

## Portsmouth Cycle Forum response to City Centre Road Scheme

### 17/02066/CS3

Portsmouth Cycle Forum would like to **OBJECT** to this road scheme in its present form.

There are positive aspects to this scheme which should improve cycling and walking, however the scheme does little to anticipate future growth in active travel through new residential and retail development, or even the suppressed demand that exists today. This road scheme provides the opportunity to create an ambitious statement of intent towards making active travel a desirable choice. We do not consider these improvements will fulfil these ambitions.

After these main points of objection, we have provided a detailed examination and feedback on aspects relating to walking and cycling, with suggestions for improvement.

### Main points of Objection to the Scheme

- Lack of consultation with relevant groups, including Portsmouth Cycle Forum locally and Sustrans nationally
- Assessment tool used for existing and proposed cycle routes was inadequate and should have used Cycle Level of Safety, as used by Transport for London. It does not provide for future growth or suppressed demand.
- Design speed of all roads is 60 kph (40 mph) even in areas with large numbers of pedestrians and cyclists.
- Main north-south cycle routes to the east and west should be cycle only, with clear separation from vehicle lanes. The proposed shared paths do not comply with the Sustrans Design Manual quoted.
- Designers have not clarified at which points cycle paths deviate from 3m minimum (as required by DfT and Sustrans) or why. The designers have not specified the quality of construction of cycle paths.

### Detailed Examination and Feedback

## Transport Assessment

The level of assessment undertaken is very weak, for example the level of service assessment is inadequate and there is no relationship with the Local Transport Plan's ambition for increases in cycling levels. This compares with the detailed data and

modelling of motor vehicle traffic. For example, the assessment could have included use of the DfT-funded Propensity to Cycle Tool to understand level of suppressed demand. The assessment also fails to consider the type of facility that would be suitable for the number of commuter cyclists that do and would use this route to access jobs and leisure - it is widely recognised that shared use paths are very unpopular with this group of cyclists who are unlikely to use them.

This detailed document includes just 2.5 pages on walking and cycling. It refers to LTN 1/12, however does not appear to followed its guidance. This states it should be used in conjunction with LTN 2/08 Cycle Infrastructure Design. This introduces the Hierarchy of Provision in Table 1.2, which has not been followed.

**Table 1.2 Hierarchy of provision**

<p><b>Consider first</b></p>  <p><b>Consider last</b></p>	Traffic volume reduction
	Traffic speed reduction
	Junction treatment, hazard site treatment, traffic management
	Reallocation of carriageway space
	Cycle tracks away from roads
	Conversion of footways/footpaths to shared use for pedestrians and cyclists

Also, we do not agree that the route has been designed in line with Sustrans Guidance or TA09/05. The latter for example says that off carriageway cycle routes should generally be designed to a 30kph design speed. This speed is not practical or safe on the narrow sub-standard shared use routes, with blind corners, proposed in this scheme.

In addition, the Construction Management Plan needs to address the provision of suitable diversionary routes for cycling and walking. In London there has been a spike in cycle casualties for every location where they've been making these changes.

## **Planning, Design and Access Statement**

This provides detailed proposals for Walking and Cycling Infrastructure, which are described as Links 1 to 4. The proposals are described here, with comments below.

### **Link 1 - Flathouse Road and Hope Street Dual Carriageway**

5.19. There will be a footway on the eastern side of the carriageway at least 2m wide and widening to 3m at the Marketway/Hope Street Signal Junction.

There is a shared use path, designated as a National Cycle Route, on the western side of the carriageway which is at least 3m wide which is in line with standards in Local Transport Note 1/12 Shared Use Routes for Pedestrians and Cyclists. Signal crossings are provided at the northern and southern end of the link, the crossings are to be toucan crossings to provide a link between new shared use paths. The crossings are to be 4m wide, with drop kerbs, tactile paving and a refuge island at least 2.5m wide.

## Portsmouth Cycle Forum comments

### Eastern side

Drawing GA3 refers to a proposed 3m wide cycle track. This runs the eastern side of Hope Street from the Marketway junction 2. At the corner of Sainsburys site there is a very narrow section, 1.6m wide. This also has a blind corner, and is adjacent to the carriageway. It diverges into separate cycle and footpaths to the north of Sainsburys' site. This should be a continuous cycle route. We would encourage the council to investigate purchase of this corner to widen the path.

