

June 7, 2005

Our ref: L05001  
Your ref:

Brian Smith  
Deputy Chief Executive  
Environment and Community Services  
ET1016  
Castle Court, Shire Hall  
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Cambridge CB3 0AP



**Cambridge Cycling Campaign**

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Dear Mr Smith,

### **Victoria Avenue Proposed Toucan Crossings**

Having studied the drawings of these proposals, we acknowledge that certain manoeuvres often carried out by cyclists will be made legal by the proposed installation of toucan crossings and some lengths of shared-use pavement. However, we believe that the new proposals could better serve the needs of cyclists if some adaptations were made to the plans. In certain respects the proposals make the situation less suitable for cyclists.

This letter is, therefore, our **formal objection** to the proposals for the two toucan crossings in Victoria Avenue. However, if our requests can be taken up, we would be willing to consider withdrawing our objections.

#### Points applicable to both crossings:

1. **Flush Kerbs:** At the beginning and end of every length of shared-use pavement, there needs to be a way for cyclists to get on or off the pavement (i.e. flush kerbs). The absence of an exit onto the road would encourage illegal cycling on the pavement beyond the end of the shared use.
2. **Width of Traffic Islands:** We consider that the increase in the width of the traffic islands makes the road lanes too narrow. (For example, at the northern crossing the southbound lane seems to have been narrowed from 3.5m to 3.2m and the northbound (including bus lane) from 6.4m to 5.8m.) It is important that the carriageway be kept as wide as possible at these pinch points where cyclists may be forced against the kerb and for this reason we oppose any widening of the islands.
3. **Traffic Signals:** We would like to see loops installed to enable cycles to cross more efficiently (as at the cycle crossings of Queen's Road and Gonville Place). The crossing buttons must be conveniently located for cyclists to operate them without having to dismount. We cannot tell from the plans whether both proposed crossings are to remain

single stage; it is essential that they do, to avoid parents with child trailers being stranded in the middle of the road.

4. Railings: We consider the presence of railings alongside such narrow road lanes to be hazardous for cyclists. The railings deny on-road cyclists any possibility of escape in any conflict with buses and other wide vehicles. Many cyclists regard kerb-side railings as intimidating. In the present instances they also increase pedestrian/cycle conflict by narrowing the usable width of the lengths of shared-use pavement.

#### Northern Crossing:

The Burrell's Walk crossing of Queen's Road has recently been much improved by removing the diversions and converting it to a direct, straight-across crossing. We consider that this example should also be followed at the northern Victoria Avenue crossing. It would be inexcusable to miss this opportunity. A direct crossing aligned with the cycle paths from the commons would reduce the potential for pedestrian/cyclist conflict, and would enable cyclists to cross the cattle grid straight rather than at a dangerous angle, as well as being generally more convenient for both cyclists and pedestrians. We would also favour the removal or realignment of the bollards at the entrance to Jesus Green.

#### Southern Crossing:

The drawings indicate the removal of the present flush kerb next to the path which leads across Butts Green to the Fair Street crossing. This is perhaps the most objectionable point in these proposals. One of the most common cycle journeys in this area is from Mitcham's Corner, along Victoria Avenue and then across the common to Fair Street. Cyclists will not want to leave the road at the crossing and try to pass people waiting at the lights and then cycle down the narrow shared-use pavement in order to access the common. Removing the flush kerb would impede cyclists wishing to leave the road rendering them vulnerable to the danger of being shunted from behind, would seriously increase pedestrian/cyclist conflict along the shared-use pavement and would make the access to the common much less convenient than it is at present.

If the crossing could be set at an angle (like the western cycle crossing of Fen Causeway) we would support this provided that this would not involve converting it to a two-stage crossing.

If your colleagues would like to meet us to discuss our concerns, we would welcome such a meeting.

Yours sincerely,  
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Clare Macrae