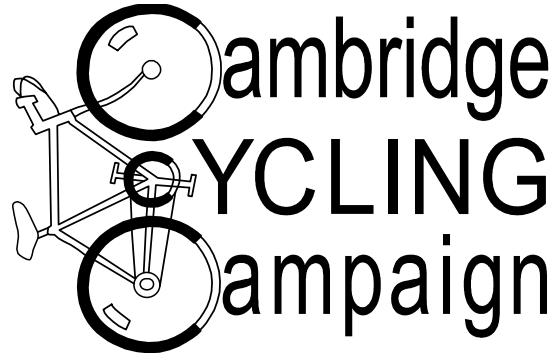


September 27, 2006

Our ref: L060007

Your ref: C/00237/06/CC

Tim Marks
Environment & Planning Department
Cambridgeshire County Council
Castle Court, Shire Hall
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Cambridge CB3 0AP



Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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Dear Mr Marks,

Addenbrooke's Access Rd Planning Application (ref C/00237/06/CC)

We write formally to object to certain features of the Addenbrooke's Access Road.

We make no comment on the principle of the need for the road. However, if built we are concerned that it meets best practice for cycling. This should clearly be possible given the lack of space constraints. We will comment on the Hauxton Road junction as part of our objections to the Trumpington Meadows application, as further major changes will be required here as part of that development.

We are pleased that measures will be taken to ensure that the Shelford Road to Addenbrooke's section cannot be used for through traffic. We are also pleased that the on-road lanes will be 1.5m wide rather than the originally proposed 1.2m and that the shared use path will be properly lit over the full length including the green wedge.

Unfortunately we can only withdraw our formal objection if we receive satisfactory answers to five major issues:

1. Poor Design Standards of the Segregated Shared Use Path
2. Cycle hostile and over capacity(car) design of Shelford Road Junction
3. Simplistic design biased against cyclists of Hobson's brook crossing
4. Excessive deviation of pedestrian and cycle routes at the bridge over rail line.
5. Unsatisfactory Speed Limit

Together these items show a lack of understanding of the requirements for a cycle friendly environment, similar to the failings seen on the road changes in the Arbury Park area. We detail our objections regarding each of the above points:

1. Poor Design Standards of Shared Use Path

The proposals as they stand will result in cyclists having to make illegal movements. We are copying this to appropriate organisations as a result (Police, Department for Transport and

Cycling England). It is totally unacceptable for new infrastructure to be designed in a way which will require users to break the law under perfectly ordinary conditions.

In Section 6 'Pedestrian and Cycling Issues' under section 6.4 it states:

"Since no level difference is proposed it would be possible for cyclists or pedestrians to cross onto the other area as deemed necessary to pass large groups etc."

It is of course illegal for cyclists to cross onto the pedestrian section of a segregated path, although pedestrians are permitted to use the cycle section. We believe it is unacceptable to make statements in planning applications that incite cyclists to break the law. It is also an admission that the proposed width is, in fact, inadequate for normal use.

A path such as this in a 'green field site' should meet the standards in the Draft LTNs (01/04 & 02/04) on cycling. Such a path should be wide enough for a cyclist to pass, without conflict, a parent cycling with young child alongside. The existing well used path adjacent to Trumpington Rd is some 1.75m wide, and it can easily be seen any morning that this is totally inadequate for such manoeuvres and that even if 2.0m wide many cyclists would be forced onto the pedestrian side to avoid conflicts with other cyclists.

We ask that the design be altered to give a cycle path of 3.0m wide.

2. Cycle hostile and over capacity(car) design of Shelford Road Junction

We are extremely concerned over the scale of this junction and its hostile design for cyclists.

We note that modelling has suggested large increases of flows of cars at this location, and that the junction has been designed to accommodate them (Predict and Provide). This seem to be in direct conflict with the aims of the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan (2006-2011) which has as one of its principal aims to stabilise the absolute flows of cars into Cambridge , and maintain the current proportion of trips by bike. In addition the 'upstream' junctions, within Shelford and Stapleford are already near capacity, with some queues, in peak hours, and without major changes there we cannot see how the increased flows will be accommodated.

We are especially concerned at the long left turn lane, as these are particularly threatening to straight ahead cyclists even when an 'approach lane' is provided as a cyclist can be in the position of having fast moving traffic on both sides. It was such a lane that resulted in the death of a cyclist on Blackfriars Bridge in London.

Huge mistakes have been made at the junction of Histon Rd and Kings Hedges Road where the design caters from large increases in car flows although they clearly cannot be accommodated upstream, and assumes that cyclists on the major road will behave as pedestrians and use a three stage pedestrian crossing rather than remain on the main road.

The mistakes there must not be repeated at this junction.

We ask that the long left turn lane on Shelford Road N'bound be removed or greatly shortened, or replaced by a short dedicated right turn lane and left/straight on lane as with other arms of this junction. We also ask that more detailed drawings and signal timings be referred the Cambridge Traffic Management Area Joint Committee for their informed discussion and approval.

