

**CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 19 DECEMBER 2019**  
**LONG WITTENHAM: HIGH STREET – PROPOSED AMENDMENTS**  
**TO TRAFFIC CALMING BUILD OUTS**

**Report by Interim Director for Community Operations**

**Recommendation**

1. The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed provision of cycle bypasses at the traffic calming build outs on the High Street at Long Wittenham.

**Executive summary**

2. The provision for traffic calming measures and pedal cyclists is reviewed in the context of wider traffic management schemes and when requested by local councils as a result of road safety concerns and as part of the on-going monitoring of reports on road accidents. Specific proposals are assessed applying national regulations and guidance on the provision of traffic calming and cycle infrastructure and the Oxfordshire County Council Cycling Design Standards.

**Introduction**

3. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to provide cycle bypasses at the existing traffic calming build outs on the High Street at Long Wittenham.

**Background**

4. The above proposals as shown at Annex 1 have been put forward following an OCC audit and stakeholder liaison in 2012 to determine what shortcomings there were in the Science Vale area, identify those areas and propose solutions for improvement where possible. These ranged from small to large and from low to high cost and complexity.
5. Following feasibility and design phases the bypasses have been recommended as relatively small and low-cost solutions to improve the current situation and safety in this area but with high potential benefits. It has been a long term aspiration to improve this link for cyclists and bring it to the [Oxfordshire Cycling Design Standards](#) (ref. 3.1.3, table page 17). In November 2018 funding was allocated to complete the improvements as part of the Science Vale Cycling Network Project funded by Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership.

## **Consultation**

6. Consultation on the proposal was carried out between 28 August and 18 September 2019. Emails were sent to the statutory consultees including: Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, South Oxfordshire District Council, Long Wittenham Parish Council, the local school and the local County Councillor. Local cycling groups such as: Cycling UK, Cyclox, Oxfordshire Cycling Network, Sustrans and HARBUG (Harwell Bike Users Group) were also included.
7. Eight responses were received. 2 objections, 4 in support and 2 neither objecting nor supporting. The responses are recorded at Annex 2 with copies of the full responses available for inspection by County Councillors.

## **Response to objections and other comments**

8. Thames Valley Police did not object but did note a concern that without adequate maintenance, such cycle bypasses became unattractive to cyclists due to the accumulation of debris and vegetation, thereby negating the benefit of their provision.
9. In response to the above concerns the design will have a humped bypass lane making it less likely to become cluttered with debris.
10. Long Wittenham Parish Council objected on the grounds that the width of the cycle provision – including both the advisory cycle lanes on the approach and the cycle bypasses – was inadequate and could present a hazard to cyclists, including encouraging cyclists to pass stationary traffic on its nearside and on re-joining the carriageway after passing through the build-out and a more general concern that the proposals were inconsistent with the Neighbourhood Development Plan – adopted jointly by the parish council and South Oxfordshire District Council – which includes a significant environmental enhancement to the village, including addressing traffic congestion at peak periods, taking account also of the planned relocation of the primary school and the provision of an off-carriageway route for pedal cyclists to avoid the High Street.
11. An objection was also received from a resident adjacent to one of the existing build outs stating that the proposals were unnecessary as pedal cyclists currently use adjacent dropped kerbs and the footway to bypass the feature, and noting more generally that parking at school journey times in particular was an effective traffic calming measure in itself, negating the need for any build-outs and also noting that the existing road humps presented a noise and in particular vibration problem for adjacent premises, which – due their being 300 years old - were, due to their foundations being much shallower than current standards, susceptible to damage particularly when larger vehicles travelled over the humps.

