

November 11, 2005

Our ref: L06001
Your ref:

Mike Davies, Capital Programme
Office of Environment and Community
Services
Cambridgeshire County Council
Box ET 1017, Shire Hall
Castle Court
Cambridge CB3 0AP



Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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Dear Mr Davies,

Sheep's Green Bridge Approach Ramps

Cambridge Cycling Campaign strongly opposes the current inadequate yet intrusive plans to upgrade the approaches to the Sheep's Green bridge and the use of 'South Cambridge Cycleways' GADG monies for the purpose.

We oppose this on three grounds:

1. We believe that the current proposals will entirely prejudice replacement of the bridge with a proper cycleable bridge. Any work on the approaches using 'South Cambridge cycleways' GADG monies must, at the least, be 'future proof', and mean that when a wider span more suitable for cycling is eventually installed the approach ramps must require little further modification.
2. The design as shown has ramps and approach spans that appear little, if any, wider but much longer than the existing ramps. This will increase the conflict between users of the bridge by making it even more difficult for those on foot or with pushchairs, wheelchairs or bicycles, sometimes with cycle trailers, to pass each other. The current bridge and approach ramps combined are around 30m long. In the proposed design this is increased to over 60m. The available inside width of the current bridge is only 1.23m, insufficient even to allow two wheelchair users to pass each other. Would one have to reverse back down an approach ramp?

We consider that an attractive bridge, like Garrett Hostel bridge (internal width 3.77m) is needed which is not intimidating for its users and on which passers-by can, if they choose, linger to look along the river without feeling under pressure to move to allow others across the bridge.

3. We consider the ramps and railings unnecessarily complex and intrusive. Given that there is only a slight drop (not exceeding 1.5m) from the approach spans to a grassy surface we consider that DMRB 'bridge' standard parapets are totally inappropriate.

We would find acceptable simple approach spans and ramps wide enough for a typical child trailer (say as promoted by the City Council) to pass a child buggy with a child alongside. A width similar to the Garrett Hostel bridge would allow for this. We hope that, for example, traditional 'Cambridge' iron railings could be used for the approaches. We oppose spending any of the monies obtained specifically for cycleway purposes on a bridge or approach ramps that are unsuitable for cyclists. We call for this grant obtained for cycleways to be spent on cycleways. There are plenty of alternative purposes within the framework of the South Cambridge Cycleway Scheme on which the monies obtained could be spent before April 2006.*

We would be pleased to meet other interested parties 'on-site' to see if suitable solutions can be found which would enable a March '06 deadline to be met.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Jim Chisholm

* We have outlined a number of these in our response to consultation dated 1st March 2005 (www.camcycle.org.uk/campaigning/letters/2005/#NA05004). We can provide a full list of our updated suggestions on request.

Cc
Caroline Gohler Cambridge Preservation Society
Alex Reid County Councillor, Newnham
Anne Kent County Councillor, Trumpington
Sian Reid City Councillor, Newnham
Julie Smith City Councillor, Newnham
Rod Cantrill City Councillor, Newnham
Councillor members of the Cambridge Traffic Management Area Joint Committee
Ian Stewart Cambridgeshire County Council
Brian Smith Cambridgeshire County Council
John Clough Cambridgeshire County Council
Philip Crack Cambridgeshire County Council
Patrick Joyce Cambridgeshire County Council
Gerald Reilly Cambridgeshire County Council
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