



BICESTERBUG

B i c e s t e r B i k e U s e r s G r o u p

Comments on Bloombridge Ltd's Design for Cycle Users at Phase 1B,
Bicester
Cherwell Planning Reference: 20/00293/OUT
Version 1.0
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document sets out some concerns regarding the development of Phase 1B by Bicester Bike Users' Group ('BBUG') from the perspective of cycle users. Rather than wait until matters are agreed between the developer and Oxfordshire County Council, we wanted to raise relevant considerations so that these could be taken into account while discussions were still continuing.

The developer of Phase 1B, Bloombridge Ltd, has previously consulted BBUG for their views of the development. However, while we recognise that there are aspects of the design that are good, we have a number of outstanding concerns about the design that we feel have not yet been addressed. We therefore thought it appropriate to set these out for all parties.

2.0 CHARLES SHOULER WAY

Insufficient attention has been paid to Charles Shouler Way. Bloombridge's indicative masterplan shows pedestrian only use of the northern side of Charles Shouler Way and no pedestrian or cycle use of the southern side. This does not appear to be in accordance with OCC's Cycle Design Standards or the relevant provisions of the Cherwell Local Plan. Stepped cycle tracks (2.2.6) or segregated cycle lanes (2.2.8) should be provided. If space is constrained, a shared cycle and pedestrian path may be acceptable (3.4.8).

There is no pedestrian or cycle provision whatsoever presently envisaged on the south side of Charles Shouler Way. This seems a significant omission given that the south side of Charles Shouler Way is likely to be the preferred route for many residents of Phase 1B and visitors approaching via the A41 shared path and Chesterton sliproad to the now committed Phase 2 development.

If the developer is envisaging that users of the National Cycle Route 51 will be encouraged to use Charles Shouler Way and the A41 shared path, minimal cycle provision of shared paths needs to be considered on both sides of Charles Shouler Way, otherwise this will not encourage the fullest possible use of walking and cycling as required by the Cherwell Local Plan.

3.0 UNCONTROLLED CROSSING OF CHARLES SHOULER WAY NEAR THE WENDLEBURY ROAD

There is still no straightforward route for a cyclist approaching from the frontage of Phase 1B along the Wendlebury Road to access the facilities at Phase 1A (including the shared path along the frontage of Phase 1A along the Wendlebury Road). The developer's indicative masterplan still shows use of a pedestrian only route across the Wendlebury Road end of Charles Shouler Way. This will encourage such cyclists to either break the law by cycling on a pedestrian only link, or instead to try to navigate a very contorted route to Phase 1A. As such, the current plan does not maximise cycle connections between different areas of Bicester 10 as required by the Cherwell Local Plan. It would make much more sense to provide a shared cycle link at this point with a refuge so that vulnerable cyclists can cross the road using an uncontrolled crossing in two movements.

4.0 A41 SHARED PATH

The A41 shared path would be, in principle, the most direct route for many of the residents of Phase 1B. However, we have serious concerns about the crossing of the Charles Shouler Arm of the Vendee Drive Roundabout. Vehicle speeds are excessive and the road is wide. This is likely to be dangerous and discouraging for vulnerable road users. We are also concerned about the original design proposed by the developer of an uncontrolled crossing with a 2m wide refuge. Such a refuge would not comply with DMRB CD 195 revision 1 Designing for

cycle traffic 2020 which requires a minimum width of 3m to accommodate a 2.8m cycle design vehicle (E/2.1 & E/4.6).

One solution to overcome this difficulty might be to de-couple the pedestrian and cycle crossings such that pedestrians cross using a refuge in 2 movements, whereas faster moving cyclists cross without a refuge in 1 movement. See for example DMRB CD 195 revision 1 Figure E/4.25N.

We have suggested to the developer that a parallel crossing (possibly de-coupled for pedestrians and cyclists) might be address the problem to some extent, but we have some doubts whether this would meet technical approval.

Another possible solution might be a signal controlled crossing, but these are inherently slower than parallel crossings and there are limitations on where lights can be placed which may require such a crossing to be placed off the desire line, both factors which are likely to reduce the attractiveness of such a crossing.

In many ways, a more attractive route for many residents of Phase 1A might be to use a shared cycle path along Charles Shouler Way and then cross at the current T-junction / future roundabout where the road is much narrower and vehicle speeds are lower and then continue along Wendlebury Road.

5.0 WENDLEBURY ROAD

We are still unconvinced by the developer's preference to route cyclists from the NCR51 / Wendlebury Road and instead along Charles Shouler Way and the A41. The Wendlebury Road is single carriageway with limited traffic and relatively slow vehicle speeds, even though national speed limits apply currently. We note that consideration is being given to reducing this to 40mph, but we would suggest that given the quiet, low traffic, nature of Wendlebury Road, and the fact that it will effectively become a Bicester street that a 30mph limit is considered.

In terms of making the fullest possible use of walking and cycling, a route along the Wendlebury Road frontage of Phase 1B would benefit both residents of Phase 1B and those approaching Bicester along NCR51.

We have been advised that a further extension of the existing shared path provision along the frontage of Phase 1A along Wendlebury Road

North is not deliverable. However, we wondered whether a way to overcome the apparent difficulties would be to make Wendlebury Road North one-way for vehicle traffic (northbound) only. There seems little demand for vehicle movement southbound given the access to the A41. This would enable the other carriageway to be redistributed to a shared path that could be continued all the way to where the Wendlebury Road meets the A41.