### Western side

Although the description here is 3m wide, at 'Junction 2' it narrows to 2.5m. This is also the location of a toucan crossing, to get to both sides of Marketway.

At this location, cyclists and pedestrians will be waiting to cross the toucan, reducing the effective width to much narrower than the 2.5m. This is also the location of a blind corner increasing risk of collision. The path may average 3m in width but it is again, only 2.5m at the bend into Flathouse Road.

There is no obvious desire line for pedestrians to use the western side of Hope St/Flathouse Road. Clearly some pedestrians do use it today, although no survey figures are provided. The plan for a busy dual carriageway means it is likely to become even less appealing to walk along, with more obvious alternatives either side of Sainsburys. If a more practical and attractive route is built for cyclists, especially those faster-moving, it is likely to lead to greater conflict between cyclists and pedestrians. Currently there is only a kerbline which means a cyclist's handlebars could be over-hanging the kerb, while the body of an HGV or bus could be crossing the kerbline as it rounds the corner. This is hazardous.

We suggest converting this to a cycle only two-way path along its length from Unicorn Gate to Princess Royal Way. The cycle track needs to be at grade with the road, with clear, physical separation to avoid conflict between cyclists and motor vehicles. This would create a continuous cycle route from Unicorn Road in the city centre to Princess Royal Way. Converting this to cycle-only would also make the hazardous toucan crossing on the northbound carriageway of Marketway unnecessary.

In relation to the proposed relocation of lighting columns on Market Way: at present, these are located in the central reservation. In the new scheme, these are within the proposed shared use walking and cycling route. This again reduces the effective width of the already narrow walking and cycling route and is contrary to DfT guidance.

### **Access to Flathouse Road close to the Emergency Access**

We are concerned that cycle access should be maintained to and from the Herbert Street underpass for employees accessing Herbert Street, and users of non-standard cycles which, in the current design, would seem to struggle with the location of bollards.

### **Link 2 - Marketway Dual Carriageway**

5.20. There are footways on both sides of the carriageway. On the western side of the carriageway it is proposed to be a shared use path and on the eastern is a footway. The footway on the eastern carriageway leaves the carriageway side 70m north of the Unicorn Road/ Alfred Road/ Charlotte Street signal junction to connect with Charlotte Street. The footway is approximately 2m wide and provides a comfortable route for pedestrians. The shared use path along the western side is at least 2.5m and provides a direct and safe route for cyclists to travel between Unicorn Road/ Alfred Road/ Charlotte Street signal junction and Marketway/ Hope Street Signal Junction. Crossing points are provided at the aforementioned signal junctions at either end of the link, the crossings are toucan crossing which are 4m wide, with drop kerbs, tactile paving and a refuge island at least 2m wide.

### **Portsmouth Cycle Forum comments**

As noted above on Link 1, Portsmouth Cycle Forum suggests changing the western side of Marketway to segregated two-way cycletrack. As per our Comments on Link1, we do not consider this to be a “safe route for cyclists”

The path on the eastern side is shown as cycle only on the revised drawings. The Forum welcomes the changes made after consultation with planners. However, it is not clear what will discourage pedestrians from using this, especially as it is on the desire line from the Junction 2 crossing. Note: there is a footpath to the north of Sainsburys site still showing on GA3, which would appear to lead nowhere, except to the cycle only track.

The other cycle and footpaths on the eastern side have been well-designed, however it should be made clear that the bus only access from Unicorn Road to Cascades Approach is for cycling as well, as it is elsewhere in the city. Note: the Design Statement has not been updated to show the new cycle- and pedestrian-only routes that are now in the plans. We would be interested to see the detail on these for further consultation.

### **Link 3 - Charlotte Street and Landport View**

5.21. Charlotte Street has a footway on the southern side approximately 2.5-3m. An off traffic route is provided from the access to Cascades Car Park to Marketway east of Marketway/Hope Street signal junction, the footpath is 3m wide with a 10-15m verge area to the west. Landport View has footways on either side of the carriageway approximately 2m wide. Landport View has a

number of access roads along the western and eastern side. At each access a crossing is provided with drop kerbs and tactile paving on the pedestrian desire line. There are two informal crossings of Landport View one just south of the mini-roundabout with Marketway and the second just north of the priority junction along Charlotte Street. The crossings consist of drop kerbs and tactile paving.

