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Our ref: NA02003  
Your ref:

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**Cambridge Cycling Campaign**

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Dear Mr Ledward,

### **PLANNING BRIEF: REDEVELOPMENT OF CAMBRIDGE RAILWAY STATION AREA**

In April 1999 Cambridge Cycling Campaign submitted suggestions for the Planning Brief for the Station Area and in November 2000 the Campaign submitted a formal objection to the plans which resulted. We are very pleased that a new Planning Brief is now to be developed.

Following the decision to draw up a new Planning Brief, we have revised our earlier submissions to take account of four major changes since that time:

- Recent clear commitments by government and local authorities to promote a substantial increase in cycling and provision of cycling facilities.
- Plans for a significant increase in rail traffic from Cambridge Station and for the building of an island platform to accommodate some of this increase.
- The expected availability of the Rank-Hovis site for redevelopment.
- The development of plans by SuperCam for a guided busway to run from Trumpington Park and Ride to the Station and on into Cambridge via Station Road.

In the present letter we set out our proposals for the content of the new Planning Brief giving particular attention to the needs of cyclists now and in the foreseeable future. In the Station Area cyclists need:

- **Much improved access routes to the Station:** Some of the present cycle routes are difficult and intimidating and are, we believe, a disincentive to many people who would otherwise cycle to the Station. Redesigning the present routes and creating new routes could and should offer pleasant, unobstructed and fast cycle access to the Station and its facilities.
- **Much improved modern cycle parking and cycle facilities near to the Station entrance:** Present cycle parking, though increased in 1998, is now over-full, too closely

spaced, poorly surfaced over much of the area and inadequately cleaned and maintained. We believe that many more people would wish to cycle to the Station if facilities were to be improved.

### **ACCESS ROUTES**

Cyclists need access to the Station Area for four purposes. Present provision is not adequate for any of these.

- Access to cycle parking at the Station.
- Access to trains. Hundreds of cycles are carried on trains to and from Cambridge Station every day. As more train services are provided and facilities for carrying cycles on trains are improved, this number will increase.
- Access to and also through the Station Area for cycle routes to be developed along both sides of the railway – the long-planned Chisholm Trail recognised in the Eastern Corridor Area Transport Plan which proposes “cycle route improvements along the line of railway.”
- Access to new offices, hotels, dwellings and other facilities to be developed within the area. Because of the necessary severe restrictions on parking provision for cars, cycle usage to all new developments in the area will be very high.

The evidence suggests that there is substantial suppressed demand for cycling to and from the Station Area. We believe that the Planning Brief should provide for at least twice the present number of cycle movements after redevelopment. With appropriate designs such an increase could, by reducing vehicular movements, actually reduce present congestion.

At present there are four main cycle access routes to the Station. In each case we comment on how these should be improved:

- 1. Station Road.** Aim: To create an attractive approach to the Station with more room for cyclists.

This is a wide road with much space sacrificed to car parking which makes it unpleasant and difficult for cyclists, especially inexperienced cyclists. Almost all the premises along the road have space for off-road parking and deliveries. To open up an attractive vista of the Station frontage and to create better conditions for cyclists and buses, all on-road parking should be removed from the whole length of the road. Traffic calming using road humps with cycle by-passes, a possible raised platform at the dangerous junction with Tenison Road together with a possible 20mph speed limit should be used to reduce vehicle speeds. If cycle lanes are provided, they must be generously wide to accommodate the probable scale of future cycle usage. In the interests of safe and convenient cycling, the road should at no point be narrowed by build-outs and the present Station Road taxi rank should be moved into the Station Area. We think it important that, as at present, no on-road bus stops should be permitted in Station Road apart from the stop on the north side of the road near the War Memorial. Good stopping places for buses should be provided within the Station Area.

- 2. Hills Road.** Aim: To create high-quality direct access to the Station from Hills Road.

Current access from Hills Road and Brooklands Avenue to the Station via the Triangle Site is of very poor quality. Access along the Earl of Derby route from the Earl of Derby public house through the Signal Building's car park has been closed for some years displacing cyclists and pedestrians onto the unsatisfactory Triangle Site route. It is

important that cycle access through the Triangle Site should be improved but the main cycle access route from Hills Road should in future be a new route via the Rank-Hovis entrance at the junction with Brooklands Avenue. This could replace the Earl of Derby route. Modifications would be needed to the road junction to enable cyclists coming to the Station over Hills Road bridge to turn right safely into the Rank-Hovis entrance.

