

FEEDBACK FROM INTEGRATED TRANSPORT AND ROAD SAFETY TEAM, SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

The LAF minutes (Sept 2011) are provided in black below followed by feedback from the Integrated Transport team in red.

Sheffield Ave and Oatlands Drive – Ian Houghton reiterated that the main concern for cyclists on the carriageway is the pinch points created by the splitter islands situated at too regular intervals. The cycle lanes are so narrow cyclists are forced to ride further out and can then create traffic congestion along the entire route with cars having no opportunity to pass. Alex Deans stated that there could be a possibility that if this road is resurfaced in the future the situation can be addressed however, there are always problems faced when trying to retro fit modern pedestrian/cycling infrastructure onto existing highway. A balance between all user needs has to be attempted.

As Alex has mentioned there is a balance to be made amongst all vulnerable roads users of which cyclists are one. The Sheffield Road/Oatlands Drive section of the network is approximately 1.2km in length; so by removing the aforementioned splitter islands/pedestrian refuges this would leave no safe crossing points for pedestrians. Due to the geometry of these roads and the proximity of the residential properties, it is not feasible to alter the layout in order to provide additional lane width for motor vehicles/cyclists. The Transport team, have to consider the best and most effective way of providing facilities for all users which, is safe but fit for purpose, in this circumstance the best option was to provide pedestrian refuges/islands to reduce speed and allow safe passage of pedestrians.

The general consensus from LAF members was that on carriageway cycling infrastructure was lacking; with too many off carriageway shared use cycleway facilities. It was noted that the Council's Transport section did seem keen to take cyclists off carriageway at most opportunities. Members thought it safer for cyclists and pedestrians if cyclists are on the carriageway.

It is incorrect to perceive that many of the cycle schemes implemented in the borough are shared-use, in reality there are far more on-carriageway lanes. The Council's view on the provision of shared-use paths is that they should be used in areas where, traffic speed/volume is high or where there is a nearby school. There are exceptions to this rule and these have occurred with new developments such as those in the Cippenham area.

In terms of safety, it is only safer to travel on the carriageway if you have experience, are trained and there are sufficient numbers that motorists are aware of cyclists. In Slough, there are plenty of cyclists however; the majority of these cyclists use their bikes for recreational use rather than the mode of transport. Providing off-road facilities for children is a more effective way of encouraging parents to allow their children to cycle to school, this in turn will result in fewer cars on the road, improving safety and reducing congestion. It is also worth

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noting that if children take to their bikes at an early age there is a chance they will continue cycling through to adulthood.

The view that cycling on the footway is dangerous has never been proven and in fact most cyclists have differing views on whether segregation is good or bad. CTC at this moment does not have a firm view but will be undertaking a review and may in the New Year make some decisions. In general terms of cycling in Slough, it is our view that each location is evaluated based on the above information and where possible on-carriageway lanes will be provided.