### Portsmouth Cycle Forum comments

This looks well-designed. The only additions we suggest would be continuous footpaths across junctions at each of the entrances onto Marketway as a form of traffic calming. This could be in form of surfacing at the footway level, and moving back the give way lines for traffic into the junctions, with raised tables, with appropriate signage to warn drivers.

### Access to from Charlotte Street to Lake Road

The council recognises that east-west permeability for cycling is poor in this area (and this is also highlighted in Portsmouth Cycle Forum's document A City to Share). There is a great need to provide enhanced, safe cycling links from this area towards Queen Street, The Hard interchange and the Gosport ferry.

We feel this could be improved by reinstating permission for cycling in the pedestrian areas of Charlotte Street and Lake Road - at all times. When the market moves there will more space available.

On the southern side of Lake Road where the landscaping and new footpaths are being developed, provision could be made for cyclists to continue westbound on a straight line towards Charlotte Street, avoiding the bus stop and junction.



Extract from drawing GA104

Landport View and Charlotte Street currently provide on-street parking. We seek reassurance that no parking will be supported in this area as this would likely be within new cycle routes.

#### **Link 4 - A3 Mile End Road and Commercial Road**

5.22. The A3 Mile End Road has footways on both sides of the carriageway, on the eastern side there is a shared use path along the whole link while on the western side the shared use path starts north of the Church Street signal junction and continues to Princess Royal Way/ A3 Mile End Road signal junction. Firstly, the eastern shared use path is approximately 3m wide along the link and widens around the signal crossings to reduce the potential conflict. A toucan crossing will be provided for users at the A3 Mile End Road/Church Street signal junction, the crossing will include a 3m refuge island, drop kerbs and tactile paving. The crossing provided on the access from All Saints Street will be an informal crossing with drop kerbs, tactile paving on the pedestrian desire line.

5.23. The western side of the carriageway footway from Marketway/ Commercial Road/Cornmill Street signal junction to A3 Mile End Road/ Church Street signal junction. The footway is over 3m wide except for a short section around Fitzherbert Street where the footway narrows. An informal crossing is proposed on the approach of Fitzherbert Street; the crossing will have dropped kerbs and tactile paving but is not on the pedestrian desire line. The new shared use path is from the A3 Mile End Road/ Church Street signal junction to the A3 Mile End Road/ Princess Royal Way signal junction. The shared use path is approximately 3-5m wide and widens around bus stops and crossing points. The informal crossing of the access to Morrison's is proposed to have drop kerbs, tactile paving and a refuge island to reduce the walking distance to improve safety. The crossing at the A3 Mile End Road/ Hope Street is proposed to be a series of toucan crossings with 4m wide refuge islands.

5.24. As part of the City Centre Road Scheme three crossings are proposed on the A3 Mile End Road/Commercial Road. Looking at the crossings north-south, the first crossing proposed is a toucan crossing on the southern approach to the A3 Mile End Road/ Commercial Road and Flathouse Road Signal Traffic Junction. The crossing will have drop kerbs, tactile paving and refuge islands 4m wide. The next crossing is on the southern approach to the A3 Mile End Road/ Church Street signal junction. The crossing will have drop kerbs, tactile paving and a staggered refuge island approximately 4m wide. The final crossing is on the northern approach to the Marketway/ Commercial Road and Cornmill Street Traffic Signal Junction. The crossing is a signalised toucan crossing with dropped kerbs and tactile paving.

## Portsmouth Cycle Forum comments

### Eastern side

Currently cyclists heading south from Grafton St have unattractive choices:

- use the bus lane on Mile End Road, then mix with fast moving traffic on the approach to Church St roundabout
- walk along the end of the footway into Old Commercial Road and return to cycling.

