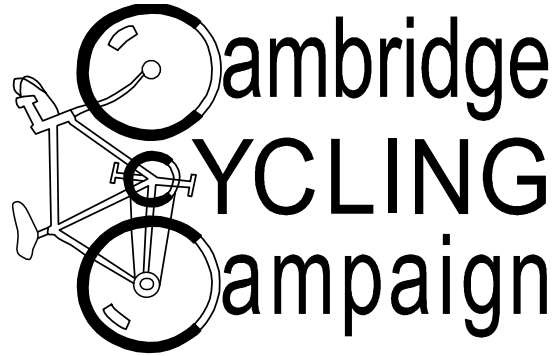


March 10, 2003

Our ref: L03002
Your ref:

Alistair Frost
Box ET1017
Cambridgeshire County Council
Castle Court, Shire Hall
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Cambridge CB3 0AP



Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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Dear Mr Frost,

Milton Road proposed bus lane and junction work

Cambridge Cycling Campaign **strongly objects** to both the proposed **new bus lane** and to the proposed **dedicated left turn lane** at the A14 interchange.

Proposed new Bus Lane on Milton Road

We object to the bus lane proposals because:

- **We object to the removal of the mandatory (on-road) cycle lane** on the east side of Milton Road. Mandatory cycle lanes are an important part of the provision for cyclists on Milton Road. Many cyclists prefer to cycle on the carriageway, as they are perfectly entitled to do, in part because of the problems that driveways and side-roads cause for cyclists using pavement cycleways. Even if pavement cyclists are given greater priority over side roads than they are at present, problems will remain because of poor visibility at driveways, and obstruction of side-road crossing places by motor vehicles waiting to join the Milton Road traffic.
- The narrow resulting inbound lane, on the opposite side of the road from the proposed bus-lane, would cause **serious problems for the hundreds of cyclists that use this section** daily. When there is outbound queuing traffic, inbound motorists will try to squeeze past, too close to cyclists. *We know* this will happen, as it already happens regularly to cyclists who use the narrow north-bound lane opposite the existing stretch of bus lane on Milton Road. It happens so often that Cambridge cyclists have christened this problem "the Milton Road effect".
- The consultation leaflet for this proposal contained **no data on the extent of delays to buses** in this area. The agenda papers for the Cambridge Environment and Transport Area Joint Committee meeting of 4 November 2002 said only "In both the morning and evening peak buses can be delayed for up to 7 minutes while queuing northbound on this section of Milton Road." Cambridge Cycling Campaign does not believe that it is acceptable to plan to spend £300,000, and cause severe

inconvenience and intimidation to hundreds of cyclists all day every day, on the basis of such inadequate information as “up to 7 minutes”. What little data we were eventually provided with, after repeated requests, was old, incomplete and probably invalid, as much of it involved GPS timings done in cars that seemed to be queuing alongside the existing stretches of bus lane.

- **Insufficient information about the segregated “duel (sic) pedestrian/cycle footway”**. The consultation leaflet went to considerably greater lengths to assure readers of the trees’ survival than it did to provide any concrete data on the expected widths of the cycle and pedestrian sections of shared use. We think this renders the results of the consultation useless.
- **Removal of the island at the pedestrian crossing just north of Kendal Way**: This crossing is very well used by many cyclists and pedestrians. The central island allows people to cross in two stages, very often not needing to press the button and wait, causing traffic to stop. Without the island, people crossing would have to wait for a simultaneous gap in all three traffic lanes - resulting in longer waits for those crossing, and more delays to traffic because of increased use of the signals. (The consultation leaflet appeared to state that this crossing would remain the same.)

Proposed changes – Science Park to A14 Milton Interchange

We object to these proposals because:

- The consultation gave no predictions of levels of **traffic growth** as a consequence of building the additional left-turn lane at the Milton Interchange. Whilst a left-turn lane might give a short-term benefit to journey times, it would encourage more journeys, resulting in an eventual net increase in car-based congestion, which buses and cyclists would have to suffer for years to come. Spending £800,000 or more, trying to “build ourselves out of traffic problems” simply does not work.
- The consultation gave no consideration as to the extent to which the sheer **volume of traffic leaving the Science Park and Cowley Road** is the cause of problems for buses on Milton Road. Simple, and much cheaper, measures such as adjusting traffic light timings to give a fairer balance between Milton Road and these large edge-of-town traffic generators could have a much more significant, and longer term, beneficial effect on bus journey times.
- The dedicated left-turn lane will cause real **problems for cyclists heading from this area to Impington and Histon**. For them, a route *via* the very welcome new cycle and pedestrian bridge at Milton would represent a considerable detour. It would also necessarily involve negotiating the bridge over the A10 at Butt Lane, which is very awkward to manoeuvre through, and impassable to bikes with trailers.

If these proposals were to go ahead, and we strongly believe that they should not, there must be:

- a guarantee that **no construction can start on the left-turn lane before the opening of the Milton cycle bridge**
- **major improvements to the bridge at Butt Lane over the A10**, so that it is safely and conveniently passable by bikes with child and shopping trailers, tandems etc.
- a **design which draws motorists’ attention to the presence of cyclists** (where they are perfectly entitled to be) on the approach to the roundabout. For example, this could be either a (large) central refuge between the new lane and the existing

slip road to allow cyclists to cross in two stages by going up the new lane and off on to a jug handle, or alternatively a cycle lane between the new lane and the old left hand lane, extending to the roundabout, and a sharp start to the new left lane, rather than have a long drawn out gradual start. Clear signposting indicating the presence of cyclists will also be essential. There must be full consultation with cycling organisations on the detailed design of this layout.

Other means of tackling the problem

Cambridge Cycling Campaign's view is that improving public transport must play a part in solving Cambridge traffic problems, but extra road space for buses should be obtained by removing road space from other motor vehicles and not by forcing cyclists off the road.

We believe that there are two big issues that need to be tackled.

Firstly, bus performance needs to be improved by installing on-street ticket machines and simplifying fares. This would, we believe, reduce bus delays more cheaply and more effectively than building bus lanes. The statistical data collected by the council to justify both sets of proposals on Milton Road are unconvincing.

Secondly, it must be understood that a major cause of traffic congestion along Milton Road is the number of private cars emerging from the Science Park during the evening peak. (A similar problem exists on Hills Road at the Addenbrooke's Hospital exit.) We urgently need measures to reduce this number and to support those who minimise their impact on the city's traffic congestion by walking, cycling and using public transport.

The solution to Cambridge's transport problems is not to reduce the number of cyclists, or to discourage cycling, but to reduce the number of private cars at peak times. Ill-thought out bus priority measures, and increases in road capacity, will do nothing to achieve such a reduction.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Clare Macrae