




NORWICH CYCLING Newsletter

No.98 Autumn 2015

City builds its first segregated cycle lane

Population
123,900
(2011)

[adapted from an article by Laura Lake in Cycling Active, June 2015]

Work is underway on the city's first segregated bike lane.

It's hard to believe the UK's pre-eminent cycling city has, until now, relied on park and riverside pathways and quiet, narrow city streets to encourage residents to get around by bike. All eyes are now on improving the main roads.

Having received two tranches of government cycling money totalling more than £10m, the city has the resources it needs to make large-scale changes.

The route links the city centre with the university and new housing developments. The cycle route will be wide enough to ride two abreast, with bus stop bypasses, meaning cyclists can keep pedalling when buses pull in.

Unusually for the UK, there will be safe provision for bikes while the tracks are being built - council officers say they would consider a 'cyclists dismount' sign a failure.

The city is growing rapidly, and councillors are keen to get new residents cycling from day one. There are aspirations to match Holland and Denmark for cycling levels, although that is said to be dependent on year-on-year investment from central government, who naturally will be monitoring commitment and progress closely.

Oops, that was Cambridge.

This was meant to be an article about a bold new Pedalway scheme in Norwich at The Avenues. Unfortunately it's been cancelled, and in any case we couldn't quite fit in the headline 'City cops out on building segregated cycle lane (but still spends a fortune on making the road pretty much the same as it was to begin with)'. See page 2.



This edition...

- Your Cycling Campaign:
The Avenues
Bluebell Road
Palace Street
Golden Ball Street
Redwell Street parking
- Edith Cavell Pigrimage
- Northern Distributor Rd
Generation Park
- The Gallery
- AGM details **DIARY DATE 16 Nov**
- Contacts and Who's Who

Your Norwich Cycling Campaign

1. Cancellation of The Avenues cycle tracks

Norwich Cycling Campaign is extremely disappointed to learn that the proposed changes to The Avenues, as part of the Pink Pedalway improvements, have been dropped by Norwich City Council. In place of wide hybrid (Danish style) cycle tracks on both sides of The Avenues that were planned after public consultations there will only be some general traffic calming measures focused on the junctions.

We appreciate that the detailed engineering work for The Avenues has thrown up severe technical difficulties related to the current and future health of the trees; that Department for Transport funding rules mean that construction must be completed by September 2015; and that the increased cost of the works has caused the council to consider if this project is value for money.

Yet this is an extremely busy route for people cycling from the hospital, research park and university to the city and it has needed urgent improvements for years. The proposed hybrid cycle tracks would have offered a safe, convenient and attractive route for current commuters as well as encouraging more people to use an active and sustainable means of transport today and in the future. It would also have helped to ensure the reliability of bus services by smoothing traffic flow.



The project gave benefits to people living on The Avenues by removing the shared use cycle path that is adjacent to their front gardens and so removing conflict between people walking and cycling. We expected these hybrid cycle tracks to be a model for other parts of Norwich.

The traffic calming measures currently being built are not specific to cycling and provide none of these benefits. The new plans also keep the shared use path

that is entirely inadequate for the current number of cyclists let alone encouraging or providing space for future ones.

As a result of phase one of the Cycle City Ambition projects the council now has greater engineering and design expertise and experience. We hope and expect that the phase two projects (Blue and Yellow Pedalways) can be successfully constructed as high quality cycle routes that will be an example to other cities in the UK.

Richard Jennings



Tough time for cyclists

YOUR "Sounding Off" correspondent (Evening News, September 6) asks why some cyclists do not use the Earlham Green Lane/Bowthorpe Road cycle track, preferring to use the road.

In fact large numbers of cyclists do use the track, even though it is narrow and suffers from a poor surface, and despite the duty to give way to cars at side turnings, low overhanging trees and other miscellaneous obstructions.

Most cyclists put up with these just to avoid having to mix with motorised traffic. The more confident few exercise their right to use the main carriageway.

Those campaigning for better cycling facilities seek to encourage more of us to get on our bikes. In no way does this imply we will get off the road.