3. Simplistic design biased against cyclists of Hobson's brook crossing

We strongly support the provision of grade separation at this location, but are puzzled as to why in the cycle route proposal (Option 2) the invert level of the path needs to be higher than that for the pedestrian proposal (Option 3). Hence although the clearance for a cycle route is raised by only 0.6m over the pedestrian option the embankment is required to be raised by 1.1m. This clearly further biases the cost against the cycle route!

We would request that the County looks at the model of an existing structure within Cambridge, which we believe offers an alternative, that would enable cycle use, yet not require a significant raising of the embankment with the consequent increased costs and visual intrusion. A photograph of the location under Fen Causeway is available at: <http://www.camcycle.org.uk/map/location/8948/>.

In the current proposals the path level is shown as above the 1 in 100 year flood level. We consider this is totally unnecessary, and the recently improved path *under* Fen Causeway is the model. This route is waterproofed and provided with an automatic water pump to keep the sump relatively dry. Although in extreme conditions it does flood, under most conditions of storms and heavy rain it is passable for both cyclists and pedestrians.

By lowering the path adjacent to the brook to around normal water level, but enclosing the path in a waterproof channel, complete with an automatic sump pump, and reducing the headroom to 2.4 m we believe to should be possible to provide a route accessible to both cyclist and pedestrians yet only need to raise the road level by just over 2.0m

We request that a structure similar to that under Fen Causeway is used at this location.

4. Excessive deviation of pedestrian and cycle routes at the bridge over rail line.

One of the problems of modern urban roads and railways is that they restrict accessibility for vulnerable users such as pedestrians and cyclists. PPG13 stresses the importance of 'permeability' for such users. According to draft landscape plans much informal recreation areas will be to the south of the new road, on both sides of the railway. In addition the National Cycle Network Route 11 will provide opportunities for both leisure and utility trips both to and from villages further south.

Unfortunately currently proposed arrangements where the access road crosses the rail line provide either no connections for such trips or involve diversions of many hundreds of metres. This is in part due to the 9 metre level difference between the paths next to the road on the bridge and the land beneath. The only link shown is many hundred metres long and caters for just a single movement.

If the ground immediately adjacent to the bridge abutments were raised by a number of metres it would be possible to significantly shorten the proposed link and provide for other links as well as softening the appearance of the bridge abutments. For example:

If the NCN 11 were to be raised on the approach to the bridge, the rail line already being on an embankment, such that it were at 4.0 above ground at the bridge, a deviation of only 100m (slope 1:20) would be needed to rejoin the path adjacent to the access road.

Similar treatment on the west of the rail line would give far better access to open space there, both north and south of the road, for those from the Addenbrooke's side.

If such links are not provided, unofficial paths down the steep slope will be the inevitable result.

We ask that shorter routes between the new road and the open space and NCN11 be provided as part of this plan and the landscaping of the surrounding areas.

5. Unsatisfactory Speed Limit

We welcome the proposal to set the speed limit from Shelford Road to Addenbrooke's Hospital at 30mph. But in our view the proposal to have a 40mph speed limit on the length of access road between Hauxton Road and Shelford Road is entirely unacceptable and should be rejected.

The application acknowledges that this will be an urban road (Supplementary Report paragraphs 2.6 and 2.9), with street lighting (paragraph 2.17), that it will be developed along the north side (paragraph 2.11) and that "30mph is a suitable speed for built up/urban areas" (paragraph 2.10 citing government guidance). In addition County Council "policy states that the County Council will work towards a situation where all built up areas are covered by a 30mph speed limit" (paragraph 2.14). The fact that currently development along this length of road is to be on only one side of the road does not justify a 40mph limit particularly as the intensity of the development will mean that pedestrians and cyclists, including considerable numbers of schoolchildren, will be using the road. Setting the speed limit at 30mph would, we believe, be to a considerable degree self-enforcing because of the proposed narrowness of the traffic lanes - only a single traffic lane of 3.25m in each direction.

In conclusion

The above five points are major failings in a design that should be considering the needs of cyclists. Currently 25% of trips within Cambridge are by bicycle. With designs such as this, that will inhibit the use of cycles, the County will fail to meet its LTP targets.

We ask that these five major failings are corrected before these plans are accepted.

We remain disappointed that proposals are still coming forward from the County Council in cases like this when best practice could easily be achieved given the lack of space constraints. For this reason we regrettably have to object.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Jim Chisholm

cc	Simon King	Chair, Development Control Committee
	Graham Hughes	Director of Sustainable Infrastructure
	Ann Kent	County Councillor, Trumpington
	Geoffrey Heathcock	County Councillor, Queen Ediths
	Tony Orgee	County Councillor, Shelfords & Stapleford
	Graham Hughes	Chair, Trumpington Environment Action Group