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12. Noting the above concerns it is accepted that although the limited width of the road precludes cycle provision meeting current standards and also that there will be, in practice, times that the cycle lanes may not be passable due to traffic conditions, provision is considered to be an improvement and a relatively low cost measure that in no way jeopardises longer term improvements contained within the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
13. Noting the concerns over the existing road humps, the scheme was constructed in 1995 and research carried out by the Department for Transport on road humps concluded that they presented no realistic risk of structural damage to adjacent properties arising from ground borne vibrations.
14. Expressions of qualified support were received from HARBUG and the Oxfordshire Cycling Network, who though also noted concerns about the narrow width of the cycle provision, in particular the 0.8m width advisory cycle lanes on the approaches to the cycle bypasses and also the need to provide a cycle lane on the exit from the bypasses, together with measures to prevent parking in the immediate vicinity by providing waiting restrictions possibly also supplemented by kerbing to ensure compliance by drivers. Concerns were also expressed that without adequate maintenance the bypasses would be prone to the accumulation of debris etc.
15. The above concerns are noted but the limited road width and also the budget available preclude the provision of wider cycle lanes/bypasses or the physical segregation of the cycle lanes. The introduction of waiting restrictions will, however, be explored subject to funding and consultation.
16. Two expressions of support were received from local residents who, however, also noted that the benefits to cyclists would be modest and that a high standard cycle network is required to link Didcot with the nearby villages and existing cycle routes in the Didcot and Abingdon areas.

### **How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives**

17. The proposals would help facilitate the safe movement of pedal cyclists

### **Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)**

18. Funding for the proposed measures has been provided by Oxfordshire Local Growth Fund, which must be spent by March 2021.

JASON RUSSELL

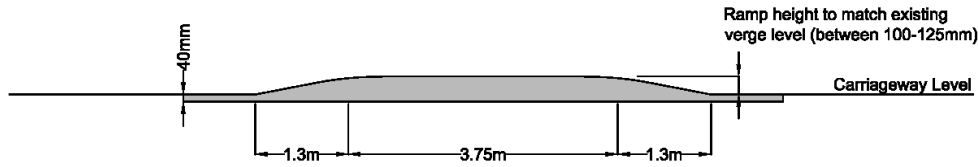
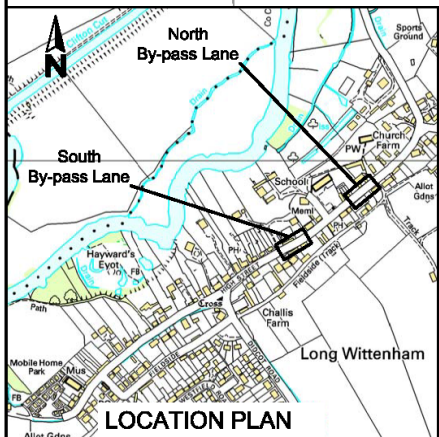
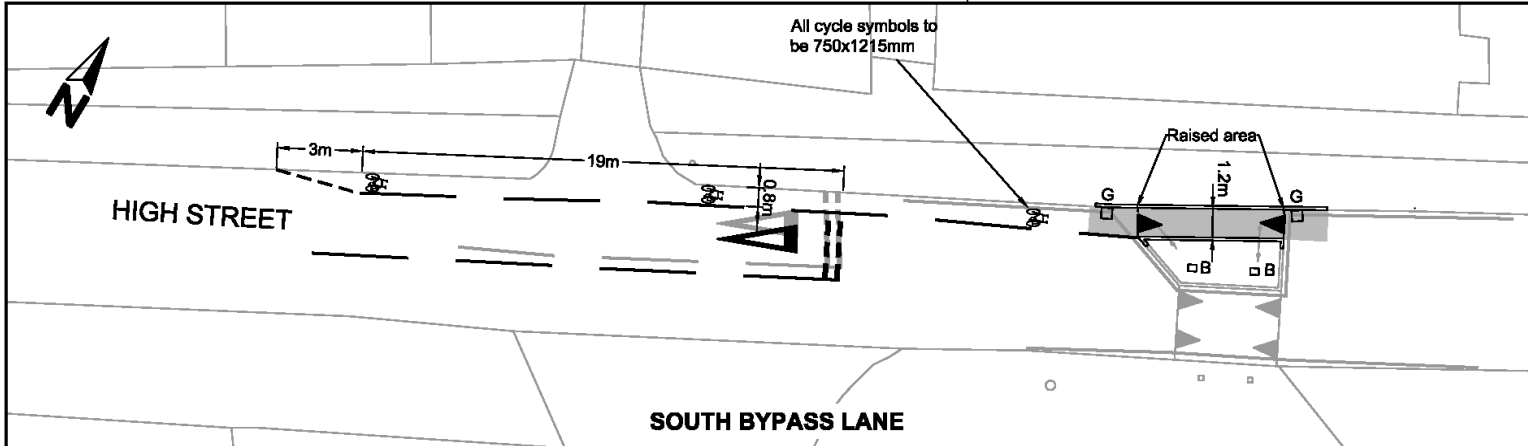
Interim Director for Community Operations

