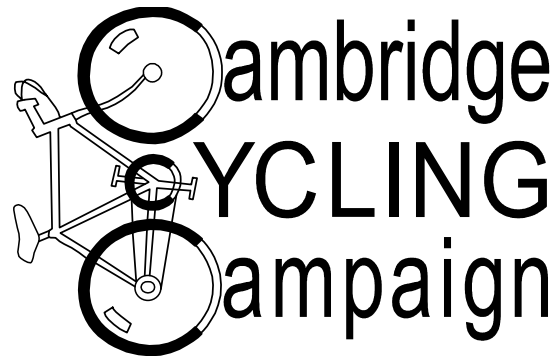


18th April 2006

Our ref: P06 012

Members of the
Cambridge Traffic Management
Area Joint Committee



Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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Dear Councillor,

AJC Meeting to be held on Monday, 24th April 2006

Agenda Items 5a, 5b, 5c and 5d: Car Parking

We welcome the Parking Policy Review and ask to be involved as stakeholders.

Park and Ride is intended to reduce private car usage of the City Centre. We ask Councillors to address the unacceptable present situation (illustrated in the accounts in Item 5a) that the P&R system is financed largely by City-Centre Council-provided on-road and off-road car parking which encourages private cars into the City Centre and causes difficulties for pedestrians and cyclists in many streets. The availability of off-street parking is promoted and advertised by the new signs showing spaces available.

We ask Councillors to support County Council policy to reduce private car usage in the City Centre and to do so by proposing car parking reduction and the search for alternative ways of funding P&R as central issues for the Parking Review. We would also like the Parking Review process to consider improving pedestrian and cyclist access by addressing the obstruction caused by free legalised pavement car parking in such areas as Romsey. Consideration should be given to replacement of some car parking spaces by cycle parking, particularly near to houses whose residents use bicycles and not cars.

We welcome the Officer's recommendation for parking restrictions in Ravensworth Gardens and the statement by the City Council's Planning Committee which the Officer quotes that on-street car parking would lead to a "poor quality external environment" (paragraph 2.2 of Agenda Item 5d).

Agenda Item 6a: Core Traffic Scheme. Stage 4: Central Area Measures

We continue to welcome the AJC's resolution that proposals for Regent Street-Downing Street-Tennis Court Road be deferred. These proposals should, in our opinion, not be considered further until the effects of the current Stage 4 proposals have shown whether such risky and problematic changes are really needed.

We welcome the proposal (paragraph 2.10) to develop plans for improving the Catholic Church junction but are surprised to see that the needs of cyclists are not mentioned. For cyclists this is one of the most difficult junctions in the city. We have many suggestions for improvement and would welcome preliminary discussions before the proposals to be brought forward early in 2007 are formulated.

We remain very concerned about the proposed loading and unloading bay in Emmanuel Street which would lead to contraflow cyclists being sandwiched between on-coming buses and on-coming vehicles entering and emerging from the bay. Some of these vehicles would have to unload from their nearside into the contraflow lane. The Officer's report states (paragraph 6.1) that the use of the loading bay would be restricted to off-peak times but the draft TRO (page 16) indicates that it would be available for no less than 20 hours out of the 24. Even more worrying, the draft TRO indicates that the contraflow lane would not be marked on-road as it passes the proposed loading bay which would inevitably give rise to difficulties by failing to give visible legitimacy to contraflow cycling in a location where competition for road space will be at a peak. Our considered view is that there should be no bay of any sort on the north side of the contraflow cycle lane at the western end of Emmanuel Street.

We regard the saw-toothed parking arrangement for buses in St Andrew's Street as unacceptable for two reasons:

1. Buses emerging from the stops will have less good visibility of overtaking cyclists in their mirrors because of the angle of parking. The number of cyclists using St Andrew's Street is even greater than those using Emmanuel Street.
2. It would apparently involve removal of the pavement cycle parking outside the Post Office (16 spaces) and perhaps even outside the Grand Arcade frontage (10 spaces). When the Planning Application for the Grand Arcade was accepted we were given categorical assurances that this cycle parking provision would remain.

