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Bricycles  
Brighton, Hove and District Cycling Group  
[www.bricycles.org.uk](http://www.bricycles.org.uk)

12 October 2009

David Parker  
Transport Planning  
Brighton and Hove City Council,  
Hove Town Hall,  
Norton Road  
BN3 3BQ

### **Re: Old Shoreham Road Cycle Route Scheme**

Dear David,

I am writing on behalf of Bricycles, the Brighton, Hove and District cycling group, and also as the local CTC (the UK's largest cycling organisation) representative for Brighton and Hove. I am a daily commuting cyclist and have often cycled on the Old Shoreham Road. Bricycles' remit is to promote cycling as a healthy and environmentally friendly means of transport. I have invited the views of Bricycles members in forming this response.

All urban roads should be made safe for cycling with speed reduction to a maximum of 20 mph and traffic reduction. These should be the **fundamental conditions** applied to assist cycling and walking in a so-called Cycling Town. This would make it clear that motorised transport is not prioritised.

#### **Limitations of cycle lanes**

Some cyclists do not want facilities which encourage motorists to think that cycling can be peripheralised into a third-rate cycle lane. These serious objections need to be acknowledged. Some recent evidence also shows that motorists overtake cyclists **more closely** when a cycle lane is marked. We know that motorists overtake cyclists wearing helmets more closely. Many motorists expect cyclists to remain in cycle lanes, but this is impossible, and drivers **must** be prepared for cyclists riding at a metre or more away from the kerb, avoiding vehicles emerging from side roads, leaving the lane to overtake other cyclists, positioning to turn right or to avoid glass and debris. Large and high-sided vehicles such as buses and lorries create a wind shock which can destabilise a cyclist, so it is imperative that cyclists are given adequate room by motor vehicles. **The Highway Code tells drivers to give cyclists "at least as much room as you would when overtaking a car"**, but this simply does not happen. Motorists regularly drive too close.

#### **Attitudes to cyclists**

Cyclists are subject to a great deal of abuse on the roads which is underreported and not taken seriously by the authorities. Operation Crackdown was presented as a means for cyclists to make the police aware of abuse on the roads, but it is unable to produce any summary data of incidents involving cyclists.

Cyclists need to be given real priority on the roads, not fitted in around the edges of motor transport. Bricycles supports a change in liability law so that in the case of a crash, the burden of proof is on the driver, not the vulnerable road user.

At a meeting several years ago, with Dean Spears, Senior Transport Planner, Walking and Cycling, we agreed that improving the Old Shoreham Road for cycling was a priority area for using Cycling Demonstration Town funding which had been awarded by Cycling England specifically for Hove and Portslade. **Our view was ignored** and the council have instead spent funds on roads where improvements were not required and value for money was poor, e.g. Grand Avenue and Madeira Drive (where the cycle facilities regularly spend summer weekends below exhibitors' stalls).

**The principle of providing better cycling conditions along the Old Shoreham Road is welcomed by Bricycles members, but the proposed plan is deeply flawed due to its discontinuity, the narrowness of facilities, pinch points and inadequate junction treatments.**

**Our first request is that the speed limit along the Old Shoreham Road is immediately reduced to 20 mph.**

Long distance traffic should be directed to use the parallel A27, thus reducing traffic on the Old Shoreham Road. The Old Shoreham Road does not need to be a four lane dual carriageway anymore. This simply encourages drivers to race each other, to no purpose. There should be a major reallocation of space away from motorised traffic. By removing two traffic lanes, there could be 2 x 2.5 m more space for cycling on each side and the balance of the right-of-way (highway) left for general traffic. This type of solution can be found in Holland.

**By abandoning the current over-provision for motor traffic, the junctions would be redesigned to allow cyclists and pedestrians to cross safely.**

During the school holidays the amount of traffic on the Old Shoreham Road can easily be accommodated by a single lane road - it is only due to the traffic on the school run that traffic volume is high. If the 9000 school children who attend school in this area cycled, the volume of car traffic would be enormously reduced. Surely, as a Cycling Town, this is what we are aiming for?

The current proposals are unlikely to fulfil the stated aim of encouraging more children to cycle, neither will they satisfy regular on-road cyclists.

There are approximately six gaps, where the cycle lane disappears at various points, including junctions. The lanes are not of continuous width and sometimes narrow, being 1.2 to 1.5m wide. Cyclists ride at different speeds, and they need at least 1.5m - 2m for overtaking.

At present cyclists are entitled to use the proposed route on the ordinary carriageway, but the 'improvements' take away some of this continuity and make them second rate road users by creating new "give ways" for cyclists. We are unsure to what extent cyclists have priority, but we want to ensure that traffic gives way to cyclists at all junctions and side roads.

**The consultation map is inadequate** with all the detail overlaid with large coloured arrows, pink circles and symbols. On the Brighton and Hove City Council website it is impossible to see further detail.

We are concerned that the council will not adequately enforce **parking restrictions** in the cycle lanes and that motorists will park in them, making them worse than useless. We want to see real enforcement of speed limits, and parking restrictions. There should be no parking at any time in cycle lanes.

Starting from the Dyke Road end, it is unacceptable that the cycle lane disappears at the Railway Bridge. This is worse than no facilities. Where road space is in short supply, cyclists should be given priority, not removed.

Advance stop lines are welcome at all junctions.

From Goldstone Crescent to approximately the junction with St. Joseph's Close, the current proposals offer nothing. From Holmes Avenue to Applesham Way, the provision is extremely discontinuous and the lanes are too narrow. Since the road is already wide enough for two lanes in both directions what is the difficulty in creating a continuous cycle lane?

Concern is also being expressed by members that maintenance of the current cycling infrastructure (potholes, debris, glass, parked vehicles, poor design) should also be improved.

Members would also like improvements from Preston Circus to join the Old Shoreham Road.

Phase 2 provision is worse than phase 1.

We are mindful that the council has totally ignored the results of previous consultations and we therefore have a correspondingly low opinion of the council's democratic processes.

The proposed cycles lanes are only on the stretches of road where it is not particularly difficult to cycle along at the moment but the parts which really need improving e.g. Southern Cross, Hangleton Link Road, Sackville

Road / Neville Avenue junction and the stretch by Hove Park have been ignored. These sections make up about 40% of the total distance and unless provision is made on these sections then we doubt that the facilities will attract good take up, let alone the thousands of students in schools along this route.

### Signage

We would like to see very clear route signage for cyclists with distances stated. We would like to see more reminders to educate motorists to **give cyclists room and to slow down**. In Northern France, there are good ones saying "Share the route" and "Drivers, slow down" which appear frequently. The current official British red triangle cycling sign is of limited use.



Reminder signs in France: "Share the route" and "Drivers, slow down".

The proposals for the Old Shoreham Road are inadequate. Please come back with a plan for a continuous route along the whole of the Old Shoreham Road which really would encourage more people to cycle along it.

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Becky Reynolds.

Becky Reynolds,

Bicycles Campaigns Officer - [www.bricycles.org.uk](http://www.bricycles.org.uk)

CTC Local Right to Ride Representative, Brighton and Hove - [www.communigate.co.uk/sussex/ctcbrighton](http://www.communigate.co.uk/sussex/ctcbrighton)  
and [www.ctc.org.uk/](http://www.ctc.org.uk/)

