

Planning application reference number 09/02814/FB.

Response by Bristol Cycling Campaign

The committee of Bristol Cycling Campaign have considered the application. We OPPOSE the application on the following grounds, and make an alternative proposal below:

A General observations:

This road is difficult for cyclists because of the volume of motor traffic in both directions in a narrow width, combined with traffic speeds well in excess of the 30mph speed limit.

At the Bristol end there are heavily used junctions on the west side including entrances to garages, car sales and a car wash.

The road has an existing shared pavement on the east side, i.e the opposite side of the road to that proposed for this new track. The existing east side track is about 1.5m wide and is usable but has a poor surface, and has no verge separating it from the road.

The proposal is for a new segregated cycle track and pavement on the west side of the road.

B Comments on the proposal

We refer below to DfT Guidance Local Transport Note 2/08 Cycle Infrastructure Design (CID). The Greater Bristol Cycling City team has stated a commitment to complying with this guidance.

The proposed west side track is shown as two-way, of width 2m, with an adjacent footway of width 1.5m at the same grade, with a separation strip. The Design and Access Statement clause 3 refers to a 4m wide path in context of improvements for cycling. This is a misleading description as the proposed cycle track is actually only 2m wide.

The *minimum* recommended width in CID for a two way cycle track is 3m. This is a minimum, not a design target. The Design and Access statement is misleading in suggesting this minimum would be met - it would not. 1m is segregated for pedestrians and interrupted by street lighting columns, leaving a 2m wide cycle track.

The drawing shows a verge and kerb of 0.725m between cycle track and road in opposite flow.

The drawings do not specify whether the surface should be machine laid or hand laid. This is an important distinction. A machine laid surface is acceptable for a cycle track, hand laid is not.

Street lighting columns are shown with centre line on edge of the footway. This limits scope for cycle track to occupy the position of the footway, effectively reducing the usable width by about 700mm (radius + 500mm) per CID table 8.2.

The *minimum* recommended width for an unsegregated 2-way track is 3m but the proposed width available is $3.5 - .7 = 2.8\text{m}$. The width is thus below the minimum and is therefore unacceptable for 2-way. It is acceptable for 1-way though.

Separation strips are a hazard when wet and are not observed by pedestrians.

CID points out that cycle routes should not require cyclists to frequently adjust speed or stop.

CID hierarchy of provision Table 1.2 requires action to reduce speed and volume of motor traffic as first priority before considering other provisions such as cycle tracks and cycle lanes.

CID Clause 10.3 – Cycle track crossings near junctions - states that cycle tracks alongside carriageway are problematic where crossing mouths of side roads. There are 10 such crossings in the proposal.

Access to the cycle track and road entrance crossings in the proposal is summarised as follows :

From S to N.

1 Novers Lane. No swept access or exit. Particularly dangerous for contraflow cyclists who have to cross the road opposite Novers Lane.

2 Slow sign at junction to existing cycle track is acceptable. Junction at includes barrier necessitating a dismount to join existing cycle track – unacceptable.

3 Headley Lane junction. Cyclists have to give way, whereas they would not if they were on the road.

4 Cycle track is between pavement and bus stop – undesirable.

5 Cyclist Give way at car dealer.

6 Cyclist Give way (with plateau) at Shell garage exit and busy car wash

7 Cyclist give way at side road

8 Abrupt end without safe swept access to road at Finch Car Sales.

9 2 way Track restarts on opposite (East) side . No safe access, particularly for contraflow cycle traffic.

10 Cyclist give way at Wimborne Road.

None of the above Give Ways and hazards exist for cyclists on the road.
The presence of junctions renders a cycle track too dangerous at these positions.

C Queries:

We question why 2-way track is required on the west side. In our view there is no necessity for a two way cycle track. The road is single carriageway and the demand for road crossing is quite low.

We question the demand for a separate pavement. The existing grass is used by people walking dogs and this may well be their preference.

D Conclusions:

We oppose the proposal because it is not in accordance with guidance in CID, is dangerous and does not improve conditions for cycling.

Priority should be given to enforcement of the 30mph speed limit.

If a cycle track is provided it should be single way and should merge to a cycle lane at the Bristol end to avoid crossing the junctions.

Unless priority is given at junctions a cycle lane would be preferred. This could be created from the verge that is proposed for this shared pavement. A mandatory cycle lane will not take the same weight as the rest of the road so can be of lighter construction.

A west side cycle track would be acceptable between Inns Court Drive (i.e. beyond the current proposal) and Headley Lane. Beyond Headley Lane there are too many side

crossings to make a cycle track acceptable, and (following the guidance in CID) a cycle lane is preferable.

E Alternative proposal:

Our alternative proposal is:

1. Add speed camera to cover both directions and step up enforcement of the 30mph limit.
2. Improve the surface and side road/entrance junctions of the existing east side track and sign it one-way south going.
3. Build a new 2.5m north going one-way track on the west side. Relocate street lamps 500mm clear of the track. If pedestrian pavement is also needed it should be grade separated. Alternatively a 3.5m cycle track could be used by pedestrians as well as one-way cyclists. A separation strip should not be used.
4. All cycle track surfaces should be machine laid.
5. At the Bristol end consider widening the road to create a 2m mandatory cycle lane on the west side. Lead the track safely into this lane to avoid crossing the joining roads and entrances.

Whilst cycle lanes are accepted by CID there is a widespread view that they encourage drivers to drive too close to cyclists and a road of the required width without cycle lanes is preferable. In this particular case widening the road at the Bristol end could have the detrimental effect of increasing driving speed so we suggest a *mandatory* cycle lane of the recommended width which would maintain or even reduce the current general traffic lane width and so not encourage speeding.

A better overall result would be achieved by commencing a 20mph speed limit at Headley Lane which would be consistent with our policy for a default 20mph urban limit. Within the 20mph limit no other provision would be needed apart from merging the cycle track safely on to the road.

S J Kinsella

Chairman, Bristol Cycling Campaign

Submission on behalf of Bristol Cycling Campaign

Bristol Cycling Campaign is a members' organisation supporting cycling in the Bristol area.