Matthew Williams,
Christchurch Road,
Norwich.

From the archive...

25
years



2. Bluebell Rd shared cycle path

The southern half of the Bluebell Rd shared cycle path has been for many years in very poor condition. Pedestrians and cyclists have to share this narrow path scattered with obstacles and potholes on top of a very rough decaying surface. The carriageway for motor vehicles has been recently resurfaced and painted but nothing has been done for the cycle path.

A few years ago, while cycling back home from a two week cycle trip following the EuroVelo route 15 along the Rhine river, my travel companion observed; "I can't believe that the worst cycle path we have been riding on for 1,400 kms... ..is 1 mile away from your house." I couldn't believe it either, but it is true. After riding long distances along cycle paths through Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Germany, France, Netherlands and England, the worst hard-surfaced cycle path we came across was Bluebell Rd cycle path in Norwich, on the last 10 minutes of our 2-week long trip. Food for thought.



The current state of this cycle path is even worse now that in some sections, the overgrowing hedge along it is invading the path making it even narrower, reducing visibility and making it less safe and less inviting to ride on. So much so that many cyclists that would typically ride on cycle paths, choose to avoid it and ride on the busy road.

The good news is that Bluebell Rd cycle path is included in the plans for improvements from the 2nd Cycling City Ambition Grant that will see improvements on the Yellow and Blue Pedalways. Even when not strictly part of any of them, this path is planned to be widened and resurfaced from Eaton to the UEA within the next 2 years. Let's hope that provision here, one of the roads with a very high concentration of cyclists in Norwich, will provide the high standard of cycling provision that Norwich deserves. More information at: www.norwich.gov.uk/TransportAndStreets/Transport/Cycling/Pages/CycleCityAmbitionGrant2015.

In the meantime, please report here to let the City Council know about the urgency to cut back the overgrown hedge along the path as soon as possible: www.norwich.gov.uk/forms/pages/roadsandstreetlighting.

Edgar Fernandez

3. Palace Street

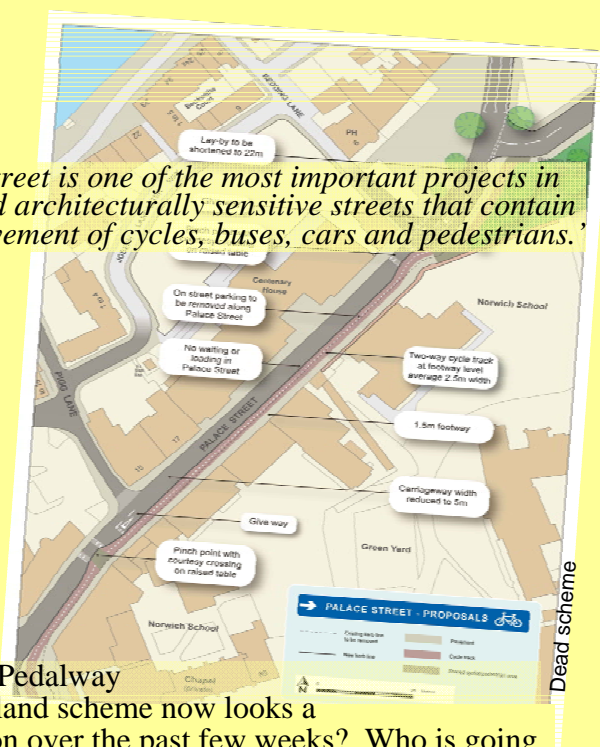
Quote 1 from City Council website: *'Tombland and Palace Street is one of the most important projects in the Push the Pedalways programme. These are historically and architecturally sensitive streets that contain many important activities. They are also key routes for the movement of cycles, buses, cars and pedestrians.'*

Quote 2 from City Council website: *'It is no longer possible to deliver the following elements of this project on Palace Street:*

- *Narrowing of the carriageway to 5m.*
- *Building a widened, shared-use footpath/cycle way on the southern side of the street.*

Instead, the following measures will be implemented:

- *A 'no waiting at any time' restriction along the length of Palace Street.*
- *A 1.5m-wide on-carriageway advisory cycle lanes on both sides of the road.*



So it's goodbye to a key part of the bold but controversial Pink Pedalway proposal in this area of the city, and the vastly expensive Tombland scheme now looks a bit of a white elephant. At how much expenditure and disruption over the past few weeks? Who is going to bother using a segregated cyclepath on the wrong side of the road outside the Erpingham Gate if you still have to ride on Palace Street to get to Bishopgate?

