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From: J. Chisholm <JC235@hermes.cam.ac.uk>
To: PAM PERCEVAL-MAXWELL <pam.percevalmaxwell@btinternet.com>
Cc: contact@camcycle.org.uk, nigel brigham <susteast@waitrose.com>
Subject: Surface condition of Cycle Paths

Pam

As requested by the Inspector at the Public Inquiry for the Cambridgeshire Guided Bus, here is a list of sample surfaces in order of quality. For some routes I've made additional comments about the lighting.

Machine laid Asphalt/Tarmac

Trumpington Road shared use path(segregated) I suggest opposite Wingate Way for easy parking. GR 5446 2556. This is a good quality surface on a route used by many cyclists. It is usually very busy between 08:30 and 09:00, when the inadequate width can be a problem. This route is well lit.

Asphalt/Tarmac

National Cycle Network (route 51) near Wadloes Road GR 5477 2598. This route which runs across Ditton Meadows to the rear of developments, is a good quality surface, but unlit and hence less used in the dark.

Hand laid Asphalt/Tarmac (with resin bonded gravel)

National Cycle Network (route 11) across Coe Fen (suggested access from Trumpington Rd opp Botanic Gardens) GR 5453 2570. The surface here is, I believe, a (very) expensive 'resin bonded gravel' for environmental reasons. The underlying surface is a poor quality hand laid asphalt/tarmac. This feels very uneven when cycling at normal speed. The route is unlit making it a poor alternative to the lit roads in the area for winter commuting.

Hoggin

[Hoggin is the term given to a mixture of clays, sands and gravels to form a material that compacts well and provides a usable, stable surface at low cost.]

Milton Country Park, GR 5475 2620, is adjacent to the recently opened 'Jane Coston' cycle bridge over the A14 which the Inspector expressed an interest in visiting. The paths with the Milton Country Park (cycling is permitted) are of this material. Hoggin is also the material which will be used to upgrade the Cam towpath N of the city in the next few months. For environmental reasons no tarmac surface will be added.

Although hoggin is smooth enough for walkers etc, it provides a less than comfortable ride on a bike. Containing clay, and hence being impermeable it is liable to puddles with consequent erosion. Note that even though it has a 'stable' surface it is unsuited to commuting routes due to uneven surface, and risk of puddles with associated mud slashing.

Unbound Granular Materials (Unbound Granular Material) Type 1 Granular sub-base

[This is a material from a certified source and should have the correct proportion of 'fines' (dusty material) and solids. The solids should not exceed 37.5mm in size. The mixture of solids and fines is designed to ensure that there are no voids in the sub-base material once compacted, that the aggregate forms an acceptable level of interlock between the angular particles, and that the compacted sub-base will allow any ground water to drain through.]

The path, over which cyclists are allowed permissive use, from Trumpington to Addenbrooke's Hospital is of a not dis-similar material. This can easily be accessed from the end of Paget Road GR 5450 2551. The decay of an 'unbound' surface can often be seen here. When braking or steering the surface is likely to move under the bike. This is a route that is used by commuting cyclists but is unlit. (Network Rail are unhappy at the amount of use of the 'at grade' uncontrolled crossing of the main line on this path. Any attempt to upgrade this path, with consequent increase in use

would be likely to result in a threat of closure of the crossing by Network Rail)

I'm told that the National Cycle Network (route 63) from Peterborough to Whittlesey, which runs along the top of a flood bank, is an example of a stone path which has deteriorated to such an extent that funds are now being sort to upgrade it to tarmac.

Please email me if require any further information.

[The definitions in square brackets come from:

<http://www.pavingexpert.com>]

Jim Chisholm Campaigner Cambridge Cycling Campaign
<http://www.camcycle.org.uk/> contact@camcycle.org.uk