It is essential that development of the Station Area should be phased so that at all times there is access for Hills Road cyclists and pedestrians via the Triangle Site or through the Rank-Hovis or Earl of Derby routes.

- 3. The Cycle Bridge linking Devonshire Road and Rustat Road.** Aim: To provide a new ramp direct from the cycle bridge into the Station Area.



*Artist's impression of a ramp direct from the cycle bridge into the Station area*

This cycle and pedestrian bridge provides an important route from many areas East of the railway line and passes *through* the Station Area. However, it is disconnected from the existing and proposed routes to the Station. Cyclists, and also pedestrians with impaired mobility or with pushchairs or wheeled luggage who cannot use the stairs down from the bridge, have to make an awkward detour from the bridge to gain access to the Station. Cyclists have to cross and re-cross Devonshire Road at a blind bend. A ramp from the western abutment of the bridge along the western boundary of the site (see attached computer-generated illustration) would provide a shorter and safer route for all. We consider this to be an essential element for proper cycle and pedestrian access to the Station Area. Integration of the base of the ramp into the wider design of the Station Area should give architectural expression to the major significance of this route.

- 4. Devonshire Road.** Aim: To create a new direct route from Devonshire Road.

Replacement of the present unsatisfactory route from Devonshire Road is essential. What is needed is a straightforward direct route.

In addition to the four routes listed above, we propose five new cycle and pedestrian routes to the Station Area. In all cases it is important that the routing within the Station Area should be direct and unobstructed following natural desire lines, should have good sight lines and should everywhere provide at least equal priority for cyclists in relation to motor traffic.

**5. Route from the South alongside the Railway Line:** The SuperCam guided bus proposals envisage a new route into the Station Area via an underpass through the northern abutment of Hills Road bridge. In the SuperCam proposals pedestrian and cycle access through this subway is presented as one option. *In our opinion it is not an option: it is a necessity.* Cambridge Cycling Campaign has actively promoted this route for many years as part of what has come to be known as the Chisholm Trail. It would provide off-road pedestrian and cycle routes from Unex House, from Cambridge University Press, from the substantial new developments proposed for the Government Offices site off Brooklands Avenue and, in due course, from Trumpington and from Addenbrooke's Hospital.

We believe that it should also provide a way through to the Station for pedestrians and cyclists travelling North over Hills Road bridge. They should be given access to the underpass by looping round via the road from the bridge into the Unex House site and on through a new pedestrian and cycle link to the underpass. This would enable cyclists to avoid the difficult right turns into the Earl of Derby route, the proposed new Rank-Hovis route (see section 2 above), the Triangle Site route and the Station Road route and would, we believe, be an important contribution to cycle safety, particularly for the many school students who cycle between Hills Road and the Station every day.

**6. Route from the North alongside the Railway Line (Western side):** We have suggested (see attached letter) that the area to be covered by the Planning Brief should be extended to cover the strip of Railtrack land along the western side of the railway line between the Station and Mill Road. We believe that this strip of land should be developed as a cycle and pedestrian way forming part of the Chisholm Trail to give access to the Station from the area beyond Mill Road via the unused railway arch under Mill Road bridge. The route into the Station from Devonshire Road (see above) should join this route close to the Station.

**7. Route from the Cattle Market Site:** The developers of the Cattle Market Site have proposed a pedestrian bridge across the railway to provide access to the Station from their development. Given the scale of the Cattle Market development and the fact that the Junction is now to be much increased in size, we believe that this bridge should be upgraded and designed to carry cycle as well as pedestrian traffic.

**8. Bridge (or Tunnel) from Rustat Road to the Proposed Island Platform and on into the Present Station:** Because of the unusually large numbers of cycles carried on trains to and from Cambridge, it is essential that this bridge or tunnel should not be constructed to some standard national design. It should, instead, be specially designed to be wider, to provide separate pathways for pedestrians and cyclists and should be appropriately ramped at all access points.

**9. Route from the North alongside the Railway Line (Eastern Side):** The planning applications for housing development on the Leica site to the East of the railway line reserve a strip of land alongside the railway line for an access route. We would like to see this developed as a new cycle and pedestrian route from the area North of Mill Road bridge via the spare arch under the east side of Mill Road bridge. Recent planning decisions for Cromwell Road have made provision for this route further North. As mentioned in our letter (attached, see section 6 above), we consider that this route southwards from the Mill Road arch, together with the parallel route on the western side

of the railway, should be included in the Station Area Planning Brief. The route on the eastern side of the railway should, we propose, be developed to connect at its southern end with Clifton Road and with Rustat Road at the junction with Davy Road and also to connect with the proposed bridge or tunnel to the island platform when it is constructed.

