

Something has gone seriously wrong here.

As part of the housing being put into the east of the A4130, a key requirement should have been the provision of walking and cycling links to the town centre and the railway station. But we are not getting that: we have a thirty-metre gap in cycling provision on the east side and a toucan crossing that connects to only a footpath! The section involved is marked in red on this detail from the plans.

The officers' assumption is that people cycling will dismount. Firstly, this is just not acceptable on a cycle route: Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 1/20 says bluntly, "Routes should be complete with no gaps in provision". Many people cycling can't dismount - some people with disabilities, riding cargo or other larger cycles, and so forth. And since a cycle route is only as good as its worst segment, this is a failure of the whole scheme.

Secondly, this is not at all realistic. What will happen as a result of the failure in provision here is that some people will not cycle at all, some people will cycle on the footway even though it's not a shared path, and some people will cycle on the carriageway.

This development should not have been approved without a plan - of some kind - to provide a continuous cycle route. Measures should have been taken to fill the missing gap, either by obtaining some land from South Oxfordshire District Council or by narrowing the carriageway.

It is too late for any of that now, but **there are some easy measures that could still be taken to ameliorate the harm done by this failure.**

While two metres is too narrow for a shared path, given a choice between a short stretch of sub-standard shared path and no provision at all, we think the former is the better option. So we ask that **the 2 metre path be made a shared path**. To support people who choose not to use that, and to cycle on the carriageway, we ask that **cycle symbols be placed in the middle of the southbound lane**; there also needs to be **a dropped kerb opposite the bus stop to allow people to move from the end of the cycle track onto the carriageway**.

And **the speed limit should be dropped to 20mph on the section of road lacking cycling infrastructure** (or with sub-standard provision if the suggestions in the previous paragraph is adopted). This would make cycling safer and more accessible both for people who opt to cycle on the carriageway and for people who cycle on the too-narrow footway or shared path. (Driver compliance with signal crossings is also better with 20mph speed limits, so I would suggest 20mph speed limits to cover both toucan crossings and the Tamar Way junction.)

More generally, we think officers should always be willing to consider narrowing the carriageway to improve walking and cycling routes - here that could provide not only continuity, but also a buffer along the A4130 between the carriageway and the shared path. With 30mph traffic, the "desirable minimum" buffer between a cycle track or shared path and the carriageway is 0.5m, and Transport Development Management should be asking for that instead of always allowing developers to get away with the "absolute minimum" of no buffer.

And lowering speed limits should always be considered where walking or cycling provision is missing or sub-standard.