Whatever the specific reasons for this sad state of affairs, it illustrates the manifold difficulties in trying to create segregated paths when there are often more practical and equitable on-carriageway alternatives. The Tombland debacle has already created a measure of unnecessary ill-feeling towards bicycle users. MW

4. Golden Ball Street & Westlegate



Norfolk County Council have consulted on changes to Golden Ball Street, All Saints Green and Westlegate in Norwich city centre. A general overview and detailed plans are available.

While Norwich Cycling Campaign supports the aims of the project we want to see more thought given to people who cycle about the city centre. Here is our consultation response in full.

Norwich Cycling Campaign supports the proposals in general and welcomes less through traffic in the city centre. However, we object to the proposals as they stand because they miss a significant opportunity to boost cycling in the city centre, by not anticipating that cyclists will want to travel the full range of possible routes, by not providing good quality routes, segregated where feasible from motor traffic and pedestrians. This is an opportunity to create new attractive through routes for cycling without making new areas of conflict between walking and cycling.

Currently, cycling across the city centre is hampered by the barriers of busy pedestrian areas such as London Street and The Walk on one side and fast flowing, one-way roads such as Rose Lane on the other. Looking at the Pedalway map, this quarter of the city centre is the least well served for cycling routes, but with a few adjustments and little, if any extra money these roads could provide attractive and direct new routes for cycling, encouraging cycling from a wide area into and through the city centre.

Junctions and permeability for cycling: We object to the implications of these indicative plans that only some routes are direct routes for cycling. E.g. the junctions between Westlegate and All Saints Street and between All Saints Street and Ber Street. It is not clear why the existing road junctions planned around one-way travel are retained for cycling in this lay-out. There should be a direct link for cycling between Farmers Avenue and Rouen Road. All Saints Green and Westlegate could provide a much improved route on the blue/yellow pedalway as an alternative to Surrey Street and St Stephens, because it would be bus and junction free for more of its length and therefore much safer and more attractive.

Defined Spaces: We are opposed to the raised table at Rampant Horse Street/St Stephens Plain. The road should be separated from the footway by kerbs as this is much preferred by drivers, cyclists and pedestrians, especially some people with mobility disabilities and visually impairment. So-called 'shared space' is a mistake that will have to be removed within a few decades. Also block paving of this type is always destroyed by heavy vehicles, e.g. buses and becomes a maintenance burden.

Westlegate should have the road separated from the footway by a kerb as above. There will be complaints about cyclists on this street otherwise and vans will park against the buildings. Queen Street, for example, has a completely flat surface that means vans are parked at the edge and pedestrians are forced to the middle in conflict with cyclists. It doesn't work. Both pedestrians and cyclists are made uncomfortable by faster moving vehicles approaching from behind cycling downhill along Westlegate will also tend to create conflict with pedestrians without defined space.

Cycle Lanes and parking for cars: Cycling up Westlegate on to Golden Ball Street and Ber Street should be easy. On the plans it looks like this will be obstructed by parking. Ber Street will become very dangerous to cycle on near Thorn Lane due to all the turns. There is space for four vehicles lanes so this could be two vehicles lanes and two kerb segregated cycle lanes. Ber Street at All Saints Green will be hazardous too. Parking on the east side should be removed so there is room for a segregated cycle track. On the west side a segregated cycle track should go between the coach and disabled bays and the footway (bus stop bypass). Segregated tracks must continue round the corner to Golden Ball Street in both directions, this corner will be dangerous.

