

**CTC response to the Town  
Centre Access consultation  
November 2010**



## **Introduction**

CTC fully supports the aims of the Town centre access plan and would like to give a detailed response on achieving those aims with respect to sustainable transport, in particular we support the vision of a town centre that is “well-connected - on foot, and by cycle and public transport and car - to the rest of the town and borough, and is well-designed”. At present the town centre lacks permeability as well as connectivity as far as cycling is concerned.

It is essential that cycling is given a high profile. This is relatively easy as

- it is inexpensive to provide facilities compared with other infrastructure projects,
- it is easy to integrate cycling into infrastructure projects which are not specifically cycling by using the Hierarchy of Users and the Hierarchy of Measures. LTN 2/2008 ([Local transport note 2/08 - Cycle infrastructure design \(3 Mb\)](#)) Many developers seem to be unaware of these hierarchies. Junction improvement and the effect of one way systems is particularly important in this respect.
- *“By early identification of both current infrastructure gaps and the infrastructure which is necessary to support the borough in the future”*
- by ensuring that developers comply with Manual for Streets, 1 and 2 (2010)<sup>1</sup>, as well as other cycle documents. The above documents enable civil engineers and planners to update their knowledge in order to facilitate cycling in all infrastructure.
- Large gaps in the cycle infrastructure means that what is available cannot be used, so it is not cost effective

To make Basingstoke a vibrant town centre to cycle in and to we need an **ABC of cycling: connectivity, permeability and promotion.**

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<sup>1</sup> Available from DfT [http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/manforstreets/Manual for Streets 2 - wider application of the principles](http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/manforstreets/Manual%20for%20Streets%20-%20wider%20application%20of%20the%20principles)

## ***A Connectivity***

The area of Basingstoke is relatively small, all parts are within 3 miles of the town centre, a five or six mile bike journey only takes half an hour and is equivalent to a brisk walk of half an hour or 1 ½ miles. Research shows that weather and hills are rarely a deterrent. It should be possible to make most trips to the town centre or the station by bike if the conditions are attractive. For this we need to consider the following factors:

1. cycle routes to the town centre and the station
2. one way systems
3. connecting cycle routes with the rest of the road network
4. cycle policy for new developments
5. design of road network – roundabouts, junctions, dual carriageways, one way systems
6. off road links – public parks, underpasses, bridges, pedestrian sections
7. the NCN route skirts Basingstoke but does not go to its shops, restaurants, museums or theatre, only the public parks and QMC!
8. extending the boundaries of the town centre will help remedy the problems with one way systems and deficiencies of NCN 23

## ***B Permeability***

At present the town centre is not only difficult to reach, the area within the inner ring road of New Road, Churchill Way West, Victory roundabout and Eastrop roundabout is almost impermeable. This is a barrier both to getting to the shops and to crossing to the other side of town. What is needed:

1. North South routes
2. East West routes
3. alternatives to one way systems
4. recognition that the bicycle may need to be walked through certain sections
5. use of carparks
6. use of pedestrianised areas

## ***C Other factors to promote cycling***

1. cycles can easily be adapted for the disabled so should be encouraged especially in pedestrianised areas instead of wheelchairs/as well as wheel chairs
2. cycling needs to be actively encouraged to counter climate change, pollution and congestion and promote good health, sustainable tourism.
3. major deterrent is cycle theft, so secure sheltered cycle racks and cages in the right location

4. cycle training – a major barrier is a lack of confidence or/and a lack of skill for people of all ages
5. good maintenance of paths and roads, potholes/uneven surfaces can cause serious injuries and broken glass cause punctures making journey times unreliable and inconvenient

## **A Connectivity**

### **A 1 Cycle routes**

#### A 1 (i) Long distance

The corridor strategy seems to have been forgotten. All major roads (A30, A33, A340, A339) should provide a cycleway, cycle lanes or alternative nearby convenient route into town. It should not be necessary to mark these on a cycle route map, but all developers should be aware that they need to link new industrial and residential sites into the road network so that cyclists can connect to adjacent rural areas, other parts of the town and the town centre. Town centre access has got to be seen in the bigger picture, if you cannot travel along the A30 corridor you cannot reach the town centre! e.g. A30 Winchester side of town, sections adjacent to this have been proposed for a cycle route and a section of footway between the King of Wessex and Winchester road roundabout has been converted to walk and cycle way. This needs to be continued all the way to Pack lane in one direction and provision made for cycling into the town centre in the other direction. A30 on the Hook side of town has no cycle facilities, contributions from the Huish development should have provided a cycle track adjacent to the carriageway whilst the road narrowing from 2 lanes to one lane at the Hatch makes the dual carriageway very hazardous for cycles here.

