

March 7, 2003

Our ref: <C 03 012>
Your ref:

Richard Preston
Environment & Transport Department
Cambridgeshire County Council
Castle Court, Shire Hall
Castle Hill
Cambridge CB3 0AP



Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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Dear Mr Preston,

Cambridge Core Traffic Scheme: Stage 3

Further to our letter dated 17th February 2003 on the technical points pertaining to the TRO and related speed limit orders, I write to give the Campaign's general response to the consultation on Silver Street scheme and its associated measures.

Silver Street area

In general, Cambridge Cycling Campaign welcomes measures towards the closure of Silver Street, in line with our earlier support for the closures of Bridge Street and Emmanuel Street to general motor vehicle traffic. Such closures have led to a considerable improvement in the local environment, with associated convenience and safety benefits for cyclists.

Cambridge Cycling Campaign has long favoured the closure of Silver Street for 24 hours a day, seven days a week to all through motor traffic, and would be supportive of proposals to this effect in the future (providing any associated changes were not significantly to the detriment of cyclists elsewhere). However, we recognise the political reality of the need for pragmatic proposals for progressive movement towards total closure. In this regard, we believe the present proposals are a welcome step in the right direction.

We support both design options, with a preference for option B (one way flow through the closure point). We would like the period of closure to be as long as possible.

We would strongly support the introduction of a 20mph speed limit. This would be highly beneficial for the many pedestrians and cyclists using this area, although we hope that the need for supporting enforcement will be brought to the attention of police authorities.

Inner ring road changes

We are opposed to measures to increase the capacity of the inner ring road through the creation of additional lanes along Gonville Place and at the Queen's Road - Madingley Road and Newnham Road - Fen Causeway roundabouts. Increased capacity of roundabouts and

narrowed lanes both approaching roundabouts and elsewhere cause danger in many respects for cyclists. This danger would be particularly great in Gonville Place for westbound cyclists wishing to go straight ahead into Lensfield Road. Furthermore, the change at Queen's Road should be unnecessary, as traffic is predicted to reduce.

We have heard reports that this change is being introduced not to increase traffic capacity but to allow emergency vehicles to pass queuing traffic. If this is genuinely the case then there is no need to introduce an additional lane. All that is needed is to remove the central islands. The additional carriageway width could then be used to provide cycle lanes.

The traffic management strategy should be to reduce road capacity, not to increase it. Increasing it could lead to additional traffic. We applaud the Council's leadership in closing Silver Street but we believe that the overall benefit to the quality of life and the traffic problems in Cambridge would be negated by increasing road capacity elsewhere. **We would therefore ask for deferral of consideration of changes to the inner ring road capacity,** as with other parts of the scheme which are being deferred such as proposed traffic lights at the 'Royal Cambridge Hotel' junction.

We welcome any increase in urban clearway designation along the inner ring road. We would particularly like to see the creation of a full-time urban clearway outside the shops in East Road where unnecessary parking appears to be a root cause of delays further back towards Lensfield Road. We would welcome investigation of this problem. More generally we would favour a reduction in on-road parking and an increase in on-road cycle lanes all along the inner ring road. We believe that such measures have become appropriate given increases in parking being provided by the Park and Ride schemes.

We welcome the proposed conversion of the crossing in Queen's Road near Garrett Hostel Lane to a toucan crossing; such conversion will increase its convenience to pedestrians and cyclists using this crossing. In giving our support we would seek assurance that the crossing will not be encumbered with chicanes and other obstructions and is fitted with detector loops.

We do not consider the proposed changes to the Gresham Road crossing to be an 'upgrade' as described in the consultation leaflet. The Gresham Road crossing is probably the best in the city and does not require upgrading - except perhaps to remove the banned turns. The proposed removal of the central island and the addition of an extra lane would increase the likelihood of traffic queuing across the crossing. In no circumstances should the detector loops be removed.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Martin Lucas-Smith
Co-ordinator