

March 1, 2005

Our ref: NA05004  
Your ref:

Patrick Joyce  
Environment & Transport Department  
Cambridgeshire County Council  
Castle Court, Shire Hall  
Castle Hill  
Cambridge CB3 0AP



**Cambridge Cycling Campaign**

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Dear Patrick,

### **South Cambridge Cycleways**

Cambridge Cycling Campaign welcomes, with some reservations, these proposals for extra provision for cyclists in the South of Cambridge. We especially welcome the proposal to upgrade the bridge over the river Cam. We hope that this provision will enable cycling to maintain its modal share of trips as new houses are built. It is especially important that cycle routes are available before any new developments are occupied.

We are, however, very concerned that Government Guidance regarding 'hierarchy of provision' is not being followed. This is reflected in Cambridge Cycling Campaign's longstanding "Policy on paths shared between cycles and pedestrians" which includes the following statement

*The first priority in providing for cyclists should be to make the normal road environment safer rather than building separate facilities, targeting the source of the problem - the motor vehicle.*

Our full policy statement is available at  
<http://www.camcycle.org.uk/campaigning/papers/SharedUse.pdf>

Our policy also agrees well with later government guidance and the draft LTNs on cycling. We would like to ask why pavement provision is seemingly being treated as a matter of first resort, contrary to this guidance.

We are also concerned about the quality of the proposed pavement cycleways. The proposals aim to improve the surface and width of the existing pavement cycleways but we are also concerned that they do not have priority over any of the side roads that they cross. Where a pavement cycleway crosses a side road cyclists should have the same priority as they would if they had remained on the road. In all cases crossings of side roads should be straight-across on a raised ramp surfaced in red.

We furthermore have concerns over the lack of stakeholder consultation before these proposals were made public, even though we are aware of the tight timescales for the spending of this money. We would have preferred to be able to make comments at an earlier stage when our suggestions could have been incorporated more easily. We are concerned that none of this Growth Area Delivery Grant (GADG) money is being used to reallocate roadspace to cyclists, and that so much money is being spent on pavement cycleways.

We ask that that all large areas of new surface be laid by a mini paver, rather than by hand, and that all kerbs will be 'flush' and not 'dropped' as indicated on some plans.

We now address each proposal in turn. The numbers given are those marked on the map.

1. **Coe Fen:** We are still concerned over the lack of any lighting along this new path and would like to suggest the use of solar-powered LEDs to show the edges of the path. Many people are finding it unusable for utility trips on dark evenings this winter.

We would also like to suggest that unless improvements are made at the junction of Mill Lane and Trumpington Street, a route via Little St.Mary's Lane should be signposted at the north end of the path. Widening to 2m, and resurfacing of the path adjacent to Vicar's Brook on the 'New Bit' needs to be included. This was not part of the recent Coe Fen path scheme, and the width here does not meet minimum standards, or even that of the new sections of path! Cyclists from two sections of wider path are concentrated onto this narrow (generally less than 1.5m) section.

2. **Sheep's Green bridge:** We strongly support this new provision and are very pleased that a bridge suitable for cycling is to be constructed here as a replacement for the current bridge. This route already carries some 700 cyclists per day.

We would welcome consultation over the exact design of the bridge, and especially its width. Of recent constructions, only the bridge at the station has been of adequate width (2.54m cycle, 1.63m pedestrian, separated by a kerb) to eliminate conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists.

3. **Stone bridge:** The current arrangements at the Stone Bridge and the crossing of Chaucer Road are unsatisfactory and we are glad that attempts are being made to improve them.

We are surprised that no attempt is being made to provide a signal-controlled crossing of the Chaucer Road exit and consider that this absence is a major failing of the proposals. Such lights were shown on the original plans for the improvement of Trumpington Road, but were, we believe, removed after a 'Safety Audit' suggested that drivers might be confused by the additional signals.

