

**Notes of meeting held on 28 January 2016 at Loxley House to discuss tram-related issues for cyclists on the two new NET routes.
revised version of 3 February 2016 following some detailed comments from Steve Tough,
Nottingham City Council.**

Present:-

Steve Tough, Nottingham City Council (ST)
Russell Cohen, Nottingham City Council and Mott McDonald (RC)
Hugh McClintock, Pedals (HMCC)
Anne Sladen, Pedals (AS)
Ian Hutchinson, Ridewise (IH)
Sarah Eanor, Sustrans (SE)

Introduction: aims of the meeting

HMCC opened the meeting by mentioning its purpose, i.e. to follow up the meeting held on 26 February 2015 with Tramlink and the Contractors, etc. to discuss various issues for cyclists that had arisen with the new layouts. Since then Pedals had been keeping a list of detailed issues on the Pedals website, regularly updated, and consolidated in October 2015. There was also a separate list of extra issues which he had recently circulated.

Main problem areas:

It was agreed that the most problematic area for cyclists remained the very constrained area on High Road and Chilwell Road (CT01 and CT02), particularly the section between Central College and the Devonshire Avenue junction. Even though it seemed that the number of accidents had declined since completion, some accidents were continuing, including very serious one in mid-December, so it was important that possible improvements, continued to be considered. SE agreed to cycle the Chilwell Road section to see if the signing could be rationalised, as she felt it contributed to the problem. SE agreed to forward any comments to HMCC.

HMCC mentioned the meeting hosted last September by Simon Barton of Bartons plc to discuss the idea of including some new section of cycle path across their redeveloped site, connecting Bridge Avenue, Holly Lane and Wilmot Lane etc., to help achieve a continuous route away from the tram tracks to the south of the High Road/Chilwell Road. Although this seemed then to be well supported nothing more had been heard since about it so HMCC volunteered to contact Simon Barton to find out the current position.

It was also agreed, while pursuing this possibility, that some other action should be taken as soon as possible, in terms of improved signing of one alternative route for east bound cyclists that did exist, via Meadow Lane, Queen's Road, Robinet Road and West End, etc. It was agreed that this was a good suggestion, even though this route might be regarded as rather too indirect by some cyclists.

In going through the rest of the list, relating to detailed issues on both new NET routes, it was agreed that several matters had now been dealt with as part of the snagging process, including several signing issues (CT05, CT06, CT27, CT28, CT32), and two locations where dropped kerbs had initially not been provided, on Inham Road (Chilwell) and Coronation Avenue (Wilford) (CL06 and CL08)

Other issues were acknowledged to be outstanding but action to address them as part of snagging or highways and land handback, may take some time yet. One example of where this made early action unlikely was the section of the Clifton route, where the various barriers were located on the tramside path past Wilford between Coronation Avenue and Wilford Lane (CL05). ST said that he understood the County Council would review the requirements for the barriers once the path was returned to them. This would require consultation with the tram operator. This would need to take into consideration the views of pedestrians who also use the combined footway/cycleway. HMCC said that Paul Hillier from the County Council had floated with him the idea of a special site meeting to discuss

these once this path had been transferred back from the contractors to the County Council, and this was agreed as a sensible idea. It was noted that whilst barriers slowed progress for cyclists, in reality this was only for a few seconds, and the scheme implementation had included a basically good new cycle path between Clifton and Nottingham.

Several of the issues concerned locations where there was initially a problem but where improvements had been made. Some had been picked up as part of snagging and some via the Road Safety Audit process. For example it was felt that the complaint about the slippery new surface on the upgraded path along the southern boundary of the Toton Lane park and ride site (CT25) was now less of an issue as the surface had settled down.

In the months before opening of the NET routes last August there was great local concern in the Wilford area about conflicts on Wilford Bridge in peak school going periods between trams and shared paths users on the one hand, and between schoolchildren walking to school and fast commuter cyclists on the other (CL16). Since then the situation had been very carefully monitored, and tram drivers instructed to go extra slowly across the bridge, if they perceived a hazard, and it had appeared to settle down. However, there were still some concerns about conflicts on the path across the bridge, bearing in mind both that sections (by the abutments) were less than the desirable width of 3 metres and also that this path was likely to attract many more cyclists with its inclusion on the City Council's Southern Cycling Corridor proposals.

Other Chilwell NET route issues:

AS mentioned the cluster of issues for cyclists on Middle Street around its junction with City Road, where the layout had been changed since the tramworks, and where some of the signing was ambiguous. She also commented on the change for cyclists on the cut-through nearby on City Road, half way between Middle Street and the High Road, which had been removed during the tram works to facilitate access for local residents. AS said it was much more awkward to use by cyclists since it was put back. She also said that the previous 'Except Cycles' supplementary plate under the 'No Entry' signs at the Middle Street end of City Road had not been put back. RC offered to investigate all these issues and, if necessary, get back to AS to arrange a site meeting to discuss them further, and including possible improvements to signing of the 'jug handle' indirect turn via the Middle Street toucan crossing into City Road. (CT17, CT18 and CT20). One option discussed was the removal of this 'jug handle' sign altogether as it was considered to be counterproductive.

AS also mentioned the need for a dropped kerb at the north end of Church Street, Beeston. RC offered to investigate.

