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By Email



Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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Dear Transport Delivery Team

Cambridge Cycling Campaign works for better, safer and more cycling in and around Cambridge and has over 1,100 paying members. We scrutinise planning applications and proposals to assess whether they will facilitate safer cycling and encourage more people to cycle.

Summary

We strongly support changes to Hills Road and Huntingdon Road, as a first step to a network of segregated cycle lanes on major roads.

We support island bus stops and consider them necessary to the proposals.

We support the removal of the two-way pavement cycle lane outside Hills Road Sixth Form College.

We do not take a view on kerb-segregated versus raised cycle lanes.

Overview

We support the principles of changes to Hills Road and Huntingdon Road to incorporate segregated cycle lanes. We think the proposals represent a step-change in approaching cycle infrastructure in Cambridge, and a necessary start to tackling the barrier that main roads pose to increased and safe cycling.

We believe the proposals will bring the following benefits if implemented:

- **Cycle routes suitable for everyone.** Separated cycle infrastructure gives freedom and mobility to young and old, away from motor traffic. We are pleased to see a shift away from 'two-tier' provision: that is a direct network for the brave, and an indirect one for everyone else.

- **Reduction of bus and cycle conflict.** People on bikes do not have buses pulling in front of them to reach a stop. Buses do not have to constantly overtake people on bikes. Removing such manoeuvres makes cycling and bus driving easier.
- **Continuous bus and cycle routes.** Buses do not need to wait for a gap to pull in to and out of bus stops. People on bikes do not need to wait at side-roads when travelling straight-on.
- **Keeping the pavement for pedestrians.** Cycling on shared-use paths, such as those on Hills Road, causes conflict and is especially disconcerting for those with mobility, hearing or sight problems. The proposals will provide separate safe spaces for both cyclists and pedestrians, removing any need to cycle amongst pedestrians. Bus passengers do not have to exit directly onto cycle paths, as occurs on Hills Road currently. The proposed islands will provide a safe space to leave and join the bus which is not in the cycle lane.
- **New cycle journeys from people who currently drive.** The city is heavily congested, with some people who would like to cycle feeling unable to do so among heavy motor traffic. More cycled journeys on segregated lanes means the road is clear for those journeys which have to be made by car.

However, we also view the proposals as a first step. The success of the aim to get more people cycling, particularly those are not confident among traffic, will be dependent on the junctions which connect routes, and those are not within the scope of the plans. Future changes must focus on the following junctions:

- Huntingdon Road and Victoria Road
- Huntingdon Road and Lawrence Weaver
- Hills Road and Long Road

Huntingdon Road will be incomplete until it has an outbound cycle lane of the same high quality proposed for the inbound lane.

We recognise that resource to upgrade these junctions is likely to be easier to achieve following implementation of the segregated facility. The County must make a clear statement of intention to improve the junctions in future.

Island Bus Stops

We support the proposals for floating bus stops, which have a 30-year history of use and are common in other countries. We think they are an essential part of the proposals: there is no point in segregated lanes which have buses pulling in front of people cycling. Segregated lanes encourage people to cycle because they feel safer, and because it makes cycling easier: bus interactions remove the benefits of the cycle lanes.

The bus islands need to be big enough for buggies and wheelchairs to manoeuvre to and from a bus ramp.

To make the narrowing of the cycle lane for the bus island obvious we strongly suggest hatching to narrow the lane in advance of the physical narrowing, and arrows to indicate that people cycling need to merge to one lane.

Cycle Lanes

We view the options presented as having different advantages and disadvantages. Although both designs exist elsewhere it is hard to know quite how they will be received in Cambridge. We recognise that both these routes have significant numbers of driveways which may affect the ability to create fully-segregated provision.



We suggest two of these symbols side by side

The cycle lanes should be marked with a double cycle and arrow, to make clear that the lane is provided for cycling two abreast, or for one person cycling to overtake another, and to indicate that it is single-directional. Placement at side roads will also help highlight the priority of the cycle lane across side roads, and turning traffic.

Both options should have double-yellow lines marked on the carriageway, not the cycle lane. We would also like to see loading and unloading bans, as the benefits of the cycle lanes completely disappear if people have to pull out into heavy traffic while cycling to get around parked vehicles. In the case of kerb-segregated lanes, this manoeuvre will be impossible without dismounting.

Drains and utility access should be located in the carriageway and not in the cycle lane. Metalwork, especially when wet, poses a hazard to people cycling as it becomes slippery. With the kerb-segregated option there may even be potential to have drains under the segregation, collecting run-off water from both sides of the segregation. A very slight slope to the cycle lane would help water run-off, without being noticeable to people cycling.

We strongly support the proposal to use machine-laid 'redmac' as providing a smooth and durable surface for cycling. Consistent cycle lane colour across the city will make it easier to quickly identify cycle lanes.