Example 2, A33 developer contributions should have been used to extend the cycle way from Basingstoke town centre to Sherfield on Loddon.

Example 3

A340 Basingstoke Bicycle users group was assured that Sherborne road (the alternative to the A340) would be kept open to cyclists, but it was closed by Everest school and no provision for cyclists made to cross Popley Way.

It is essential that long distance cycle route provision is provided along all main corridors into the town centre and that any traffic management schemes increase safety for vulnerable users, not just pedestrians whose needs are different, but also cyclists.

#### A 1 (ii) Cycle routes where they reach the town centre

There are no cycle routes which reach as far as the town centre, although there are a few which get almost there.

Signage is extremely important so that it becomes possible to get from NCN 23 at the underpass near QMC to the town centre. Pedestrians usually walk in their own local area so are familiar with it and have footways on both sides

of the street as well as shortcuts and footpaths however cyclists often cycle outside their local area and need to know which streets are cycle friendly, where there are cycleways, shortcuts and alternatives to one way streets. It is therefore essential we have good signage from QMC to the town centre. In places there may be no alternative to pushing the bicycle through a passage or crossing carparks, in other sections the one way system will need to be modified.

## **A 2 One way systems and cycle routes**

### A 2 (i) North South

The one way system blocks the North South axis for cyclists from station and BCOT via Penrith road.

Most of the access roads from the South and West have been made one way travelling westwards and northwards, this means that there is no alternative to the Winchester road between the King of Wessex and Winton Square/New road traffic lights. It is not possible to travel by bicycle from BCOT in Worting road to Fairfields and the NCN23 via Penrith road because the continuation along Bounty road, Hawkfield road, Victoria road, Southern road is blocked as they are one way only allowing travel westwards.

### West East

The one way system blocks West East cycle flow because of New road, Southern road, Bounty road and Hawkfield road.

### North/South and South/North

QMC to carparks and Winchester road, Market place

The one way system and junction of Victoria street, Jubilee road and Southern road means that it is difficult/impossible for cyclists to enter and leave Southern carpark. This needs modification so as to permit two way cycle traffic.

## **A 3 connecting cycle routes with the rest of the highway network.**

Recommended cycle routes on a cycle map usually are only a section of cycle route for the individual cyclist, he has to use other segments of the highway, such as transferring to a non recommended road or to a pedestrian link in order to cross a busy carriageway or junction. Obviously when a cyclist reaches an end of route sign it is not his destination or the end of his journey, he continues cycling often transferring from footway to carriageway. It is essential that the cyclist can make a smooth transition between these three types of highway, it may be a dropped kerb before a converted footway or a warning notice of what the hazard is (low tunnel, steep slope, blind corner) or an arrow to divert the cyclist to a cycle track. When turning off the road on to the adjacent footway it is essential there is a wide turning angle/wide radius curve (no 90° corners), a wide entrance and no immediate hazards such as posts and barriers. A quality example of this is where NCN23 crosses

Brighton Way, an example of what not to do is the left turn of NCN23 from Woods Lane to the circular path round the Woods lane roundabout.

It is essential that cyclists can transfer between modes of infrastructure, often a cyclist will find that he is on a main road but there is a cycleway adjacent to this road but no means of transferring or there is no signage to say where it is going. E.g. Rooksdown avenue and the adjacent cycleway. This is particularly important if you are to use the bridge instead of the roundabout on the A339!

#### **A 4 cycle policy for new developments**

Developers need a written policy statement on cycling as well as a map of recommended cycle routes so that we have quality infrastructure. Much of what is stated in this document could be incorporated into that.

Cycleways which share the footway are very unsatisfactory for a wide range of reasons and are only recommended as a method of last resort in the guidelines (LTN 2/2008). They can provide a partial solution in established built up areas lacking space (e.g. A30 King of Wessex to Winchester road roundabout), they should never be necessary in new build.

It is essential any new build in the town centre cater for the desire lines of cyclists, both the potential and established movements, regardless of whether these are on a “recommended cycle route”. At present all the car parks are cycle routes and there are potential routes if the buildings between Southern road and the town centre are destroyed and rebuilt. Likewise any building on the land adjacent near the railway station or the Anvil must increase cycle permeability through these areas.