The cycle lane on Golden Ball Street should be kerb segregated from motor traffic. The end of the lane just south of the Woolpack Inn is unacceptable with a merge back into motor traffic. This should be a protected exit or the lane should continue in to Ber Street. The proposed width of the cycle lane on Golden Ball St is 1.5m, which is inadequate. It should be 2.1m and kerbed. There are currently 3 lanes here so there is room. Additional parking and narrowed exit from Rouen Road is cycle unfriendly. Use the space for a kerb segregated lane.

General: Kerbs that cyclists will cross must be flush not dropped. Many of the recently-installed kerbs have been dropped and are hazardous. There is no indication of where cycle parking will be, or indeed the overall numbers. It must be on level ground or carefully placed at right angles to the slope. Various pinch points are being added that will be dangerous and uncomfortable for cycling and these should be redesigned or removed.

Richard Jennings

5. Redwell Street cycle parking

These stands have recently been installed, replacing a car parking space as it was deemed the cycle parking was a better use of the space. However, the 'heritage' design of the stands is not apparently to everyone's liking, because it is potentially more difficult to use a D-lock than with modern designs of stand, and there have been concerns about bikes easily getting scratched. There has already been quite a debate amongst members posting on the website. What do you think?

Research findings based on study of 50,000 citizens:
Cyclists live half a year longer
As a result of their cycling culture, citizens of the Netherlands live, on average, half a year longer than non-cycling citizens elsewhere in the world. And cycling leads to 11,000 fewer deaths per year.
(Dutch Cycling Embassy Newsletter, July 2015)

