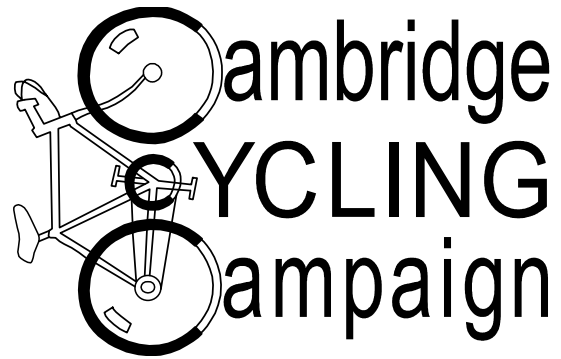


November 21, 2006

Our ref: C 07 002
Your ref:

Susan Mills
Environment & Community Services
Cambridgeshire County Council
Castle Court, Shire Hall
Castle Hill
Cambridge CB3 0AP



Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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

Dear Susan Mills,

Hazardous arrangement for cyclists at the Core Stage 4 bollards on Regent Street

You will be aware that we wrote informally asking when the new TROs for the Mandatory Cycle Lanes adjacent to the new bollards came into force. We also expressed concern that cyclists using the northbound bypass at the bollards are seriously disadvantaged, as motor vehicles seem to expect cyclists to 'give way' at the merge. On 8th November, you replied:

There is a "no loading" restriction in force along here so enforcement can be carried out. Last week, we ordered a dashed "edge of carriageway" line to be laid where the cycle lane and traffic merge after the closure point. This merge should not be so much of a problem once the bollard is brought into operation. Until that time, many cyclists might prefer to use the traffic lane. We will do a lot of publicity, signing and apply red surfacing to the cycle lane when we bring the bollard into operation.

We are concerned that the detail of the 'closure' point in Regent Street is far from satisfactory, and that your statement that "cyclists might prefer to use the traffic lane" is an admission of this.



The recent addition of dotted lines reinforces the perception amongst motor vehicles that they have absolute priority over cyclists at this location. We've already received several reports from members who feel they've been hassled by motor vehicles at this location.

We feel it to be no exaggeration that a death could be possible here if something is not done promptly. In just a few minutes watching here this week, we saw one cyclist hit the far kerb while having to take evasive action when a bus converged with her path.

We do not believe it is safe to make cyclists 'give way' at the merge before the buildout. This requires them to look over their shoulder at just the point where they have a narrow path between kerbs and bollards. Nor do we believe that buses and taxis should have rights over cyclists at this location, especially as they have a far clearer view. Furthermore, it is not normally the case that one is expected to give way to the right.

In addition, the cycle bypass lane 'floods' after rain, and there is currently a sticky and slippery area of mud, that further increases the danger. The drainage seems extremely poor here, which exacerbates the problem as cyclists were moving out even earlier.

We believe that the only satisfactory solution, without engineering measures, is for the cycle lane to be 'extended' as an *advisory* lane through the narrowing to show that cyclists have right of way. We stress that an advisory lane can be entered by motorists, so we cannot accept the statement which you also gave in a separate e-mail of 9th November that:

There isn't room next to the build-out to mark a width of meaningful cycle lane.

The proper solution is to remove the starting point of the island just after the gap. Ironically this currently has cycle parking, which would need to be relocated somewhere nearby. Even that short length would allow a measured merge with the traffic.

Sadly we did not spot the buildout feature in the initial plans, the design of which we have been unable to determine actually went out to formal consultation.

In the short term, we ask that the cycle bypass is coned off until a solution is found. Perhaps one possibility might be the use of sensors/loops which delay the bollard if a cyclist goes through the bypass.

We should like to meet you on-site, very soon, to discuss these issues.

Lastly, we would be grateful to be e-mailed a copy of the Safety Audit for the scheme, or if none was done, confirmation of this.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Martin Lucas-Smith
Co-ordinator