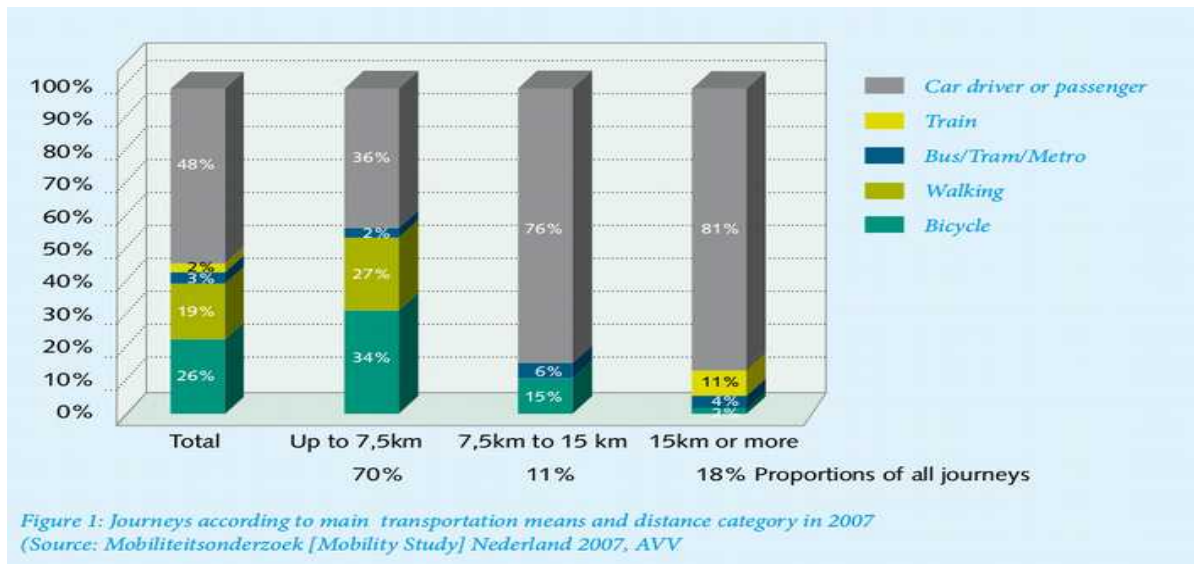


Illustration 1: Journeys according to main transportation mode (Source: Ministerie van Verkeer en Waterstaat, 2009 Cycling in the Netherlands)

3. Re-phrase each reference to “convenient access to public transport” as “convenient access to public transport and to walking and cycling routes.”

We can see no obvious reason to exclude walking and cycling from these references. In most cases we would expect there to already be convenient access to walking routes. Convenient access to cycling routes would generally be satisfied by access to local community paths.

4. Re-phrase each reference to “provide safe pedestrian and cycling access” as “provide safe, proximate and direct pedestrian and cycling access.”

As noted under recommendation 1, distance is a primary factor in people’s decisions on whether to walk or cycle. The layout of a suburb, and the layout of paths within the suburb, determine the distances between homes and schools or shops.