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Our ref: <C 03 009>
Your ref:

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Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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Dear John and Patrick,

Design Guide

We enjoyed meeting you last week, and were very grateful that you were able to find the time for, what I hope you found, was a useful meeting. This is a short letter to follow up briefly the main points we discussed, as the Campaign's response at this stage of process.

Overall view

In summary, we felt that the draft, though an early one, is very promising. We would not wish to see it watered-down. Encouragingly, we feel that the guide is not desperately far from completion, the main deficiency being the need to clarify it, through reorganisation.

Reorganisation

Our main suggestion was that the first half of the guide should be presented in the form of a series of chapters mirroring the Hierarchy of Measures. Such a reorganisation, we feel very strongly, would help reinforce this hierarchy to the reader, whether technical or lay readers. This step alone would increase very considerably its quality.

The Guide would therefore begin:

1. Principles of planning for the cyclist (basically the first half of the current chapter 1)
2. Traffic Reduction (currently not covered)
3. Traffic Calming (which can bring out particular examples but not restate other technical guidance; based on the current section 5)
4. Traffic Management / Junction Treatment (from the current section 5)
5. Cycle Lanes & Re-allocation of carriageway space (separate from cycle tracks; taking sections of chapters 3 and 4)
6. Cycle Tracks (separate from cycle lanes; taking sections of chapters 3, 4 and 6)

As noted above, we believe strongly that Cycle Lanes and Cycle Tracks should be treated as separate chapters. The present treatment is very muddled and doesn't give on-road provision the priority it requires, if provision for cyclists in Cambridgeshire is to improve.

The purpose of the Design Guide

We understand your dilemma of deciding what form the Guide should take and that there are resource issues surrounding its completion. (Should a request be put to Councillors for increased resources towards completion, we would be prepared to lobby in support of this, given the high strategic importance, and therefore good value, of the Guide.)

We believe it extremely important that the process results in clear guidance for use which is widely applicable, rather than purely for cycling schemes. We therefore gave our suggestion that an Executive Summary, similar to Edinburgh's Design Guide, would be helpful, particularly for developer-led schemes. We feel this would help get round the danger that the Guide might only end up being used for 'cycling schemes' rather than designing with cyclists in mind, which is vastly preferable.

Missing sections

We noted the main things we believed were missing: The hierarchy of road users (e.g. reproduce from LTP Section 6); Incorporating the numbers of cyclists into decision matrices; The need for better data; Traffic Reduction; Lower speeds; More on Cycle Audit and Review; Cycling in parks and commons: defining and improving policy and standards.

'Hybrid' provision: new to Cambridge

We presented our suggestion of hybrid provision (see attached), increasingly being found elsewhere, e.g. in Oxford and abroad in Århus. Effectively partially segregated on-road provision, this, we think, would provide the 'best of both worlds' and get round the problems of pavement-style provision. We will forward our forthcoming new Position Paper on this.

Final points

We restate that we would like to be in the position that a good Design Guide would result in well thought-out schemes, ones which we would have no hesitation in actively welcoming and supporting, rather than having to record repeatedly our detailed objections.

Attached are the notes we brought to the meeting. A few of the points within it were not discussed due to lack of time (e.g. our points on derogation in section 2.3). We hope you will have time to work through the notes more closely.

Lastly, may I recall our agreement that electronic provision of future versions of the draft would be helpful. I can provide assurance that this will not result in multiple submissions from us; rather, it is helpful for the Committee volunteers each to have a copy they can look through at their leisure, in preparation for our (single) official response.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Martin Lucas-Smith
Cambridge Cycling Campaign