

In view of the intention that this area is to become a major transport hub it is vital that the provision for cycling is a fundamental part of any development.

To quote from the Nottinghamshire County Council's current Draft Nottinghamshire Cycling Strategy 2015 document:

"The economic benefits of cycling are well established – improved access to local centres increases their vitality; improved access to jobs and training can broaden jobseekers' travel horizons; well-planned leisure routes can increase the visitor offer and therefore improve the visitor economy; and car drivers that switch to cycling help reduce local congestion with resulting benefits to the economy.

Similarly, increasing cycling is a major theme in all government plans to improve the mental and physical health of the population, which in turn reduces the financial burden on the health service and lost productivity within the business economy. In addition to improving cycling safety thereby reducing cycling casualties, cycling can help improve health through increased activity, as well as helping improve air quality by reducing the numbers of trips made by polluting vehicles.

Such benefits help deliver many of the County Council's strategic priorities, particularly those relating to protecting the environment, supporting economic growth, and promoting health."

It is important that the developments are compatible with the future provision of major north-south and east-west segregated cycle routes. These will have the potential feed into the "well-planned leisure routes can increase the visitor offer and therefore improve the visitor economy" and provide a viable means for local people to access the hub enabling car drivers to "switch to cycling help reduce local congestion with resulting benefits to the economy".

From the outset the aim should be to make cycling a viable option for accessing the hub from within a five mile radius and beyond.

In particular there are a number of specific potential routes that any development should take account of and not create a barrier to. These include:

An extension of the tram-side shared path from the present NET terminus at Toton Lane alongside the probable NET extension to the HS2 Hub (and beyond that if the tram is extended to Derby, as now being considered).

The draft proposals (from John Grimshaw, as part of the DfT HS2 Cycleway feasibility study) for the HS2 Cycleway in this area, including links to and from the riverside path near Attenborough etc.

If Bessell Lane, Stapleford is to be used as a general access road for local traffic, rather than restricted for through motor traffic (TP7 north-south link), we need to be assured of the quality of the cycling provision that will be made with the changes to the layout of this road and the rest of the proposed north-south road including the extension of Midland Street, Long Eaton (TP8 Replacement Access).

The Area Plan included with this consultation does not specifically refer to any cycling infrastructure. The only implied cycle provision is a link to and from Sustrans NCN Route 67 and the Erewash Valley Trail to the west. While this should indeed be provided for, this route currently utilizes the Erewash Canal towpath which cannot be considered to be a viable volume cycling route as it narrow, unlit, beset with barriers and subject to the conflicting needs of anglers, (dog) walkers and cyclists. However, in the future with the project to re-open the Bennerley Viaduct and improve the canal towpath in that area and other similar plans this has the potential to be a major leisure route attracting visitors to use the Toton hub as the starting point for cycling tours of all the surrounding areas.

Fundamentally “Not prejudicing the cycling route to the station” should be a Core Strategy requirement. Of equal importance to motorised vehicle access.