Background papers: Plan of proposed cycle bypasses and cycle lanes  
Consultation responses

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Joanna Mellon 07741 607539

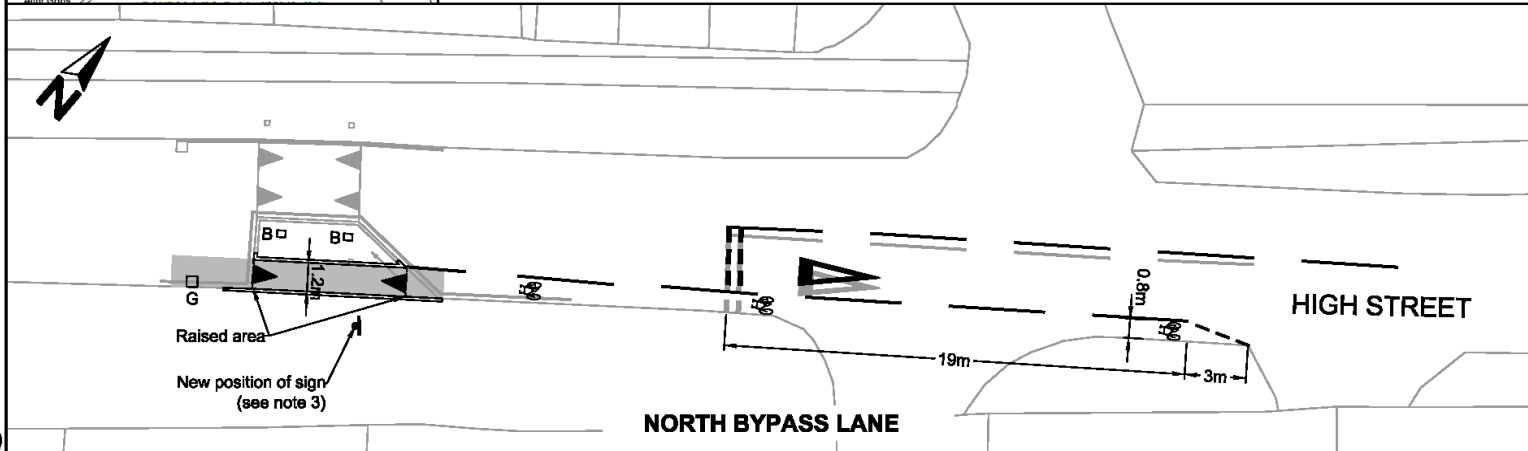
December 2019

Drawing No.	S-000579-DET-000-001	Revision	1		
<b>Key:</b>					
<b>G</b>	Replace existing carriageway gullies with 'cycle friendly' gully gratings and frames.				
<b>B</b>	Remove existing wooden barriers on buildouts and replace with new wooden bollards with weathered tops & reflective band.				
	New K1a Kerbing to HSD/1100/140 to match existing upstand. Verges behind new kerbs to be reinstated with topsoil as necessary and grass seeded.				
	AC 10 Close Surf 70/100 (Clause 912) 40mm deep surface course with regulating material where necessary.				
<b>Notes:</b>					
1. Ramped by-pass lanes to be 1.2m wide.					
2. Existing road markings to be repositioned to provide 0.8m wide cycle approach lanes or refreshed as necessary. New road markings required as shown.					
3. SEC to move illuminated sign from the north buildout to the verge, at the start of the works.					
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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
1	08.02.12	Amend resurfacing depth.			LMD
<p>Steve Howell Deputy Director of Environment &amp; Economy Oxfordshire County Council Speedwell House Speedwell Street Oxford OX1 1NE Tel: (01865) 615700 Fax: (01865) 241577</p>					
Project title <b>SVUK CULHAM TO LONG WITTENHAM CYCLE ROUTE DETAILED DESIGN</b>					
Drawing title <b>HIGH STREET, LONG WITTENHAM CYCLE BY-PASS IN EXISTING BUILDOUTS</b>					
Drawing Status Scale @ A3    Drawn by    SRF    Checked by    LMD    Approved by    AJP 1:200    Date drawn    19.01.12    Date checked    03.02.12    Date approved    08.02.12					
Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref S-000579					
Drawing No.	S-000579-DET-000-001	Revision	1		



**CROSS SECTION OF RAISED CYCLE BY-PASS**

Scale : NTS