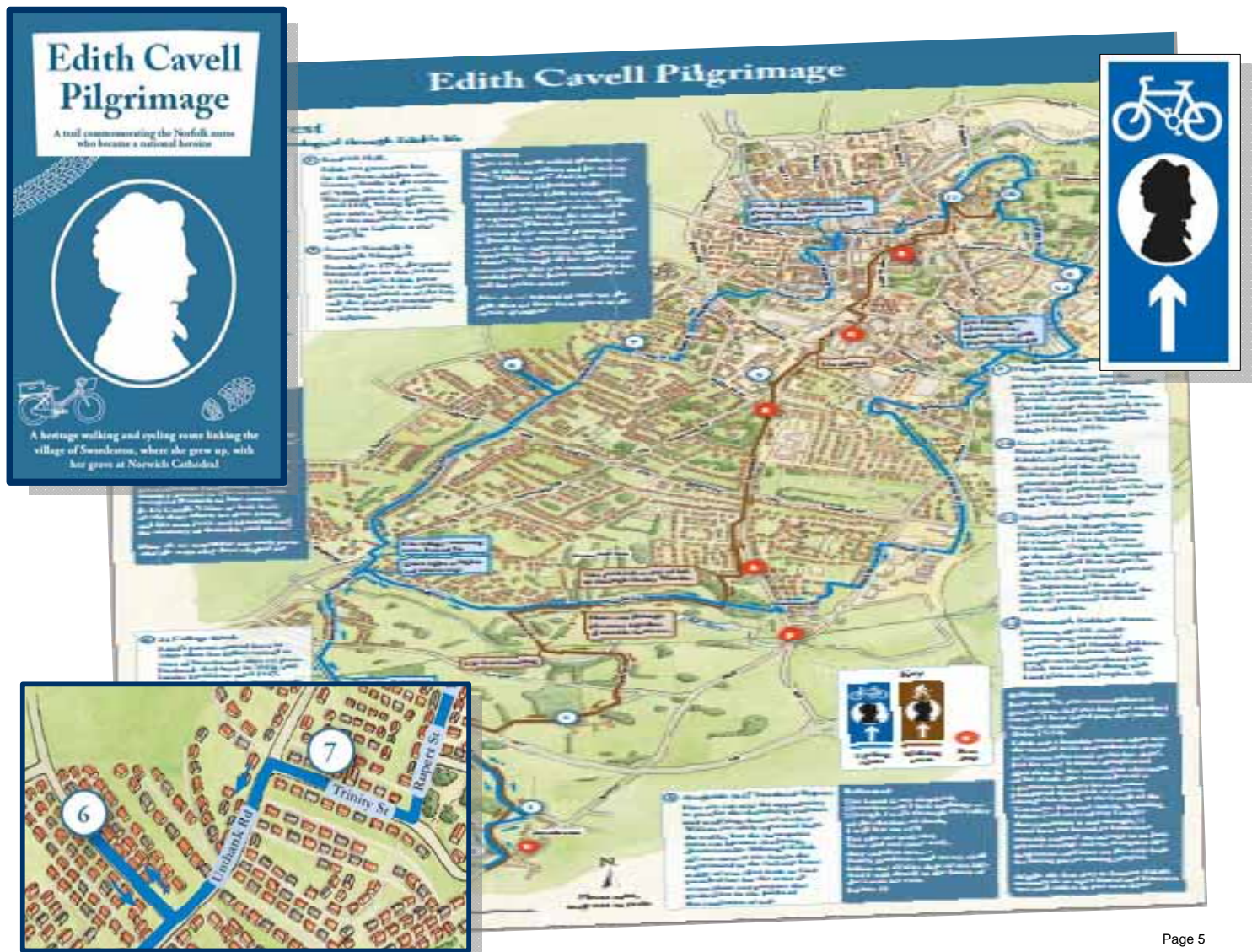


New cycle stands outside St Michael-at-Plea church

Why not check out the newly-published **Edith Cavell Pilgrimage Trail**, a 14-mile circular cycle route between Norwich and Swardeston launched to mark the centenary of the death of the Norfolk heroine in 1915.

More details here:

www.cathedral.org.uk/userfiles/edith%20Cavell%20Pilgrimage%20Leaflet%202015.pdf



Northern Distributor Road

update from Tony Clarke

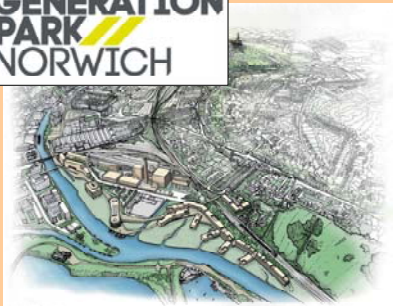
As you will be aware, the Inquiry into the NNDR recommended approval and this was confirmed by the Secretary of State for Transport. The Inspectors stated that the plans for cyclists were "Reasonable" in terms of "cycle proofing" and this was accepted by the Minister.

This decision undermines the concept of "Cycle Proofing" and means that instead of an objective assessment all plans will be the subject of political judgement.

However the fight is not over - the matter will be raised at the "Cycle Proofing" working group later this year.

On the matter of the £30 million cost over run – I pointed out that the scheme was underestimated on the basis of official inflation figures for the construction industry and the historical record of under costing of similar road projects. The announcement of the additional £30 million was delayed until after the period for legal challenge to Inspectors report had expired.

**GENERATION
PARK
NORWICH**



The planning application for the Norwich Generation Park has been lodged with Norwich City Council and the Broads Authority. Deadline for receipt of comments is now the end of September. I am collating a response for Norwich Cycling Campaign; send me your thoughts or comment direct on line.

You can view the application at Norwich City Council website by entering application number 15/00997/F at:

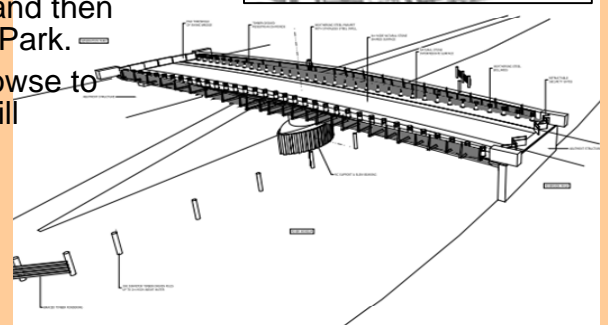
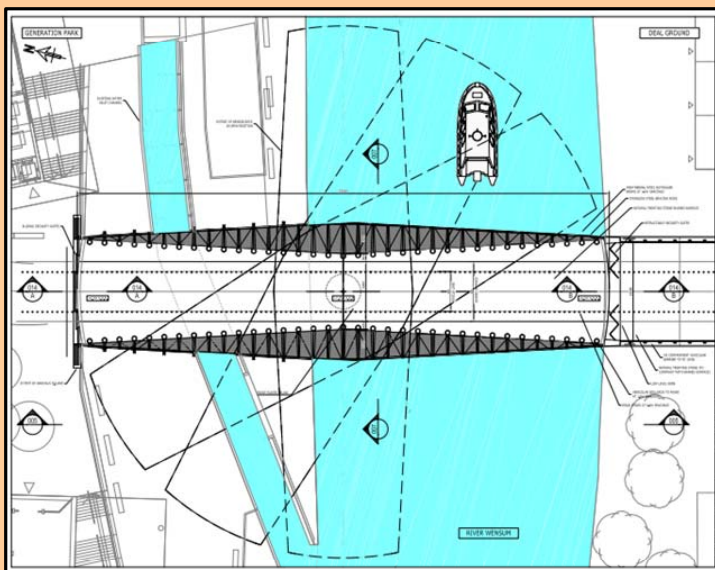
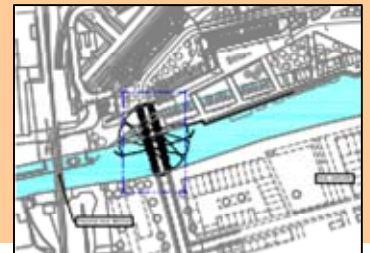
<http://planning.norwich.gov.uk/online-applications/>

Further info from Mark Brown at Norwich City Council 01603 212505.

While there is much to be welcomed by cyclists in this application there are serious problems with the bridge over the river Wensum and the safety of cyclists during the three to five year construction period. Look at the plan and note the centre pinch point - fancy meeting an HGV there?

A new road will run from The Street, Trowse, over the river Yare to enter the Generation Park via the new bridge over the Wensum. During the construction period a temporary route for HGVs will run from just beyond the railway bridge on Bracondale to join the access road and then to cross the new Wensum bridge to enter the Generation Park.

A 3m wide cycle path will run parallel from The Street, Trowse to a just short of the new bridge over the Wensum when it will become a shared surface for HGVs, cars and buses.