AS raised another item, the poor signing at the south (Middle Street) end of Devonshire Avenue (CT37) for cyclists wishing to turn left towards Beeston town centre. RC offered to investigate.

It was agreed that the provision for cyclists in the Middle Street / Styring Street area (CT11-CT16) was relatively satisfactory, at least for more confident cyclists prepared to ride on the road, even if some of the off-road provision, more likely to be used by less confident cyclists, was rather more awkward. AS did however mention that there were 2 street lights here (near Tesco) not working, which RC offered to refer to the Local Highway Authority.

Middle Street / Station Road area:

There is apparently an extra white line. (CT21). RC to investigate.

Inham road tramside shared path: near Bramcote Lane (CT31)

Flooding issue agreed as unsatisfactory. RC to investigate how ponding could be avoided.

Lower Road – Fletcher Road:

In response to the complaints several months ago about the poor signing of this legal through route for cyclists (CT10), additional signs had been added to make clear that cyclists were exempt from the

general ban on through traffic movements (other than trams). However, RC emphasised that the intention was also that cyclists riding between University Boulevard and Beeston town centre should be encouraged to use the route involving the paths and crossings around the roundabout by the west entrance to Nottingham University.

AS also commented on the importance of the continuity of kerbs on this route: needs to be marked more coherently.

AS and HMcC said it was important to provide dropped kerbs at the Queen's Road East end of the cycle path from Lower Road, which local cyclists still expected to use as part of the 'historic' route to and from the previous site of the toucan crossing. (CT07 and CT08). Dropped kerbs were also needed on the other side of the University Boulevard / Queen's Road East junction (CT09), particularly for cyclists coming up Queen's Road East and heading towards the City Centre, to facilitate earlier access to the cycle path on the north side of University Boulevard. This was discussed in detail and ST and RC suggested that the provision of additional drop kerbs which would be in undesirable locations could be avoided through better signage directing cyclists to dropped kerbs already implemented.

University Boulevard north side cycle path:

Cycle stands near the tram stop west of the University south entrance (CT39): Agreed that there was some risk of cyclists colliding with these after dark and that it would be a good idea to add some reflective tape to reduce this risk. It was also pointed out that passengers emerging from the tram at this point (especially those heading for the nearby playground) often have no idea that cyclists could be passing and rush off the tram. Some surface warnings could be considered, e.g. logos, to reduce this risk, although it was noted that this is a very wide area. It was also agreed that cyclists should be aware that this is a particularly busy location and should use caution and an appropriate speed.

There was some discussion about the complaints about dangers to eastbound cyclists approaching the toucan crossing by the South entrance who may be unsure if the lights were green for other vehicles (CT19). It was felt that the most important way to address this was for approaching cyclists to watch out for traffic approaching from different directions, however.

Science Road / Clifton Boulevard west side cycle path (under Ningbo tram bridge) (CT03)

RC said that he thought that the previous layout of the cycle path on the west side of Clifton Boulevard had not been direct so he was unclear of the reasons for the objections to the realigned path (under the Ningbo tram bridge) having a kink. AS and HMcC said that the previous layout definitely lacked this kink, which made the path more awkward to use. RC agreed to provide a photograph of the cycle path taken in July 2008 which identifies the kink and HMcC said he would discuss this with regular users of this path.

Meadow Ways / Gritley Mews, The Meadows (CT04)

RC explained the good road safety reasons for this layout, with a dropped kerb on the northside shared path not being located opposite the mouth of the Gritley Mews junction. There is an option to look at a route for unconfident cyclists across the small section of the footway to the West of Gritley Mews in order to access the dropped crossing however this option would need to be reviewed and safety audited if taken forward and this would include appropriate designation by lining and signing.

Other Clifton NET route issues

Signing of shared path alongside tram between Wilford Bridge and Riverside path (CL18): HMcC said that, in addition to the direction sign at the Coronation Avenue end of the riverside path (to and from West Bridgford) pointing the wrong way (CL18) there was a general lack of direction signing on the tramside shared path between this point and where it connected the main (west side) Wilford Bridge

tramside path by the Wilford Village tramstop. RC agreed to investigate the signs pointing the wrong way.

Queen's Walk area tramside path (CL02-CL04 and CL07)

The various points made about the sharp bends on the shared path by Queen's Walk were reviewed and it was felt that these were a fairly minor problem, provided that cyclists were not travelling too fast!

On riverside path west of north end of Wilford Bridge: intruding poles (CL05)

RC said that this was not a NET-related problem although HMcC maintained that it was related to the changes made in relation to the NET at the junction of Riverside Way and the link road to and from Robin Hood Way etc. RC offered to pass this comment onto the highway authority.

Cycle lane markings near the Ruddington Lane tramstop (CL10)

RC said that these were being reviewed.

Narrow shared path east and west of the Ruddington Lane tramstop (CL12 and CL15)

Agreed that this path width was unsatisfactory but that not much could be done to add extra width. HMcC commented that increased conflicts could occur in future when this path became part of the proposed Southern Cycling Corridor route.

Conclusion and follow-up

RC said he would keep in touch with the rest of those present once had had an opportunity to investigate all the points raise.

It was also provisionally agreed to hold another meeting, probably in September, to review progress and once there had been further progress with the handover of responsibilities from the contractors to the two Local Highway Authorities.

HMcC, revised on 3 February 2016 following some detailed comments from Steve Tough, Nottingham City Council.