**NORTH BYPASS LANE**

P:\4. Improvement Schemes\Schemes\S-000579 SVUK Culham Cycle Scheme\Drawings\Working\SVUK Culham - Detailed Design.dwg

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<b>No objection</b> – In principle I have no objection providing these features are delivered with an element of future maintenance. Many like features throughout the County are not regularly maintained and have become overgrown by the verge, resulting in cyclists choosing not to use them. Garsington and Steventon just two examples that have suffered years of neglect.
(2) Long Wittenham Parish Council	<b>Object</b> – (see <b>Annex 3</b> for detailed submission)
(3) South Oxfordshire District Council	<b>No objection</b>
(4) Local Resident, (Long Wittenham)	<p><b>Object</b> – I wish to protest most strongly about this proposed new provision.</p> <p>There is really no need for this provision. For the last twenty years cyclists traveling north have always left the road at my south driveway entrance, continued along the pavement -by-passing the road hump, and returned to the road at the north driveway. There has never been any inconvenience.</p> <p>If the council have money to spend why not just remove the traffic calming obstruction altogether. It is not needed because the school drop-off and pick-up ensures there is only one lane left for motorists passing through. Thus creating its own traffic calming at the time when most children and pedestrians are about.</p> <p>Removing the road hump itself would also protect my house, As has been reported several times in the past, because we are only feet away from the bump, the house shakes when heavy vehicles bump across. A 300 year old listed building was not built to today's standards and has shallow foundations and as a result the timber structure moves causing ceilings to collapse and walls to crack. Please remove the bump even if you leave the chicane.</p> <p>Furthermore why did you, only last month, reinstall the bollards on the chicane that were knocked down a couple of</p>