The proposed loading bay outside Bradwell's Court would be even more of a problem. Contraflow cyclists would be sandwiched as in Emmanuel Street. Cycle parking would be drastically reduced from the 52 spaces which existed until recently (and which the accepted plans for Bradwell's Court indicated would be reinstated). It is important to remember that the Bradwell's Court development, contrary to the City Council's Cycle Parking Standards, provides no additional on-site visitor cycle parking whatsoever. We do not understand why a loading bay is needed here. All the Bradwell's Court development is to be serviced by a loading dock accessed from Drummer Street. The shops in the Prudential building have rear access from Emmanuel Street. Loading for the shops on the West side of St Andrew's Street is to be provided from the Grand Arcade's facilities. We ask Officers to specify precisely which shops actually need loading provision in St Andrew's Street and whether this number is sufficient to justify a dedicated loading bay in so sensitive an area.

Paragraph 11.9 reads as follows:

"Both layouts, combined with the new frontage of the Bradwell's Court development reduce the amount of cycle parking in the area. Cycle parking is located where possible in positions that do not conflict with bus stop facilities and pedestrians. However, the new parking facility in the Grand Arcade development will off-set the loss, but this will need to be actively promoted to ensure that it is used."

We regard this as completely unacceptable because it is in conflict with both City and County Council Policy. In the County's hierarchy of provision pedestrians and cyclists come above public transport users and the County's censuses indicate that roughly the same number of cyclists come into the City Centre as bus passengers. Cyclists are not to be treated as subordinate to bus users, to be fitted in only when bus users do not need the

space. Cyclists and bus users need equality of provision (as acknowledged in paragraph 11.1 before being, in effect, denied in paragraph 11.9). The Grand Arcade cycle park is supposed to provide 511 cycle spaces but this is well below the number specified for such a development by the Cycle Parking Standards. We have recently been informed that the space available is insufficient to provide even the agreed 511 spaces. Under the terms of the Cycle Parking Standards the cycle park should have been close to the main entrance of the development but instead it has been hidden away in the most inconvenient and least accessible corner. Moreover the development displaced more than 130 existing cycle parking places, many of them in more convenient locations. The proposal for drastic reduction of cycle parking in St Andrew's Street where it is in constant demand and then using the poorly located Grand Arcade cycle park as a substitute must be strongly resisted.

Agenda Item 6c: St Andrew's Street-Downing Street Junction

We accept the need for improvements to this junction which has a poor accident record. We ask that instead of a simple all-red phase to ease the problems for pedestrians, an experimental pedestrian and cycle only crossing phase should, subject to DfT consent, be tried out here. Such arrangements are not uncommon on the Continent and would make more sense here now that Toucan crossings combining a pedestrian and cycle phase have become more commonplace.

What could and should be done immediately is to make the existence of the cycle contraflow more visible to pedestrians at this junction. Red surfacing and a clear on-road cycle logo are needed. Care should be taken that the red surfacing is smooth but not slippery.

Agenda Item 7a: Milton Road bus priority and traffic management review

For us, the key component of this scheme is the continued encouragement of on-road cycling by the provision of an inbound on-road cycle lane and an outbound bus lane in which cycling is permitted. For the majority of cyclists, including the many who cycle to work along this route, pavement cycling would not be a satisfactory option for obvious reasons: conflict with pedestrians, loss of priority at side roads, obstruction by street furniture, pavement-parked vehicles, misplaced wheelie bins and other obstacles. We support the Officer's recommendations so long as good quality on-road cycling provision remains. The bus lane should be at least 4m wide to permit buses to overtake cyclists. The inbound on-road cycle lane should be at least 1.5m wide and should either be mandatory or, if advisory, reinforced by non-slippery double yellow lines along its entire length.

Agenda Item 8a: Cambridge Area Cycleways Programme – Prioritization Process

We are uneasy about this proposal which seems too subjective to be usable and fair. Any two people attempting to score projects using the criteria specified would be likely to come up with quite different answers.

Material on other Agenda Items to follow

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

James Woodburn