

Cambridge Cycling Campaign

Response to the City Deal Histon Road Consultation

Contents

Introduction	2
Overview	2
King’s Hedges Road and Darwin Green Junctions	2
King’s Hedges Road to Gilbert Road	3
Gilbert Road/Histon Road/Warwick Road junction	4
Gilbert Road to Texaco Garage/Aldi	5
Aldi to Victoria Road	5
Opportunities for additional routes.....	6
Victoria Road Junction	6

Introduction

Cambridge Cycling Campaign works for better, safer and more cycling in and around Cambridge and has over 1,100 paid members. We scrutinise consultation proposals and planning applications to assess whether they will facilitate safer cycling and encourage more people to cycle. Our response to proposals is based on such assessment.

We welcome the strategic objective of high quality cycling routes proposed by the Greater Cambridge City Deal. We hope that the final installations are high quality and of good design in order to encourage more people to cycle, thus reducing congestion in Cambridge. With this objective in mind we have responded to proposals for Histon Road, indicating the positives for each design, highlighting areas where the designs fail to meet the standards for cyclist safety and making recommendations for rectification.

As always, we invite further discussion about our response and can offer more information about how our recommendations might be implemented. Please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Overview

Our aim for Histon Road is for an attractive route for people of all ages, from 8 to 80, to safely cycle along. We believe that this will result in a step change in the number of people using the route, allowing many people to make a mode shift from car to bike.

We do not think that either of the proposals, as currently drafted, achieve this goal for people cycling. While we support the aim of improving the bus service, we believe that most of the improvement to bus services can be achieved without the provision of an inbound bus lane along the full length of the road, allowing for better cycling infrastructure and improved green space.

King's Hedges Road and Darwin Green Junctions

We note that the current proposals do not include any improvements the King's Hedges Road/Histon Road junction, or any details about the junctions near to the Darwin Green Development. The King's Hedges Road junction is currently a very pedestrian and cyclist unfriendly junction. To cross from Histon & Impington a person on a bike has a choice between following an on-road cycle lane, which has significant left-hook risk from traffic merging across, or using the pedestrian crossings, which takes three separate crossings, and a number of 90 degree turns, all of which are awkward on a bicycle, especially if using a trailer or cargo bike. Since Orchard Park and Histon & Impington have a large number of residents that might use this route we see this as a very large omission.

We would like to see a Dutch-style traffic junction here, with single stage crossings for cycles on (at least) the crossing of King's Hedges Road. A single stage crossing would ensure that the cycle route maintains the convenience of the existing on road cycle lane, but would make it attractive to a much wider range of users.

The designs that have been released to date for the Darwin Green development follow the same pedestrian and bike unfriendly design. We wish to avoid another mistake such as that found on Huntingdon Road, where high quality segregated provision is interrupted by large junctions that people are expected to negotiate without separation from motor traffic (West Cambridge and Lawrence Weaver Road). A route is only as good as its weakest sections.

King's Hedges Road to Gilbert Road

In the proposed plans (both "do something" and "do maximum") the majority of the raised cycleway has a width of only 1.5m. This is too narrow for a cycleway with the potential to be very busy. In addition, the lanes have no buffer from the 3m road lanes in a 40mph zone. This means that a key benefit of raised cycle lanes - a feeling of comfort for people on bikes - is lost. We know of parents from this area ruling out schools in Histon & Impington for their children due to the perceived danger of cycling in the existing cycle lanes. The cycle lanes on Huntingdon Road and Hills Road are targeting 2.3m width, which is more appropriate as it allows for parents to ride alongside children and riders of different speeds to pass. A 1.5m lane should only be acceptable for short pinch points, not for the majority of the route.

This would mean that the inbound bus lane cannot be maintained along the entire length of this section, but we believe that effective bus priority could still be achieved with sections of bus lane where the width is available. Where the width prevents the inclusions of a bus lane, traffic lights could be used to prioritise buses on the narrower sections.

Reducing the length of the bus lane also has other advantages, including minimising the required land take and allowing green verges and trees to be maintained along parts of the route.

The drawings have the cycle ways stopping across side roads. The raised cycle lanes should be continued across the side roads with no change in height, to show clear visual priority. Similarly the footways should also continue over the side roads to show clear visual priority over motor vehicles using the side roads.

We support the tightening of the turn geometries shown in the plans.

The bus stop details are not shown in the proposals. They should, as far as possible be floating bus stops. We do not consider the shared use sections at bus stops to be an acceptable solution, as this will generate unneeded conflict between cyclists and bus users.

We suggest that the 40mph speed limit in this area is reduced to 30mph.

There may be opportunity to provide a city bound separated cycle way from the King's Hedges junction to Hazelwood Close, along or parallel to the allotment access track. Provided a convenient single-stage crossing of King's Hedges Road this would be an

opportunity to move cycle traffic away from motorised vehicles on Histon Road. As a bidirectional track this would be also be an excellent addition to the cycle network for trips from Histon Road to Orchard Park.

The space saved by moving the city bound lane away from the main carriageway would provide for a 2.3m wide Histon & Impington bound lane next to Histon Road. This north bound lane should remain so riders heading in this direction are not required to make two crossings of Histon Road to use the proposed cycle way alongside the allotments.

Where the drainage ditch is of concern we would recommend looking at Dutch engineering solutions where cycle way incorporate a drainage solution.



Image 1: Cycle way incorporating a drainage solution.

Gilbert Road/Histon Road/Warwick Road junction

The junction design in the consultation is a standard British junction with Advanced Stop Lanes (ASLs). This does not provide a comfortable environment for people on bikes, especially when making right turns. We recommend that a junction with fully protected cycle movements be designed, with either a protected two stage right turn, or a simultaneous green junction. This would provide convenient and safe movements for cycles and pedestrians, without affecting the motorised vehicle capacity of the junction. This is especially important due to the proximity of Mayfield School and the potentially large number of children on bikes.