Cycle specific facilities or cycle routes should be attractive and usable, they should increase connectivity and permeability e.g. Beggarwood is well connected to the town centre at both Eastern and Western corners from the old Beggarwood lane converted into a cycleway, however the other cycle routes are difficult to follow, indirect, with many barriers and not connected to the adjacent roads and cul-de-sacs, they do not increase permeability. The cycleway at Park Prewett from Rooksdown avenue to Peggs Way is well designed in that it is broad and attractive and is connected to all the adjacent roads from their cul-de-sacs. It also parallels the main arterial road, providing an attractive offcarriageway alternative, what is lacking is signage from either end otherwise you do not know it is there and signage of the cul-de-sacs. The Berg estate and Brighton Hill are good example of footways which increase permeability with all footpath labelled to improve orientation. If they were all sufficiently wide and had wide radius corners instead of 90° ones they would be ideal as shared cycleways.

Any modification of roads should enhance safety for cyclists e.g. islands, bends and a steep hill mean that it is not safe to cycle up Chineham road from Popley Way, yet the cycle path is inconvenient and dangerous with its many road crossings, this means that Everest school is inaccessible by cycle. This

would seem to be the fault of the developers, they need stricter guidelines and supervision.

Manual for streets gives many examples of how the actual roads can be designed to increase permeability for non-motorised traffic but decrease it for cars. Too often cycle paths are an add-on feature, e.g. there is a cycle way along the field edge of new development off Old Kempshott lane Buckskin, but no thought was given to a cycleway along Old Kempshott lane itself, which connects the development to the town. Furthermore to increase housing numbers houses were built on the neighbouring public right of way so that it became inconvenient and indirect.

### **A 5 design of road network – roundabouts, junctions, dual carriageways, one way systems**

Where possible cycle movements should be facilitated and made safer even if it is not cycling specific infrastructure. This should be stated policy, it is making explicit guidelines in LTN 2/08.

Increasing junction capacity and wide entry angles on Victory roundabout make cycling more hazardous. Traffic lights on the Eastrop roundabout make it safer for on road cyclists, but we also need combined cycle and pedestrian routes underneath this roundabout.

### **A 6 off road links – public parks, underpasses, bridges, pedestrian sections**

It may be necessary for cyclists to use pedestrian sections if they wish to use a continuous low traffic route e.g. Victory roundabout. This principle needs to be applied to other roundabouts especially Brighton Hill, Winchester road and Eastrop roundabouts. Although not ideal it is the only way it will be possible to have continuous cycle routes into the town centre. Ideally rather than the blue advisory signs, cyclists dismount or end of cycle route, hazard notices might be used to cycle with care, beware blind corner, low ceiling, steep ramp – this would reduce resentment from pedestrians and encourage responsible cycling.

Public parks perform a useful function in providing traffic free routes in pleasant surroundings, they have a large perimeter so can provide a useful hub to multiple destinations.

Pedestrianised areas such as top of town were originally the main road to London, busy with stage coaches. The great width means that there is sufficient width for pedestrians and cyclists to mix with safety.

## **A 7 the NCN23**

This route skirts Basingstoke but does not go to its shops, restaurants, museums or theatre, only the public parks and QMC!

This is a national route, it caters not only for local leisure and business cyclists but also for long distant cyclists and tourists. The advertising has already been done by Sustrans so it is essential that it links to all that Basingstoke can offer to the visitor. Green tourism has great potential to contribute to the economy of the town for example cyclists tend to spend more on restaurants, food and drink than car occupants. It also needs to link to the train station for those cyclists wishing to start from this point.

## ***B permeability***

### **B 1 North/South South/North axis**

North South direction of the one way system along New road, South North along New Street Timberlake road means that cyclists have to find alternative routes to travel south towards the station. The potential alternatives are

- a. Castons yard, alley ways, Joices yard and Church street including the foot bridge over Timberlake road and the bridge by the Anvil, rail station
- b. Market place, Wote street, The Banjo, the Market at Festival place, bus station bridge, Alencon place or Market at Festival place, Eastrop, subway across Eastrop rbt, Alencon link, rail station
- c. London Street, carpark, the Banjo, Market at Festival Square
- d. all walking through Festival place via Porchester Square and St Johns Square and Castle Square
- e. London road, Eastrop lane, Eastrop roundabout, Alencon Link – good for connectivity but does not increase permeability

### **B 2 East/West West/East**

Because of the geography and the one way system there are different problems according to whether you travel east or west. The potential choices are:

- a. New Road East West only at present, could be enhanced by a contraflow cycle lane – expensive and controversial.
- b. Winchester Street and London Street – very popular with cyclists.
- c. Flaxfield road, Cross Street or Joices Yard, Haymarket carpark, alleyway, lower Wote Street, the Banjo, Chequers road

- d. Flaxfield road<sup>2</sup>, Church road, Clifton Walk, Porchester Square Wesley Walk, Jubilee Circus, passage to bus station, bus station, Eastrop roundabout/park
- e. Victory roundabout, Glebe gardens, Chute house, Anvil or Clifton Walk
- f. Victory roundabout, Churchill Way, Eastrop roundabout, Eastrop Park
- g. Victory roundabout or the Anvil, Alencon Link, car park, Old Reading Road

It will be noted that the direct travel along the axes is very tortuous despite the town having been designed on a grid system and depends on car parks and pushing the bike. How can this potential grid of permeability be achieved for cyclists and what are priorities?