CMDE8

	<p>years ago? One bollard at least will have to be removed. What a waste of money!</p> <p>Finally, if one is considering a cycle path to Clifton Hampden, why can't you use Feldside. It would separate the cars from the cycles and be well away from pedestrians.</p>
<p>(5) Local Resident, (Long Wittenham)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - Having led the LW / Clifton Hampden cycle lane group for a few years as part of our Parish Plan, I can say this proposal is a step forward. HOWEVER, it is really just the icing on the cake.</p> <p>There is a brilliant cycle network around Didcot and particularly Ladygrove, which is joined to LW by the cycle path that crosses the Appleford Rd and up past the Pendon museum to LW High St. Then there is the great cycle network around Culham and on to Abingdon or Benson.</p> <p>What we REALLY NEED is a safe cycle link that joins these two networks together along the side of the road between LW and Clifton Hampden. This is a really dangerous stretch of the road at the moment.</p> <p>If this can be progressed in addition to your proposals here, then great, but please don't spend your scarce resources on this (or similar) schemes if there is no money left for what is the real priority.</p>
<p>(6) Local Group, (HARBUG)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - This is a good idea to create cycle bypass lanes through the Long Wittenham traffic calming, I have two observations on the proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 0.8m is narrow for a cycle lane especially since the whole carriageway is also narrow. Is there any scope for moving the kerb back to create more space for the cycle lane?</li> <li>• On the other side of build-outs there is no cycle lane to 'run out' Could this be re-assessed as on the south side, cars park in the space created by the build-out? This is especially the case during the school run, meaning the cycle bypass would be blocked and un-usable at the times when it is most needed. This is not so much a problem on the north side but in both cases cars do quickly 'nip around' the build-out and swerve in to avoid slowing down the oncoming traffic that has priority. Drivers are so focussed on getting around the build-out that they probably won't look for or notice cyclists on the inside. Could the cycle lane be extended on the other side of the build-outs with some kind of physical demarcation to protect cyclists and / or prevent parking in the cycle lane e.g. plastic posts, armadillos or kerbs?</li> </ul>

CMDE8

<p>(7) Local Group, (Oxfordshire Cycling Network)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I can add the following feedback, essentially agreeing with HarBUG.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cycle bypasses would be beneficial for cyclists through Long Wittenham traffic calming, allowing continued progress.</li> <li>• Our main concern is the 0.8m approach lane. This is far too narrow and would encourage close passing because many drivers will assume that the lane marks a safe passing distance. Either the lane needs to meet minimum width standards, 1.5m in the Oxfordshire standards, or it would be better not to have a lane and perhaps just have a cycle painted marker.</li> <li>• For the bypass, 1.2m is the width of the Cycle design Vehicle (HE IAN 195/16) so an extra little bit of width would be beneficial if possible.</li> <li>• Cycle bypasses of this type tend to collect autumn leaves and other debris. Is there a width or design that would enable more easy cleaning or make it self-cleaning?</li> <li>• Parking should be prohibited for a distance on either side of the build-out to ensure that cyclists are not blocked or required to make tight manoeuvres.</li> <li>• As this is on a NCN route, are you also consulting with Sustrans? They may have additional ideas. At very least, it would make sense to include NCN route confirmation signage.</li> </ul>
<p>(8) Local Resident, (Long Wittenham)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – I am a resident of Long Wittenham, and a cyclist, and have seen the information about the proposed Cycle bypasses on Long Wittenham High Street.</p> <p>I am strongly in favour of these amendments, although until such time as there is a safe cycle route from Long Wittenham to Clifton Hampden, I do think this is not going to improve most journeys between the two significantly. Are you able to provide any information on the likelihood of a dedicated cycle path between the two villages? It would be good to know if this is being investigated or if we will still have to take our lives in our hands to make the journey. Having moved from West London just over four years ago, I can honestly say that cycling on roads in South Oxfordshire is terrifying. The traffic moves very fast on narrow roads, making it unsafe for cyclists to use the same roads.</p>



### Long Wittenham Parish Council

#### RE: LOCAL Consultation – High Street (Long Wittenham) - Proposed Amendment to Existing Traffic Calming Features (SVCN route 8G)

Dear Christian,

Long Wittenham Parish Council discussed these proposals at our meeting on the 12th September. The PC are aware of several residents who made adverse comments on the proposals but we are not sure if these have been only made to us or forwarded to OCC.

**The PC would normally be in favour of any additional practical provision for cyclists but we are very concerned about these proposals for several reasons.**

The PC looked at your plans and the description above and found there is an immediate discrepancy in the width described. On the plans the new lanes are marked 0.8m and above you state approx 1.2m?

However the PC has also looked at OCC's own advice on the provision of cycle lanes and has found that these widths are both well below the recommended minimum width as set out in your own guidance documents.