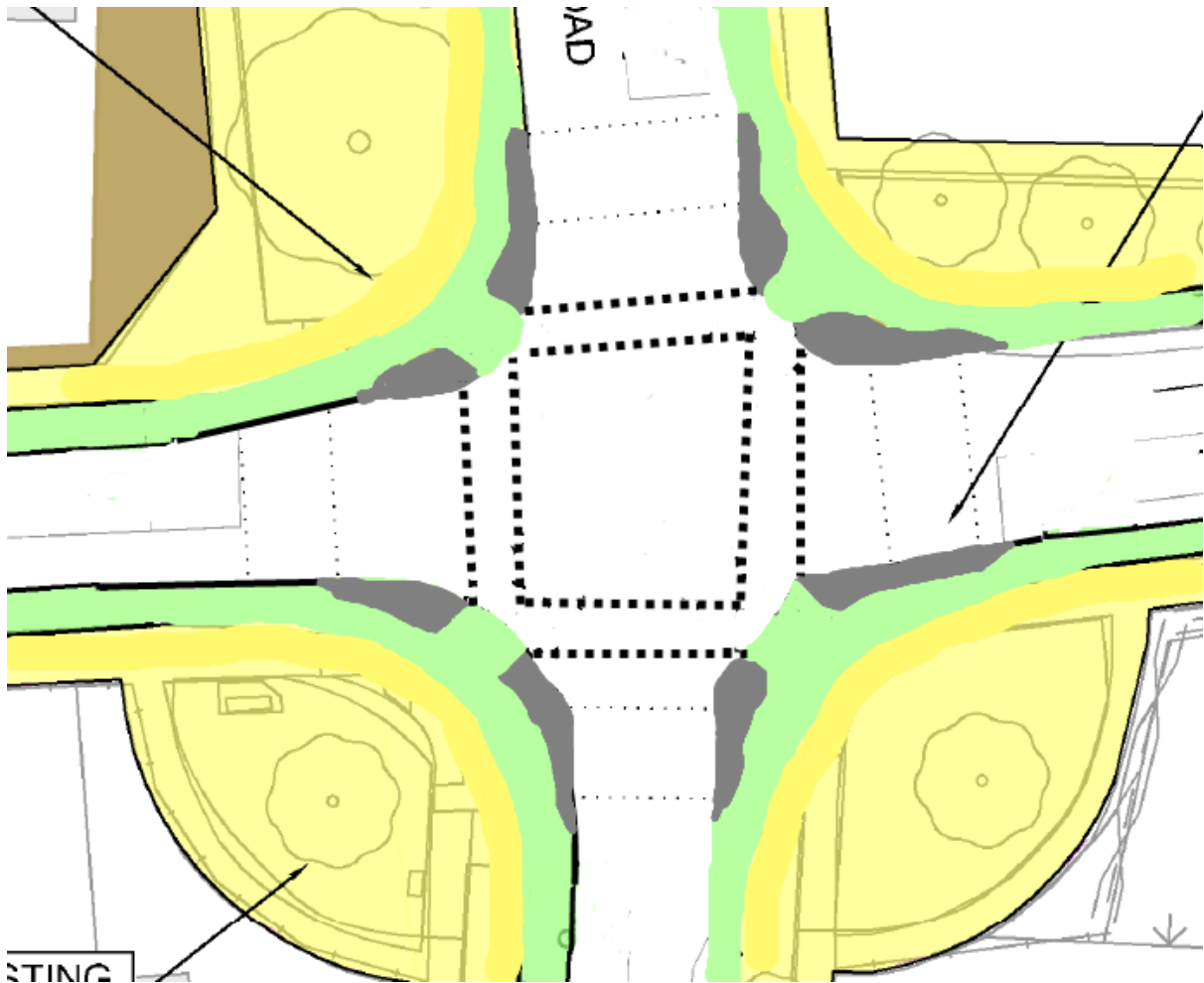


Image 2: Example of segregated modes overlaid on Histon Road and Gilbert Road junction.

Gilbert Road to Texaco Garage/Aldi

We would support the provision of the 2m raised cycle ways along this section, since this is relatively short section, and the available width is limited.

Aldi to Victoria Road

We recognise that the road width means that the options to improve this section of the route for cyclists are limited. We support the removal of the on-road car parking.

We would prefer the "do-something" option of 1.5m advisory lanes on both sides of road, as sensible compromise given the limited space.

As the potential for segregated cycle route is limited in this section a 20mph speed limit should also be used here for the improved safety and comfort of cyclists.

Opportunities for additional routes

Due to the limited potential for improvement to the southernmost section of Histon Road we would like to suggest that in addition, an alternative route into city be improved and signposted. This could complete an attractive route, which would also be heavily used as a link to Mayfield School, and to West Cambridge. The best candidate route would be via Warwick Road and Oxford Road. This would require Warwick Road to be upgrade with segregated lanes and the junction of the cut-through to be improved and barriers removed.

Another alternate route would be via Richmond Road and Windsor Road. This has the benefit of lower traffic on Richmond Road, but would require a new set of lights to allow easy right turns from Histon Road to Windsor Road.

We stress that these suggestions are in addition to changes on Histon Road, since the ideal layout for cycling cannot be achieved there, not as a replacement for making improvements to Histon Road.

Victoria Road Junction

We support the restriction of turns on to Victoria Road. We note that very few of the cycle movements through this junction are protected, but would prioritise improving the Huntingdon Road direction through the junctions to create a completely segregated route to and from the city. We would like to know whether S106 funding from the Mount Pleasant development could be put towards this.