

Response to Nottingham City Council's Nottingham Eco Expressway and Eastern Cycle Corridor consultation, May-June 2016:

Joint response by Pedals and the Proposed Trent Lane to The Hook foot-cycle bridge Steering Group

We welcome the proposed improvements for cyclists, particularly when those which are the subject of this consultation, between the Island Site and Vale Road, are combined with the series of changes still being planned further west, across the Island Site and connecting to the City Centre, including the Broad Marsh Centre and Nottingham Railway Station. The completion of this wider scheme will be of particular importance in encouraging cycling in this area since the present links to and from the City Centre are often very unattractive and intimidating, at least for less confident cyclists.

With the current proposals focusing on a series of improvements for cyclists on the east side of Manvers Street and the northern side of Daleside Road, it is important to ensure that usage of this enhanced route is encouraged by a series of new and upgraded crossings. The new one proposed on Manvers Street between the west end of the Sneinton Greenway and the east side of the Island site (City Link) (A1) will be very useful, as will the one proposed at Candle Meadow (D13) but others such improvements are needed, e.g. connecting the path north of the major Daleside Road / Manvers Street roundabout to Meadow Lane near the Lady Bay Retail Park. Some of these are currently only pelican crossings and should be upgraded to toucan crossings, with proper safe approaches and links.

Although the new toucan crossing at the west end of Sneinton Greenway will be of particular benefit to users of the Greenway it will also be important to ensure an improved connection for cyclists heading west on Sneinton Hermitage towards City Link etc. The arrangement for the crossing at the stub end of Sneinton Hermitage needs to make better provision for the many cyclists who want to go from City Link across to Sneinton Hermitage, heading towards Sneinton and Bakersfield. We are keen to see that any changes to the traffic control make this easier and not harder. If there is to be an "all vehicles on red" phase to allow cyclists to cross in one go, we suggest that it would then make sense to add a parallel crossing on the north side of the junction.

The existing cycle paths on City Link are distinctly substandard and need upgrading if not as part of this phase then certainly as part of the series of improvements to follow between Manvers Street and the City Centre. Both here and more generally the surface quality on cycle paths should never be inferior to that on the nearby carriageway.

Also very important will be some improvements to the current rather cramped and tortuous signalled crossing for cyclists on Daleside Road just west of the Trent Lane roundabout. This improvement will be all the more vital in the context of the proposed foot-cycle bridge between Trent Lane and The Hook, Lady Bay, and connecting directly to a 3-metre wide shared path on the west side of Trent Lane from the proposed north bank bridge landing at the south end of Trent Lane.

A good standard path on this side of Trent Lane, with cyclist priority at side road crossings, will help cyclists to avoid the hazards of mixing with general traffic on the north end of Trent Lane, particularly near the junctions with the two sections of Little Tennis Street to the east, as well as the proposed new access to the new housing development planned on the former Park Yacht Club site, etc. This will also need effective measures to control nearby car parking, to prevent the path being obstructed.

Ensuring this safe link is all the more important in view of the extent of residential development emerging on both sides of Trent Lane, principally the Blueprint development on the Trent Basin site, the proposals by McCann Homes to develop the Park Yacht Club site, together whatever is proposed for the site belonging to Inside Land. Also pertinent is that due to the already high levels of general traffic from the Industrial Estate, it can be chaotic and unsafe to try to exit Trent Lane onto Daleside Road, particularly at peak traffic times and, similarly at the Racecourse Road junction. If the installation of traffic lights is required, in the light of these major wider developments, it will be very important to ensure that they include safer connections for cyclists and pedestrians as integral part of the changes.

We welcome in principle the use of the shared zebra crossings recently authorised by the DfT, e.g. on Trent Lane north of the Trent Lane roundabout (B4) and to the north and south of Racecourse Road (D11), but would suggest that their use be carefully monitored since they are a new form of facility, particularly to ensure that drivers do in practice give way to cyclists using them, as they should do for pedestrians on current zebra crossings. The careful use of appropriate signs and markings should help.

The proposed relocation of Park and Ride bus stops onto Daleside Road (D12) should be designed with careful attention to the need to avoid conflicts with cyclists passing these bus stops. The proposed new crossing shown as a Pelican crossing should be a Toucan crossing.

It is essential that the rights and priorities of cyclists who choose to remain on the main carriageway should always be maintained on the cycle path. This is essential to make the route more attractive and this includes clear signs and markings where the route passes the petrol filling station on the north side of Daleside Road (B3).

Also important is to minimise the risk of conflict between cyclists and passengers waiting to board or alighting at bus stops. Where space permits the cycle path should be aligned behind the bus stop area.

Some cyclists, e.g. those travelling west, will no doubt want to continue to cycle on the carriageway or using the proposed Eco Expressway bus lane, to save having to cross to the cycle/footway on the north side of Daleside Road, and their safety will need to be closely monitored. With other motor vehicles than buses being allowed to use the bus lane, it will be extra important to ensure that the new facility is not used illegally by other motor vehicles.

HMcC,
23 June 2016.