

Comments on Tranche 2 Proposals from RCC March 2021

Routes closer to the town centre where there is no cycle provision are probably the priorities for cyclists. So priorities are probably – Bath Road/Castle Street/IDR, and Southampton Street/IDR.

General:

- No widths are shown on any schemes - the cycle lanes are likely to be narrower than we would like/want.
- Mainly one-way lanes/tracks as opposed to the two-way tracks that were previously intimated/proposed. With the frequent road junctions, the one-way lanes/tracks may be better than two-way track.
- No means of segregation is shown, although sometimes this appears to be advisory or mandatory lanes. No width marked for 'barriers' between cycle lane/track and road traffic.
- If lanes are no more than 1.5m wide and there are kerbs or other physical barriers to the sides then overtaking by cyclists would be very difficult.
- Some sections of route on London Road (East of Cemetery junction) and on Shinfield road are segregated (shared paths) and unsegregated shared paths at bus stops and junctions.
- No entry-treatment raised tables with reduced corner radii are shown at sideroad junctions to reduce vehicle speeds and improve cyclists' and pedestrians' safety.
- The London Road scheme east of Cemetery Junction is primarily a bus priority scheme and should be funded accordingly, not from Active Travel.
- Make all ASLs at least 5m deep and provide at all junctions along the route unless this is not possible.

1. Bath Road, Castle Hill and route over the IDR roundabout - RCC priority 1

Generally a good scheme from what is shown, but more thought for roundabout.

- From the west end – the westbound cycle lane over the rail bridge could be made mandatory and extended as little traffic turns into Southcote Lane. The Shared path from the Toucan crossing should link to Southcote Lane (service road). A long-term aspiration should be to provide a better foot/cycle bridge on the north side over the railway.
- Provide an Eastbound ASL to facilitate cyclists turning into Berkeley Avenue, also a section of shared path by the crossing of bath Road to help less confident cyclists make the right-turn via the crossing.
- Provide raised tables at side-road entrances, with reduced corner radii, to slow traffic and improve safety of cyclists and pedestrians.
- Cycle lanes inside bus lanes have worked in London, some prefer the exclusive space, but others feel restricted from the 'bus' area.

- ASL symbol not marked on the Russell St approach or is this a bus and cycle pre-signal. Also, ASLs missing on Russell St and Coley Avenue.
- Parking bays on outside of cycle lane should be removed or relocated.
- Cycle lanes should be wider uphill to facilitate overtaking (by cyclists), and also provision made for overtaking on longer lengths of physically segregated lane.
- Restricted width of cycle lanes on approach to roundabout noted, but maybe there is scope for using some width from the northern footway.
- The roundabout looks interesting, but still has 4 stages to cross over the central island so little benefit. It may be preferable to run the segregated lane/track round the outside, using Toucan or Tiger crossings on the roundabout arms. Remove the outer of the three lanes on the northern and eastern sides. If the central island option is to progress, as it is easier to create the extra cycle space, then it maybe best as cycle only. Many cyclists will use the quicker option of keeping on the carriageway. How does the signal phasing work for the cycle link in terms of delays.

2. Southampton Street – IDR

A difficult site and a difficult consideration. Cyclists are more likely to want to avoid the carriageway here than at Castle Street.

- A cycle route through the roundabout is probably more beneficial than at Castle St, but the alignment is too tight, and maybe a protected route outside the roundabout would be better. Are all the vehicle lanes really needed, is not capacity controlled by the car-park entries. Can the central route be for cyclists only, this would improve its attraction? A marginal strip between the lane/track of 0.5-1.0m should be provided.
- At Bridge Street the track inside the bus stop (parking bay) should be re-thought. Is the third lane at the traffic lights (for only one car) of any real benefit. Can more footway/cycleway space be created on the east side.
- The cycle track (on the 'wrong' east side) on Southampton St is probably better than the bus lane option which has poor southbound provision and a worse link to the proposed roundabout track. But a problem to join the track at Crown Street when the signals are green.
- Southampton Street - A busy bus lane here will not be attractive to cyclists, although more cyclists are likely to be heading north here. Also, the buses (and cyclists) move to the centre lane to avoid two lanes of west-turning traffic. At Deansgate Road tighten the geometry and provide a raised table and allow one-way east-bound for cyclists.
- Crown Street – the contra-flow eastbound is useful. The junctions at London Street and Southampton Street may work better with all-green phases for pedestrians (and Cyclists near junctions.).

3. Shinfield Road

Cycle lane into town but segregated paths (incorrectly labelled cycle lanes) going south out of town, the type of segregation and widths are unclear.

- Width and continuous segregation may stop cyclists from overtaking other slower cyclists, particularly on the uphill section.
- Inset bus bay more at Elmhurst Road.
- There seems to be some design confusion as to whether the route is cycle lane or track (segregated shared path) at the bus-stops and sideroads.
- If it is a cycle track (or shared/segregated path) past the university entrance, then it may be best to set it back by 5m, or more, on a raised table to give cyclists clear and safe priority. It may also be worth trying to make the 'track' two-way back to Elmhurst Road.
- Can the 'track' be wider on the uphill southbound section in particular where there seems to be plenty of space.
- Additional Zebra crossings may be beneficial for pedestrians (and cyclists near junctions).
- A shared path continued over the stopped-off junction of Cedar Road would be useful.
- Raised tables at sideroads would help cyclists and pedestrians.
- Northbound cyclists may still wish to use Northcourt Avenue.
- If the southbound route is a segregated path, then maybe raised delineator markings would be appropriate.

4a. London Road West of Cemetery Junction

This is mainly one-way cycle lanes on each side of road (better than the original one-way bus lane?) These are likely to be narrower than we would like, but no widths or means of segregation shown. The existing three traffic lanes currently generates 'race-track' conditions for much of the day, so removing a lane may help most road users.

- Half of the 3m lane leaves less than 1.5m each way including the segregation method, which is narrow. Overtaking may be restricted.
- It would be worth keeping the existing shared-use, at least to start with as some cyclists may prefer that option, particularly if the new lanes are narrow. One option may be to allow use of the footway areas between some trees to facilitate overtaking. Retaining shared-use in some locations will also help informal cycle route connectivity.
- Add ASLs at Erleigh Road and Eldon Road (1.5 lane width)
- Raised tables at side-roads will help cyclist's and pedestrian's safety.

4b London Road East of Cemetery Junction

This appears the least good scheme for cyclists with only bus lanes and segregated and shared paths (wrongly marked as 'cycle lanes'). Funding should mainly be from bus-priority funds.

- The bus lane is likely to have fast buses, taxis and motorcycles using it.
- Provide better links to other routes at Liverpool Road and Manchester Road
- Extend the eastbound shared path to the Suttons Seeds roundabout.
- Left- turning vehicles into St Bartholomews Road could clash with bus lane traffic, maybe cut back the end of the bus lane by 20m.
- Right-turning traffic into Cholmeley Road could cause problems unless bus-lane is cut back.