Currently cyclists and pedestrians crossing the Chaucer Road exit get no direct indication of the state of the signals for vehicles waiting to exit from Chaucer Road. This means that some cyclists stop unnecessarily when it is safe to go and others go just as motor traffic is given a green light to cross their path. We believe the type of low-level signals for cyclists and pedestrians as installed at the new crossing of Fen Causeway would be suitable here. What is of particular concern is that motorists here can behave aggressively to vulnerable users as the motorists may wrongly believe that cyclists and pedestrians are disobeying a red light, which of course they cannot as no lights exist.

*Signal control over the crossing of this exit road is essential.* The lights for cyclists and pedestrians should be set to green at all times except when the road lights are set to green, or about to be set to green. This would be of great benefit to all cyclists on the

Trumpington to Cambridge path, especially the many less skilled cyclists who use this as part of a 'Safer Route to School'.

We believe that as part of this scheme the existing pelican crossing across Brooklands Avenue at its junction with Trumpington Road should be modified to allow cyclists from Sheep's Green to get onto Trumpington Road southbound. Such cyclists can use the existing toucan across two lanes of Trumpington Road and reach the existing island. The existing pelican crossing would then allow these cyclists to get onto Trumpington Road southbound at a time when conflicting traffic is stationary if only it was legal for them to do so (cyclists are not allowed to ride across a pelican crossing). We therefore would like to suggest that this pelican crossing be converted to a toucan. There are several other cycle movements such a modification would support.

We are also concerned at the number of conflicting movements between cyclists (and pedestrians) in the area of Vicar's Brook and Trumpington Road.

4. **Porson road:** We fully support these changes.
5. **Rutherford Road:** We support the improvements to the passageway between Porson Road and Rutherford Road, but are dismayed at the apparent provision of pedestrian guard rails directly across the path of cyclists at each end. This is a retrograde step. We cannot see why these are required at the end of two cul-de-sacs where traffic speeds are very low. They are more likely to increase than decrease conflict by forcing cyclists and pedestrians together at just the point where there is reduced space. There is also a need for flush kerbs and 'H' bar markings on the road to reduce the risk of obstruction by parked cars. We accept the need for a bollard to prevent cars from accessing this passageway.

**Long Road:** Here, as elsewhere, the priority should be to improve conditions for on-road cyclists. We believe that a 30mph limit is essential for the whole length of Long Road. This would be consistent with Trumpington Road, Hills Road and Babraham Road.

6. **Long Road North side:** We are pleased to see that the width and surface of the shared-use path from Hobson's brook to Sedley Taylor Road is to be widened and resurfaced, and support this work.
7. **Long Road South side:** We are pleased at the improved provision, although there is a conflict between the 1.8m nominal mentioned in the text and 2.0m mentioned on the drawings.
8. **Accordia Site and Hobson's Conduit:** A new route of some form, for cyclists and pedestrians, from the Accordia site to Long Road should be an important objective in order to increase the 'permeability' of this area as in the guidance in PPG13. With the developments off Brooklands Avenue and the proposed Clay Farm development, utility trips through the area by bike and on foot, be they for school, work or shopping, will become important. If no such route exists many more trips will be made by car. Cambridge Cycling Campaign strongly supports such a route. But, we wish it to be made clear that we support every effort to avoid the existing public footpath adjacent to the west side of the Conduit.

a) North of the bridge into Clare College sports ground we welcome the proposed routing of the cycle path through the Cambridge University Press and Accordia sites and away from the existing path alongside the conduit.

b) Alongside the Clare College sports ground we acknowledge the sensitivity of the public footpath and urge the council to seek an alternative route on the east side of the conduit.

We would like to be consulted as routes become available in this area.

**Brooklands Avenue:** We believe that the first priority for cycling along Brooklands Avenue should be to try to improve conditions for on-road cyclists. Because of the tree cover, street lighting levels on both the road and the pavements are poor and need to be improved.