### **B 3 Permeability - Actions needed in order of priority**

#### 1. Cycling permitted in pedestrianised areas – a cheap effective option

Winchester Street and London street are already used by cyclists, it is very popular and is the most direct and widest of all the routes. What are the accident figures if any for cycle/pedestrian collisions? Although this road is closed to all vehicles it is regularly used by motorised cars and vans for access and deliveries. A traffic regulation order (TRO) to ban motor vehicles would permit cycles and legalise what is already happening. It may be objected that cycling in a pedestrian area is dangerous, but the research and the guidelines state that it is perfectly safe and permissible.

A TRO to make cycling legal here would be quicker, cheaper and easier than creating a contra flow along New Street and New road. It is also more direct so more attractive.

When the TRO to ban motor vehicle was introduced cyclists were never consulted although CTC is listed as a consultee/stakeholder.

Church street and Wote Street

A TRO was needed to ban vehicles from Church Street and Wote Street, a new TRO is needed to ban motorised vehicle so that non motorised vehicles i.e. cycles are permitted. By changing the entry symbol to the town to no motorised vehicles, no further cycle signage is needed. This is already the case along Alencon Link which is no motorised vehicles.

#### 2. Routes through the Malls and Festival Place

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<sup>2</sup> At present there is no means for cyclists to cross Timberlake road to Church street as recently a sign prohibiting cycles (bicycle on a white background surrounded by a red ring) has been erected at the entrance to the subway and no alternative has been provided at grade. Other subways have no prohibition of cycles signs and cycles are obviously permitted because there are blue advisory dismount signs.

As can be seen from the analysis of cross town routes it is essential that bicycles are permitted in these shopping areas at all times of the day and night. It can be intimidating to meet revelers in the Top of Town or near the cinema, so alternative cross town routes must be available e.g. Clifton Walk to bus station.

This is a cheap option as nothing needs to be done other than maintain the status quo.

### 3. Churchill Way

Although this tunnel is dark it is a direct route which connects the East and West of the town and there is adequate space for a twoway cycleway beside the west bound carriageway. Due care would be needed to protect cyclists from lorries and cars entering the adjoining storage areas.

### 4. Alencon Link

Alencon Link is already open to cyclists in its entire length, only motorised vehicles are banned in one section. Improvements in signage and infrastructure are needed

Signage is needed from:

Victory roundabout to the station

from Alencon link to town centre via Crown Heights and the bridge<sup>3</sup>

from Alencon link to footways across Eastrop roundabout

from Alencon link near Clement House to Old Reading road via the carpark and thence to Norn Hill and Basing View. At present there is a new good quality footpath only, insufficient in width for cycling. BBUG has repeatedly asked for a cycle link across this carpark as well as up to the pub now renamed Poision.

from Alencon link via rail tunnel and Bunnian place to South View cycleways are needed both sides of the railway lines linking Basing View and Norn Hill directly with the railway station and Vyne road, it is essential this happens if there any release of railway land or new developments.

### 5. infrastructure

It needs to be easier to negotiate the junction into the stopped up end of Old Reading road and connections at the junction of Old Reading road and main road at the top end

An uphill cycle lane is needed from Victory roundabout to Anvil roundabout as well as off carriageway facility on the south side of this section. Another possibility would be removal of the bank on the north side to provide a cycleway or cyclelane. Ideally a cycle lane on both sides of the road as a

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<sup>3</sup> At present there is only a small black sign saying footpath, illegible from the road to the town centre via this bridge. This bridge was designed wide enough for bicycles at the request of the Borough councillors and yet it is not signed for cyclists.

cycle way on one side only always causes problems in joining the cycle facility.

#### 6. facilitation of cross town routes via car parks

- a. Signage would help here
- b. It is difficult negotiating the junction from Chequers road to Seal road/the Banjo, infrastructure for cyclists would help here
- c. to get from the traffic lights in London road beside Civic Buildings it is necessary to turn right along New Road and then left into the Red Lion lane and car parks. A converted footway on the western side of New road would achieve this.
- d. Signage is needed from the “end of cycle route” sign near junction of Eastrop Lane and London road to the town centre

### ***C Promotion – other important factors***

It is important to identify the barriers to cycling so that these can be addressed otherwise good quality facilities may not be used.

