



## Northern Quarter Development: Comments from Portsmouth Cycle Forum

30<sup>th</sup> October 2013

Portsmouth Cycle Forum welcomes the plans to redevelop and regenerate the north of the city centre. This document sets out Portsmouth Cycle Forum's comments on the proposed development.

Portsmouth Cycle Forum look forward to a development that welcomes cyclists with well thought out and plentiful cycle parking, easy cycle access and excellent connectivity to the cycle network. The need for these things is well illustrated by the existing development at Gunwharf Quays.

When the Gunwharf Quays development was planned no consideration was given to cycle access at all, and it was decided that no cycles would be permitted into the development itself. It was only after the development opened that it became clear that many local customers wished to avoid the traffic and access the shops and restaurants by bike. Cycle parking was retrofitted but because of this it is poorly laid out, uncovered, overcrowded and forces cyclists to get off and walk before they get to it. Connectivity to the city cycle network is still poor and often brings cyclists into conflict with pedestrians and motorists.

We hope that Centros will learn from the mistakes of others and will work with Portsmouth City Council and Portsmouth Cycle Forum to deliver a development that is truly cycle friendly.

We ask that the development team give particular attention to the following issues: access, connectivity and parking.

### **Access**

The design must take account of how cyclists and pedestrians will approach the new development.

Some will use the main road network, many will use the planned dedicated cycle facilities and a lot will use minor roads (e.g. All Saints Rd). The convenient location of crossing facilities (e.g. toucan crossings) enable cyclists and pedestrians to get to the development is vital. The waiting time at such crossings should be as short as possible to encourage their use.

Access into the development does not stop at the road crossing, however. Frequently there will be car parks or other areas to cross first. Routes across these should be easy to follow, convenient and safe. Please don't expect cyclists and pedestrians to find their way across an expanse of car parking with no planned route for them to follow. Non-motorised users will usually try to follow the shortest route – this should be factored in to the design to avoid conflict.

Access to the development for cyclists and pedestrians should be possible from all sides. Travelling around the development to find an access point will present a serious barrier to access, and will reduce the number of cyclists and pedestrians using the new development.

### **Connectivity**

It is essential to have good connectivity to the wider cycle network to allow safe access for cyclists to the development. This is not fully realised in the current plans for a redeveloped road system.

Centros should work with PCC to ensure that the homes, shops and restaurants of the new development are easily accessible by bike. There are currently significant barriers to cyclists at Mile End Rd (routes in and out of the city are to the east of this major road, whereas the proposed cycle routes in the new development are to the west) and the western part of Market Way (where the cycle route is much too narrow and has poor onward connectivity to the Historic Dockyard / Gunwharf Quays area).

### **Parking**

An adequate provision of high quality cycle parking is essential for any new development. To avoid



excessive queues of traffic waiting to access (and bypass) the new development as many users as possible need to arrive by other means, and the bicycle will often present the fastest and cheapest way for users to get to the development.

The cycle parking at the new development needs to consider 3 distinct groups:

- **Residents:** Secure cycle storage should be provided as part of any residential development. This should be enclosed and accessible to residents only and ideally should be based on lockers or a secure compound covered by CCTV.
- **Staff:** Staff at working at the new development may wish to cycle to work. To do this they will need at a minimum a secure space to store their bike for the day. This parking should be covered, protected by CCTV and access to it should be controlled in some way. Ideally staff who cycle will also be provided with a place to change into work clothes and shower. It is unlikely that individual retail / food outlets will be able to provide the required facilities for their staff individually – this should therefore be planned centrally.
- **Visitors:** Visitors require easy to use parking that is easily accessible from approach routes and conveniently located close to shops and restaurants. Visitors parking should be accessible without requiring cyclists to dismount. It should be installed in prominent locations, covered by CCTV and if possible be protected from the elements. Visitor's parking should accommodate unusual cycles – such as tricycles (often used by the disabled cyclists) and cycles with load carrying trailers.

For residents and staff (and some visitors) a manned bike park may be appropriate, as are currently in use in other UK cities (e.g. Leeds and Leicester). This video of the McDonald's Cycle Center in Chicago illustrates the concept extremely well. By charging a small fee to users, partnering with other cycle using organisations (in this case the Police) and by offering value added services Chicago has created an attractive, self-sustaining cycle park that people pay to use: <http://vimeo.com/13309023>.