9. **Brookland's Avenue South side:** This shared-use pavement cycleway is unsatisfactory and improvements to the surfacing will make only a marginal difference.
10. **Brooklands Avenue North side:** We would like to suggest that at the Hills Road end of the cycleway, a new cycle exit onto the road should be installed at the start of the traffic left-filter lane. The shared-use provision would have to be extended for a few metres to give access to this new exit.

### **Trumpington Road between the junction with Brooklands Avenue and the junction with Bateman Street:**

To improve cycling conditions along this route, we believe that the priority for attention should be on-road provision. The proposal for pavement cycling along the east side of Trumpington Road past the Botanical Gardens fails to address the major issue that faces cyclists on this length of road – that is the problems caused by the narrow traffic lanes alongside parked cars.

At present car parking is provided for non-residents along both sides of the road in continuous narrow parking bays (2m wide) with narrow non-mandatory cycle lanes (0.98m to 1.2m wide) immediately outside these parking bays. Cyclists using these lanes are in constant danger of being struck by car doors. If they observe Rule 52 of the Highway Code ("Leave plenty of room when passing parked vehicles"), they have to cycle along the outer edge of the cycle lane or even in the traffic lane causing annoyance to passing motorists. The problems are greatest for southbound cyclists because a high bank can prevent parked vehicle passengers from alighting on the near side. Instead they get out onto the narrow cycle lane forcing cyclists out into the traffic lane.

All these parking spaces are far from shops, offices and most houses and will not often be used by the disabled or by motorists delivering or collecting bulky or heavy goods. It is difficult to see why motorists using these spaces cannot use the Park and Ride facility further South along Trumpington Road. We pointed out the highly unsatisfactory nature of the on-road cycle lanes here several years ago. Bringing these into line with government guidance should be a matter of first priority here.

We have three alternative proposals for this section of Trumpington Road:

#### *Option One:*

Our preferred solution would be the abolition of all car parking on both sides of the road and the provision of 1.5m wide mandatory red cycle lanes on each side. With such wide, and hence safer, on-road cycle lanes the requirement for pavement cycling in this area could all but be eliminated, though there would be space to widen the shared-use pavement on the

west side of the road by at least one metre.

*Option Two:*

As above, car parking would be removed from both sides. This would permit 1.5m wide mandatory red on-road cycle lanes to be installed along both sides of Trumpington Road and the present shared-use pavement on the west side of the road could be widened by a metre. On the east side of the road below the bank in the area at present occupied by parked cars, a new 2m wide two-way cycle path, raised from road level and with a kerb separating it from the road, could be constructed for off-road cyclists, particularly schoolchildren.

This would permit the present pedestrian pavement outside the Botanical Gardens to remain pedestrian-only except at the two ends where the new segregated cycle path would merge with the footway and become a shared-use facility. Such an arrangement would provide an adequate route for off-road cyclists especially those travelling from Brooklands Avenue to the Bateman Street area.

With the improved southbound cycle lane, we consider that most southbound cyclists would use this rather than the segregated path. This would give a facility similar to that on the North side of Newmarket Road over the railway bridge.

*Option Three:*

Car parking would be removed only from the east side. This would permit 1.5m wide mandatory on-road red cycle lanes along both sides of Trumpington Road. On the west side of the road where car parking would remain, the cycle lane would be separated from the parked cars by a 1m wide buffer zone.

## **In Conclusion**

We hope that the above suggestions are useful. We would welcome the opportunity to meet council officers on site at the Brooklands Avenue junction to discuss our suggestions at that location. We would also like to see more detailed working drawings of the shared-use sections and those for the bridge on Sheep's Green.

We wish to stress that quality is important, and that there must be exceptional reasons for paths not reaching the minimum recommended standards. We should also be seeing machine laid paths, flush kerbs and national standards for width on all plans sent out for consultation. Even on routes used primarily for leisure there is the requirement that a cyclist should be able to pass two people walking side by side without leaving the surfaced section.

Yours sincerely,  
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Nigel Deakin

cc Chair AJC