#### Fear of cycling

Poor infrastructure design is one barrier but so is fear of traffic. This can be reduced not only through good design of roads and alternatives to roads and difficult junctions but also through education – information (maps, signage, green travel plans) and training. Many cyclists, including regular cyclists of many years experience, lack both handling skills and management skills to ride safely in traffic. There needs to be advertising of cycle training and cycle confidence courses aimed at individuals, groups and families.

#### Information

A cycle map at the station where people enter the town would be useful. It is already possible to download a map Basingstoke from the internet off the Basingstoke website, but it does not give enough detail, only main roads are named. Google and Streetmap show all the roads but footpaths and cycleways are missing. Is this an opportunity for co-operation between the Ordnance Survey and Basingstoke borough to improve the information on Street map?

There is also the buddy system, where cyclists can contact others to share the same journey, this can aid route finding or increase confidence.

#### Fear of theft and cycle parking

A major deterrent to cycling is cycle theft and damage to cycles, so secure sheltered cycle racks and cages in the right location is essential. It is not

always recognised that the value of a bicycle can exceed that of a car or that the lighting accessories, costing hundreds of pounds, can be well in excess of the value of many bikes.

Cycle parks need to be well designed and installed, monitored and in the right location. If the cycle rack is visible from the eatery or shop the owner is visiting he can monitor the bike park himself, but otherwise CCTV with monitoring is needed. Cycle parking in car parks and beside a main road or stations, not overlooked are ideal locations for thieves to operate in. It is convenient to either ride away or place the bike on the train or in the car, removing it quickly to a distant location. At the station or outside Marks and Spencers in Church street they know the owner will be away for a long period of time so making it much easier.

Cycle parking is urgently needed in the top of town, outside the bike shop, in London street, Market Square outside the museum, in London street.

A cycle parking policy is needed to ensure that cycle parks are well designed, installed correctly (at the Ark at the hospital, near Park Prewet road, at Kings road shops, the racks cannot be used as they are too close to the wall) and found in the right locations.

#### Climate change, tourism and the economy

Cycling needs to be actively encouraged to counter climate change, pollution and congestion, promote good health, sustainable tourism. Addressing climate change is one of the avowed aims of the proposed Town Access Plan; however good car technology maybe, it cannot beat the zero emissions of the bicycle. Congestion is one of the major factors negatively affecting the economy more cycles and fewer cars can address this.

#### Social inclusivity

Cycling is socially inclusive. It provides mobility to those without cars, young people under 18, the older person who has stopped driving, the disabled and those on limited incomes. Cycles can easily be adapted for the disabled so should be encouraged especially in pedestrianised areas instead of wheelchairs/as well as wheel chairs. There is already a project in East Hampshire District Council to encourage cycling, this cycle champion initiative is now being expanded to the whole of Hampshire. It is possible for disabled people to learn how to use specially adapted bicycles at Alice Forest forest.

## **Conclusion**

The CTC supports the aims of the Town Access plan and gives detailed guidance on how to achieve these aims with cycling, top priority is a TRO to

remove the present prohibition of vehicles from the top of town and replace it with a prohibition of motorised vehicles. This supports a town which is *“well-connected - on foot, and by cycle and public transport and car - to the rest of the town and borough, and is well-designed”* and *“The need to improve access to, and links across, the town, providing a choice through improving public transport, walking and cycling access to the town centre”*

We believe this ambition can be achieved by working with BBUG and CTC as stakeholders as well as *“with Hampshire County Council and transport providers to develop and implement a Town Access Plan”*. We state ways to *“achieve a well-connected town centre”* and have also identified some of the *“current infrastructure gaps and the infrastructure which is necessary to support the borough in the future”*.

We hope that there will be a strong cycle plan for the town centre and its connections with a robust *“Delivery and Implementation Plan, to accompany the Core Strategy, and to detail what infrastructure will be provided, broadly what it will cost, who will be responsible for its delivery and when it will be provided”*.

We strongly urge the borough to adopt this ABC of cycling: **connectivity, permeability and promotion.**

Heather Rainbow  
CTC Right to Ride Representative for Basingstoke and North Hampshire  
23 November 2010

CTC is the national organisation for all cyclists in the UK and Ireland, including children, families, and commuters. CTC has over 70,000 members and affiliates and is the oldest and largest cycling body in the UK.  
CTC Charitable Trust works to promote cycling by raising public and political awareness of its health, social and environmental benefits, and by working with all communities to help realise those benefits.  
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