We believe that all these new routes should be developed at least in part through Section 106 agreements.

We believe that Railtrack (and now its successor organisation) currently have an agreement with Sustrans to improve access to stations using redundant operational land. We consider it imperative that Sustrans should have an input to the plans for routes into the Station Area.

### **CYCLE PARKING AND CYCLE FACILITIES AT THE STATION**

If more people travelling to the Station are to be encouraged out of their cars and onto their bicycles, it is imperative not only that much better access routes to the Station should be provided but also that cycle parking and other cycle facilities at the Station should be greatly improved and modernised and that the present severe shortage of cycle parking spaces should be remedied.

**1. Cycle Parking Centre:** We favour an emphasis on covered, secure, staffed cycle parking in an attractively designed Cycle Centre immediately adjacent to the station entrance and comparable to the staffed parking that is available at many Continental stations including Münster and Groningen (see attached illustrations). At Cambridge



*Canopy for underground store immediately outside Münster rail station, Germany. The store extends right under the adjacent 4-lane road.*

provision could be above ground or it could be largely underground but with an attractive above-ground entrance structure comparable in grandeur to the Münster one. We consider that the fact that Cambridge Local Authorities consider cycling to be a valuable and praiseworthy activity and not a low-status, inferior or marginalised one should be demonstrated architecturally by the provision of manifestly high-quality buildings and facilities. Whether above or below ground, it is imperative that the Cycle Centre should be no further from the Station entrance than the present cycle parking area. Supervised parking space in the Centre should cost users no more than about 30 pence per day and less for a season ticket.



*Above: inside the attendant-operated CCTV-monitored cycle store at Groningen main station, Netherlands*

*Below: Multi-storey cycle park outside Amsterdam Centraal Station*



The previous plans for Station Area cycle parking indicated 1050 spaces, but the area provided was insufficient to accommodate this number according to *Cycle Friendly Infrastructure* standards. Present evidence shows that 1050 spaces are anyway far too few even for current levels of usage. We ask that a minimum of 2300 spaces designed

according to *Cycle Friendly Infrastructure* standards should be provided in the new plans and that 800 of these spaces should be in the proposed supervised Cycle Centre. As at present, the cycle stands closest to the Station entrance should in the Centre be reserved for cyclists with disabilities. We believe that the Centre should also provide some limited cycle hire and repair facilities.

**2. Free Cycle Parking on Main Site:** 1000 free cycle parking spaces, using Sheffield or comparable stands and preferably under cover, should be made available in a convenient location close to the Station entrance. If the Local Authorities are to succeed in their intention to increase cycle usage and to decrease car usage, cycle parking must be closer to the station entrance than car parking. Cycle parking should be built to *Cycle Friendly Infrastructure* standards, should be protected by CCTV and should be culled at least every month to remove broken or vandalised cycles if these have been abandoned. The area allocated should be large enough to permit future expansion when this is needed.

**3. Free Cycle Parking East of the Railway Line:** Free cycle parking using Sheffield or comparable stands will also be needed on the eastern side of the railway line at the entrance to the new bridge (or tunnel) to the island platform. We suggest that initially 500 spaces should be planned for but the number needed may well be greater than this if the island platform is not constructed for some years. Space will also be needed for future expansion.

**4. Cycle Parking for New Commercial and Residential Development in the Station Area:** Because of the need to restrict vehicular traffic generation in the Station Area, little or no car parking should be permitted for all new commercial and residential development in the Station Area. We believe that the Brief should specify that a corollary of reducing car parking should be an increase in both the quantity and the quality of cycle parking provision for each new development. What is needed is secure, well-located, easily accessible, covered parking with Sheffield or comparable stands. The Local Authority's existing cycle parking standards should, we believe, be upgraded for all development in the Station Area.

In conclusion we would like to stress that in our opinion the previous plans for the Station Area allocated too much space for commercial and residential development in the area immediately adjacent to the Station. Insufficient space was allocated to the transport interchange function of the site and, in particular, to the space requirements of cyclists, bus passengers and pedestrians. Even more seriously, the scale of development close to the Station left no room for future development of the transport interchange function of the site to take account of expected increases in train usage. We ask that the new Brief should specify a reduction in the density of new building close to the Station to permit the effective operation of the transport interchange function over a time span of at least fifty years.

Yours sincerely,  
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Jim Chisholm