

Item 5 - Cherwell Street Bus Service improvement Scheme - Detailed Design

We support this scheme, but would like the plans amended to include cycle symbols in the carriageway lanes on Cherwell Street and George St where people might be cycling.

It is good to see some future-proofing, with work done to enable a later upgrade to a toucan crossing at the George St-Cherwell St junction, as noted in paragraph 25. But there would have been even greater savings if this could have been done now: the extra cost of putting in a toucan crossing rather than a puffin crossing is much smaller than the cost of changing the crossing at a later date. So we would like to see a budget for implementing small walking and cycling improvements or additions as part of schemes like this.

Another suggestion was to have cycle symbols in the carriageway to legitimise cycling and warn drivers of the possible presence of people cycling. This has not been included in these plans, but is a minor enough measure that it could still be implemented without significant costs or further consultation.

We also suggested continuous footways across the Britannia Rd and Lower Cherwell St side entries, but too late for that to have any chance of making it into the plans.

These are among the features that should be included by default in any full-road design. That is, when any urban main road is being built or rebuilt, continuous footways should be put in across minor side street entries. And if cycling infrastructure can't be included then on-carriageway cycle symbols should be put in place as a "best we can do" fall-back.

This should all go into the Street Design Guide, but we don't need to wait on that. Thinking about active travel - and especially cycling, which is often forgotten - should be part not just of all bus improvement plans but of all highway schemes. This needs to be a clear message from the top down to all officers.