We feel it is important that all kerbs at the edge of the cycle paths, at pavement edges as well as where kerb segregation is used, should be angled kerbs. This means that the effective width of the cycle path is not narrowed - instead it should be possible (as is common abroad) for pedals to go over the edge of the track.



Angled kerbs increase effective width

Raised (Hybrid) Cycle Lanes

Raised cycle lanes offer greater space for overtaking, and easier entry to and exit from the lane for turnings.

However they are also more open to illegal parking and must be enforced by the authorities to be effective.

If raised cycle lanes are implemented, they must continue at the same level across side roads and accesses i.e. 25mm above the carriageway. This would prevent people cycling from having to constantly change level, or as some have described it 'sea-sick' cycle lanes. It also helps emphasis the priority across side roads and over turning traffic.

The 25mm upstand should be tapered to the carriageway, to make it easy to leave the lane for right-hand turns, and avoid people falling off their bikes went entering the lanes at an angle.

The lanes must be marked as mandatory cycle lanes to prevent use by motor vehicles. Paint must be non-slip so that people on bicycles can cross it safely.

Kerb Segregated Lanes

We view the fully segregated option as offering the greatest feeling of protection, especially for those new to cycling. There is also less chance of illegal obstruction.

The disadvantage is that it is harder for people cycling to enter and exit the lane flexibly, and there is the risk of accumulation of debris or water where the main road sweepers cannot operate.

However we would like to see wider lanes and narrower segregation as a better use of the space set aside for cycling. This would allow for easier overtaking, while still providing space and separation from motor traffic.

We would like to see the kerb segregation without bollards. The effect is that the segregation, at 60cm, is needlessly wide to support bollards and so there is less space for cycling. The bollards create unnecessary visual intrusion and expense. They would also prevent emergency vehicles straddling the segregation when necessary, as will be common on Hills Road. If the intention is to avoid vehicles driving onto the cycle track, we ask that they be added retrospectively only where specific problems are found in practice.

We would also like consideration of a raised, kerb segregated lane where the raised lane can be continued across side roads. Raised lanes are most beneficial across side roads and accesses, as they provide visual and physical continuity when there is a gap in kerb segregation for necessary turns.

Hills Road Proposals

Hills Road Pavement Cycle Lane

We support the removal of the pavement cycle lane on Hills Road outside Hills Road Sixth Form College. Although this will inconvenience a small number of users who will have to cross the road twice to stay on the same side of the road, we support the principle of reserving pedestrian space for pedestrians, especially in areas with high pedestrian volumes such as Hills Road.

We also think that there is the potential for confusion with people cycling in both directions across access, especially if one direction has priority but the other does not.

Cherry Hinton Road Junction Bus Stop

The bus stop just after the Cherry Hinton Road junction on Hills Road is an existing problem for junction capacity, as traffic is blocked by waiting buses. As the current location is unsuitable for an island bus stop, we would ultimately like to see the bus stop moved to a location where this is possible, but still convenient for bus users, as this section of the scheme does not come up to the standard of the rest by failing to address the issue of bike and bus interaction.

Huntingdon Road Proposals

Raised Cycleway Option

If the raised cycleway option is implemented the 2.7m allocated for the segregated option should be used for the raised lane, instead of the 2.1m in the proposals. The additional distance from motor vehicles will still be important for less confident cyclists who choose to stay left if there is no segregation to separate them from motor traffic.

Road hatching

The plans leave a lot of central road hatching in the design. Where there are no junctions, this is a waste of usable space, and should be used for additional width on the cycle lanes, and particularly the bus islands, as appropriate. Girton Corner, for example, retains central

hatching and concrete of the width of two cars in the plans where half of that space could be taken out and given over to the bus island.

Lawrence Weaver Junction



Markings should prioritise the straight-on cycle lane

should separate the left hand cycle lane, not interrupt the straight-on lane.

This junction will remain a barrier to creating new cycling trips, as it involves motor vehicles crossing the cycle lane, and people on bikes moving between two rows of motor traffic. If no hard infrastructure changes are to be made here given current budget, we suggest that straightening the straight-on cycle lane, from the existing Y-junction, will at least help emphasise continuity for the majority of people cycling through, and that they should have priority over those moving into the left-turn only lane. The white dashed markings

Girton Corner

The lane from Girton Road which leads into the new cycle track shows a sharp angled turn at the give-way. We think this should curve so that cyclists enter the lane smoothly rather than closer to a 90% angle.

Cycle Zebra

We like the principle of the cycle priority crossing parallel to a pedestrian zebra. We are keen to see this tried, although we would also like to see it tried at a place with lower traffic volumes as well as on Huntingdon Road.

Closing Comments

Overall we think that these proposals are a necessary direction to increase levels of cycling in Cambridge, and therefore relieve pressure on transport infrastructure by encouraging space-efficient, healthy and environmentally-friendly travel. We commend the officers on the work put into the proposals, and look forward to more high-quality, segregated schemes as part of the Cambridge City Deal.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Hester Wells
Co-ordinator