This plan gives a good alternative to the existing routes, but it is unclear why it should be shared use. Pedestrians have the existing route through Old Commercial Road, and it is not clear why they should want to walk alongside a busy dual carriageway with such a good alternative. The only reason they might want to walk on this new route is to get to the crossing towards the Sainsburys side. It is not explained why the bus stop has been moved south – it appears to be a similar distance to the crossing as the existing stop. We suggest keeping the bus stop where it is, and making the shared path extend to the crossing. From here it should be cycle only as far as the new Church St junction.

The stopping up of Wingfield Street is a positive move, and should help reduce ‘rat-runs’ through Buckland. We suggest extending the shared path to allow easy access for cycles into Wingfield Street. This links in with the quiet routes through Buckland as described in the Transport Assessment.

We also question why All Saints St is not to be blocked. It is a break in the bus lane and shared cycle/footpath and can be exited via Staunton St or Cornwallis Crescent. If this is not possible there should be a raised table to slow traffic and indicate priority for pedestrians and cyclists crossing.

We question how the cycle route links into Lake Road from Cornmill Street. The drawing appears to show that cyclists will leave the shared path and enter the vehicle lane. This will require them to look behind as they join the carriageway to merge with traffic. Please provide clarification as this does not appear safe.

### Western side

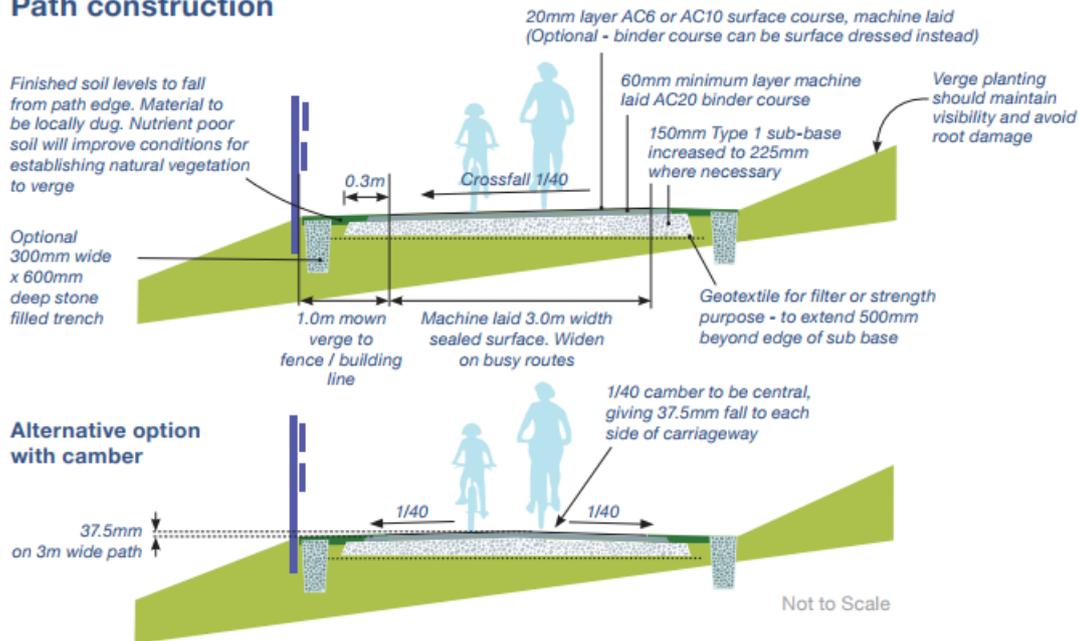
This looks well designed. The only addition would be to create raised tables at junction 10 and the junction to the south of the petrol station as a form of traffic calming.

## Highway Design Report

This states the proposed cycle infrastructure has been designed according to guidance from the Sustrans Handbook for cycle-friendly design. The cross-section drawings are not clear what kind of construction is proposed for the cycle paths. We request reassurance it will be of a similar quality to that in the Sustrans Manual, as shown below.

### Traffic free routes 2

#### Path construction



Sustrans Design Manual: Traffic free routes 2

### Summary of Portsmouth Cycle Forum Objection

- Improper assessment
- Lack of consultation
- Incomplete design
- Some areas of improvement but not enough to satisfy existing or future demand

In addition, we request Portsmouth Cycle Forum should be consulted for future road schemes.

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