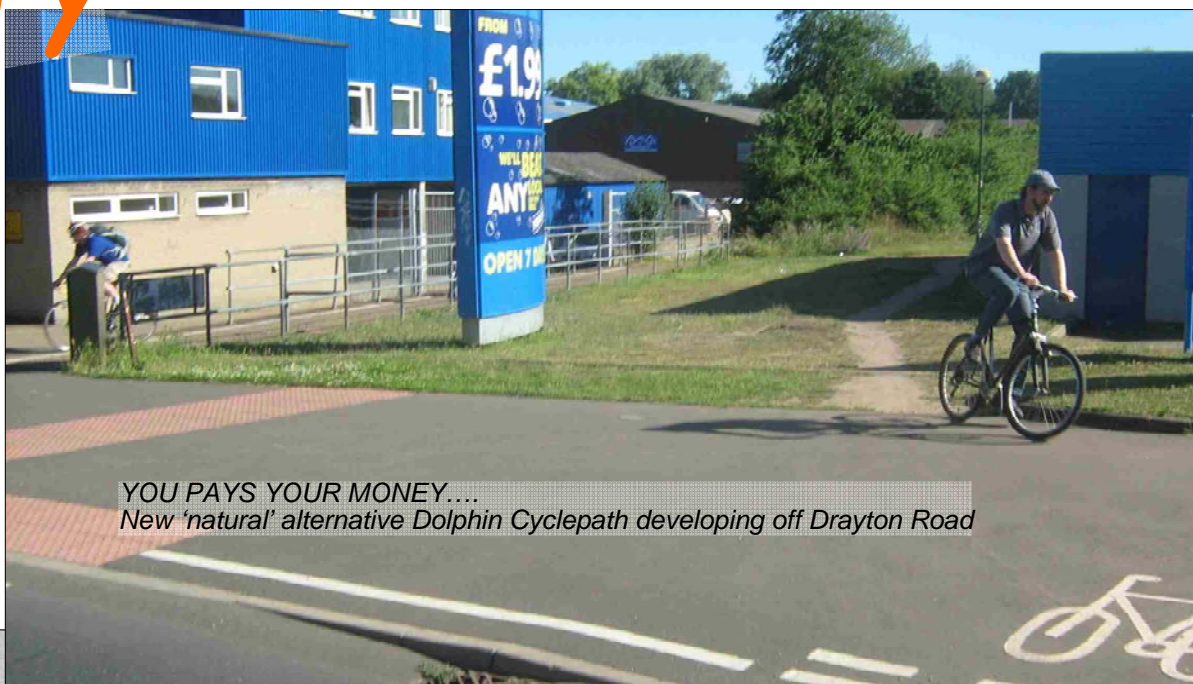


It is not easy to follow the exact details of the design for the new bridge, but from the plans attached to the application it seems that there will be a series of steel bollards which will form a pinch point in the centre of the bridge reducing the carriage way to 6 metres. This is where cyclists will be in conflict with the HGVs for road space. It is well documented that HGVs present the greatest danger to cyclists on the road of all motorised vehicles.

I cannot think of a precedent for a design of this type.

Tony Clarke

The Gallery



YOU PAYS YOUR MONEY....
New 'natural' alternative Dolphin Cyclepath developing off Drayton Road



CHEAP AND NASTY RESURFACING
Can anyone explain why pre-existing potholes are not patched before new surface dressing is applied? (Portersfield Road and many other locations across the city)



HEAVY MOB
New speed table under construction at Unthank Road, August 2015



OH WELL
It was nice while it lasted,
Westlegate



Events

Your invitation to our

2015 Annual General Meeting November 16 @ 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm The Charing Cross Centre, St John Maddermarket Norwich, NR2 1DN

In addition to the formal business we
will be having a number of short talks
from local organisations, details
to follow. All welcome.

TIMELY ADVICE FOR THE TIME OF YEAR:

Lighten up, cyclists!

IT SEEMS that cyclists need to be reminded to see and be seen. I have witnessed several near misses due to cyclists not using lights.

At this time of year it is especially important for cyclists to light up early as the afternoons are often dull, and there may be patches of

fog or mist.

Surely it is better to spend a few pounds on good lights and batteries than to spend time in hospital or go to an early grave.

P Hoare,
Montcalm Road,
Thorpe Hamlet.

EN 7/1/92



Contacts & Who's Who

Website
Facebook
Email

www.norwichcyclingcampaign.org
<https://www.facebook.com/NorwichCyclingCampaign>
info.norwichcyclingcampaign@gmail.com

Chairman:
Treasurer & Membership:
Secretary & City Council contact:
Consultations:
Website & Facebook Manager:
Newsletter Compiler:
Other committee members:

Rotating chair: Jeff Jordan, Virginia Greasley and Christine Wilson
Bob Cutter (robert.cutter@mypostoffice.co.uk)
Margaret Todd (margaret.todd@btinternet.com)
John Elbro (j.elbro@lineone.net)
Oliver Stretton-Downes (ollystrettondownes@gmail.com)
Matthew Williams (mattwill75@hotmail.com)
Phyll Hardie, Tony Clarke, Ian Chapman, Richard Jennings,
Edgar Fernandez
Rachel Mold

Hon. Auditor
Norwich City Council (part time cycling officer): Tim Mellors (timmellors@norwich.gov.uk)

Members' meetings normally take place monthly on the third Monday at 7.30 pm.

**Forthcoming meetings: 21 September, 19 October, 16 November (AGM)
at Charing Cross Centre, 17-19 St John Maddermarket, Norwich NR2 1DN.**

!! Deadline for material for Winter newsletter: 27th November 2015 !! Your chance to contribute something...