

**GREEN BRIDGE LINK- DRAFT IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY  
SUBMISSION TO BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL**

1. The University of Queensland welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Draft Impact Assessment Study on the proposed “Green Bridge” Link.
2. The University has acknowledged, for some years, the need to improve access to the St Lucia campus, particularly for those traveling from the South. Efforts have been made, in partnership with the Brisbane City Council (BCC), to improve public transport to the campus but improvements in the provision of this mode of travel have not kept pace with the growth of the University.
3. While recognising that travel patterns are seasonal, and are particularly heavy during the two main teaching semesters, it is estimated that about 60% of commuters to the campus each day, on average, travel by car. Our records show that in 2002, 36% of students and 40% of staff traveled to the campus from Southern or Eastern suburbs not all of which will be well served by public transport.
4. The University Senate acknowledged that access to the campus was a major issue in 1992 when it introduced a paid parking scheme at St Lucia and developed a transport and parking strategy which involved:
  - improved public transport arrangements;
  - encouragement of the use of bicycles;
  - incentives for the shared use of cars;
  - co-operation with the BCC over the introduction of a restricted parking scheme in the immediate neighbourhood of the campus; and
  - provision, paid for out of parking fee revenues, of additional parking spaces on campus to minimise the impact of parking on the surrounding area.
5. The University remains committed to this strategy and will support, and attempt to work in partnership with the BCC, to develop solutions which improve access to the St Lucia campus, particularly in the form of public transport. We believe that significantly more can be done in this area.
6. The University, however, will not support a public transport solution which requires a large area in the heart of the St Lucia campus to become a public transport corridor.

7. The campus is one the University's major assets. It has consistently been identified in market surveys as one of the major factors in shaping the decision of students in their choice of university in what has become an increasingly competitive environment. Moreover, the campus is a significant community asset. It has become an important area of parkland and public recreation. The University receives no funding for maintaining this community asset and in fact is one of only three Universities in Australia to be taxed by its local authority through the imposition of general rates.
8. The University believes that the Brisbane City Council's preferred solution of a four carriageway bridge from Dutton Park to College Road into the heart of the campus and the resulting impact of public transport on approximately 2km of campus roads will have a hugely deleterious impact on the amenity of the campus and the adjacent residential areas of St Lucia. It will apparently require long stretches of road along the University's parkland to be widened and many mature trees to be removed. These roads are, at times, heavily used by joggers, walkers and cyclists as well as cars and we have obvious safety concerns relating to them becoming a Busway. It is estimated that up to 240 additional buses a day will drive through the campus. The preferred solution is rejected by the University which will not support or co-operate in its implementation.
9. Moreover, we are not convinced that the bridge, as designed, will not be used, in the long term, for general vehicular traffic or even that it can be policed adequately in the short term to prevent its use by some cars.
10. We are intensely disappointed that there has been no meaningful discussion or analysis of the impact of the proposed solution on the St Lucia Campus or of alternatives to this grandiose and expensive scheme which has been incorrectly and misleadingly labeled as a "Green Bridge".
11. The Council claims that the proposed solution is the only way to resolve long term public transport issues within the City and to deal with the impact of single occupant car travel to the St Lucia Campus. The Council has provided no evidence that the proposed bridge will resolve the problem of access to the St Lucia Campus. It has presented no evidence that large numbers of students and staff will convert to public transport as assumed or that there will be any reduction in the number of cars wishing to access St Lucia. The dedication of two lanes of the already overloaded Sir Fred Schonell Drive to buses will exacerbate these problems, particularly at peak travel times. The preferred solution has the potential to create a transport corridor which will bring people through the campus who would otherwise have little reason to be there and thus exacerbate, rather than resolve, traffic and other problems in the area. It also reinforces the view that what the Council is seeking is not just to provide additional public transport to the University but to establish a major transport thoroughway linking the suburbs south of the river to those to the north and west. We urge the Council

to make public the traffic studies upon which this preferred solution was based so that the conclusions which have been drawn from these studies can be exposed to public debate and objective analysis.

12. The University, for some years, has been discussing with the BCC, the feasibility of a truly green bridge, limited to pedestrians, cyclists and small electric vehicles. The University strongly supports such a concept and does not understand why a bridge, or bridges, of this type could not be combined with a public transport solution which improves access to the campus from the South but does not involve buses traversing the campus.
13. In summary, the St Lucia Campus not only makes a significant contribution to enabling the University to maintain and enhance its standing as a major teaching and research institution but is also a significant community asset which should be sustained and enhanced. We believe that both of these factors are endangered by the preferred solution. The University, therefore:
  - rejects the preferred solution of a large vehicular bridge from Dutton Park to College Road;
  - supports the concept of one or more truly green bridges, designed to be used only by pedestrians, cyclists and small electric vehicles and linking with a bus interchange and parking stations on the opposite side of the river serviced by an electric vehicle shuttle service to, and possibly through, the campus;
  - opposes any solution which results in a public transport corridor through the St Lucia Campus and urges that a more detailed analysis be made of alternative solutions which confine any increased bus traffic to the edges of the campus; and
  - commits to working with the BCC to provide more general improvements to campus access by means other than the car.

4 March 2003