

July 3, 2005

Our ref: C 05 01

Councillors of the Cambridge Traffic
Management Area Joint Committee



Cambridge Cycling Campaign

P.O. Box 204, Cambridge CB4 3FN
01223 690718 (phone & fax)
contact@camcycle.org.uk
www.camcycle.org.uk

Dear Councillor,

**Cambridge Environment & Transport Management Area Joint Committee meeting, 4th
July 2005¹**

We write to give our views on various matters on the agenda for this meeting.

6a & 7a George Street petition

Whilst we are pleased that residents of George Street are concerned with the safety of cyclists using the route, we feel the correct solution is the removal of a small number of car parking spaces at key points to create passing points. It would be a totally retrograde step to ban two-way cycling through this road where there is so little motor traffic. We have heard from a number of local people who have written to us to express their opposition to any such suggestion.

6b) Willis Road parking

Whilst we do not wish to take a view on this proposal, we feel that any proposals to increase residential car parking must be accompanied, as a matter of course, by residential cycle parking, as is common on the Continent. There is a real shortage of cycle parking in the Mill Road area, and gradual increases in provision would seem sensible.

8a) Cambridge Core Area: Air Quality Action Plan

20mph zone (section 2.3): We naturally support proposals for a core-wide 20mph zone. We have separately written on a previous occasion to indicate our support for a slightly larger and more coherent zone.

¹ Agenda at: <http://tinyurl.com/c5tqc>

Inner Ring Road (sections 2.6/2.7): We very strongly support the suggestion of extending the urban clearway restrictions to the whole of the inner ring road. We feel that the current situation is totally at variance with the current sensible policy to get traffic to avoid passing through the city centre and to use the inner ring road instead. We feel particularly strongly about the situation on East Road, which is very congested and which creates considerable problems for cyclists.

8b) Conversion of East Road - Burleigh Street - Norfolk Street pelican crossing

We have had a constructive on-site meeting with Officers and the local Councillor and we welcome the fact that some important modifications to the original plans have now been made.

We have long argued for conversion of this crossing to a toucan and are pleased that firm proposals have finally come forward. We have written separately² to Officers regarding a few concerns on the details. In summary these are:

- The need to provide protection for cyclists making a right turn from East Road into Burleigh Street (a concern also expressed by Councillor Rosenstiel).
- The need for detector loops. We think the level of “false demands” by cyclists who are not intending to cross would be low. We disagree with the comment by Officers that there are “limited benefits” and ask the Committee to approve a scheme to best practice and which does not treat cyclists as less worthy than motorists. Detector loops are of course routinely used to change traffic signals for approaching motorists.
- We object to the conversion of a narrow footway beyond the planters along East Road to shared use. The need for taking up pedestrian space has not been demonstrated. Local and national policy is that Shared Use should be provision of last resort. A reasonably good on-road cycle lane already exists. This aspect of the proposal should simply be removed.
- We feel it essential that all car parking spaces outside the Norfolk Street shops (CB2 etc) near the junction with East Road are removed. The current, absurdly-located, parking creates much conflict between vehicles and cyclists. There is other parking available nearby.
- Sets of kerb-side railings are proposed. We feel this sort of outdated 1970’s-style provision should be removed as it may encourage faster traffic speeds and can be intimidating for on-road cyclists forced close to the railings by passing vehicles.
- The very wide pavement outside the school should be narrowed in order to provide an on-road cycle lane. This would enable, at last, a joined-up cycle lane along East Road. This would help cyclists bypass queuing traffic. The changes to the junction provide an excellent opportunity to make such a change. We also wish to see a full clearway along East Road (see above). This scheme could with these adjustments be a major improvement for cyclists.

² <http://www.camcycle.org.uk/campaigning/letters/2005/NC05007EastRoadToucan.pdf>

9a) Jointly funded cycleways programme 2005-6: Contraflow cycling treatments

We warmly welcome these proposals, which represent highly effective improvements for cyclists in line with national policy. These should increase cycling rates by opening previously blocked routes at what is a low cost compared to many schemes. We hope that the sites listed at a previous meeting will indeed be the subject of work in coming years.

The report notes the practical problems of signage due to inflexibility of Department for Transport Regulations. We ask the Committee to consider passing a resolution like the following:

'The Cambridge Environment and Traffic Management Area Joint Committee supports the creation by the Department for Transport of a 'No Entry Except Cyclists' sign. We feel that such a sign would make cycle contraflow conversions simpler, and would increase compliance rates by all road users. We note that a similar sign exists for buses, without problems. We move that Officers write to the DfT to relay this view.'

9b) Mount Pleasant-Huntingdon Road-Victoria Road-Castle Street Junction Cycle Improvements

We welcome these proposals and will make detailed comments during the consultation process.

9c) Victoria Avenue Proposed Toucan Crossings

We have had a constructive on-site meeting with Officers and the local Councillor and we welcome the fact that some important modifications to the original plans have now been made.

However some serious problems remain, most notably the proposal that the northern crossing (near the river) should be dog-legged (indirect). Although we are generally keen on toucan crossings, changes must avoid creating conflict and unnecessary inconvenience for all users, as is proposed here. Our concerns, in summary, are:

- The northern crossing should be direct, i.e. in a straight line. This is to make the crossing convenient, avoids cyclists making unexpected movements, and avoids cyclists having to cycle on the pavements where conflict with pedestrians is inevitable. Most roads in Cambridge present the opportunity for road users to "emerge unimpeded into the carriageway" but common sense prevails. There is no need to stop pedestrians and cyclists from following their natural desire line by creating obstructions which cause unnecessary conflict between pedestrians and cyclists.
- It is essential that detector loops are installed at this crossing so that motorists are not given automatic priority and cyclists need not unnecessarily lose momentum by having to stop to press a button. Detector loops and straight-across crossings are used successfully elsewhere in the city most notably at the Fair Street crossing of Maid's Causeway, at the Gresham Road crossing of Gonville Place and at the Burrell's Walk crossing of Queen's Road. To fail to provide such a crossing here would be a retrograde step.
- So-called safety railings are again proposed and represent a form of highway design of a bygone age. They obstruct pedestrian movement and remove the possibility of escape

by on-road cyclists in the event of any conflict with a large vehicle. These should simply be removed from the plans.

9d) Provision of Cycle Facilities on Hills Road Railway Bridge

We are very pleased to see proposals to tackle this area and will make detailed comments during the consultation process.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Martin Lucas-Smith
Co-ordinator