#### **Oxfordshire Cycling Design Standard**

##### **Part 3 Cycle facility specifications.**

##### **Mandatory and advisory on carriageway cycle lanes**

Diagram 7: On-carriageway cycle lanes refers.

3.2.17 The widths of both mandatory and advisory cycle lanes are the same as for stepped cycle tracks: 1.5m to 2m with **1.8m being the recommended width.**

3.2.18 **Where the minimum width cannot be attained over the majority of its length, cycle lanes should not normally be provided.** Research by Parkin J & Meyers C, 2009 suggests cycle lanes can cause motorists to leave a smaller and in **the case of narrow lanes inadequate space when overtaking a cycle user.**

We are concerned that provision of substandard width lanes gives cyclists undue confidence and that vehicles will in fact give less room and put cyclists at increased risk as described in the research noted above.

Furthermore the provision of these lanes will encourage cyclists to pass by on the inside of any queuing traffic. At peak times for school drop off and collection there is often a long queue approaching the traffic calming and many of these cars are delivering children to



the school and play school in the village hall. There is a tendency for parents to allow children to exit the car whilst in the queue and so a cyclist on the inside could quite easily be seriously injured when a car door is unexpectedly opened while traffic is stationary in the queue.

The other serious concern of the PC is that if the cycle lane is provided along the kerb line that cyclists using the lane will then have to rejoin the traffic exactly at the most difficult and congested section of road. The first two photos show the typical state of traffic and to take out any road width for a cycle lane can only make this worse. Cyclists trying to merge back into the queuing and congested traffic will also be funnelled into the area between the traffic calming and school which is in constant use for parked cars at peak times. This conflict would increase the risks to cyclists emerging from the cycle lane.

Below are photos of the traffic congestion caused at peak times often leading to an element of "road rage"

Putting cyclists into the middle of this is only likely to increase tension.



You should also be aware that the PC and SODC has adopted a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Long Wittenham. In that NDP the PC has identified a number of physical improvements that the village supports.

One of the key issues for us is to reduce traffic congestion in the High Street. To do this we are well advance with plans to build a new school and play school on land away from the High Street and having moved the school, to then look at significant environmental improvements to the whole area. The NDP also promotes the possibility of an off carriageway cycle route. We plan to use CIL funds to carry out these improvements.

The PC therefore considers it would be premature to carry out any work in the High Street until these advanced plans can be completed and a review undertaken.

Attached for your information are comments from residents via the Long Wittenham website. The PC strongly agrees with the residents who have pointed out that these proposals would be further inappropriate urbanisation of our historic High Street in a conservation area.

The PC also looked carefully at your plans as it is not very clear how even the 0.8m substandard cycle lanes could be fitted in?

We note that there are two references to “bypass lanes”. We are extremely concerned about how these might be constructed. It would appear that you intend to widen the road ( which would be essential even with the narrow cycle lanes) and that to do so you will have to close the road whilst work is underway. There would be no safe way of relocating the kerbs without a full road closure which would have an undue impact on the residents getting around the village versus the perceived minor improvements for cyclists. At the south location there is a telegraph pole close behind the kerb and this carries overhead power to the High Street. Relocating this would put put electricity off, a further serious inconvenience for High Street residents.

In summary The PC cannot support these proposals at the present time. They provide only substandard provision which we feel will increase the risk to cyclists, cause undue disruption and serious inconvenience to residents and are premature as we have more extensive plans following the relocation of our school as set out in the NDP.

We request that nothing is done until the school is relocated and at that point the PC would be very happy to review the whole area with OCC to make more appropriate provision for cyclists.

Should you wish to clarify any of our comments you can contact Stephen Brown, LW Parish Cllr on 01865 407589 or at [longwitt@hotmail.com](mailto:longwitt@hotmail.com).

Alternatively you may like to attend our next Parish Council meeting on 10th October at 7.30pm.

***Long Wittenham PC September 2019***