

**Rushcliffe Borough Council Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies (Further Options):
Response to Consultation (March 2017) from Pedals (Nottingham Cycling Campaign)**

A. Introduction

Although Pedals does not wish to comment on the general need for more housing sites to be allocated, or all the many individual proposed sites, and the full range of factors involved in considering their suitability for development, we would like to emphasise the general point that access by bike, existing and potential, should be a very important consideration in the final selection.

The main reason for this is that there is a serious danger of any further allocation of new housing sites, on top of the existing housing allocations, greatly adding to what are anyway very serious problems of congestion, and consequent motor traffic-generated poor air quality, in much of the Greater Nottingham area, including in West Bridgford, Trent Bridge, Lady Bay Bridge, and their main approaches, with associated very serious public health implications, the nature of which has recently become even more evident.

While part of the response to this increasingly serious problem is encouragement for the use of much less polluting motor vehicles, we think that this will be inadequate without reduced general traffic levels, including strong encouragement to people to be more selective in their use of cars and to be far more willing to use other, more sustainable modes, for at least some of their trips, and including much more walking and cycling for shorter trips. Without this much more radical approach there is a grave danger of the various new housing areas, major and minor, becoming car-dependent enclaves, as well as ever worse levels of congestion and pollution.

Much stronger promotion of active travel, and cycling in particular, is increasingly important more generally in terms of both individual and public health, with growing awareness of the importance of including much more physical activity as an integral part of daily lifestyles, including transport.

B. Comments in relation to some particular proposed housing sites:

To help reduce the already very serious levels of congestion and poor air quality on Trent Bridge, Lady Bay bridge and their main approaches, Pedals, in close cooperation with several other groups, and Sustrans, as well as the County and City Councils, is nearing completion of work on a feasibility study for a new foot-cycle bridge over the Trent between The Hook, Lady Bay, and Trent Lane, Sneinton with connections to a variety of existing and proposed upgraded and new routes on both banks of the river. The Bridge Steering Group has commissioned a report from Sustrans on the economic impact of the proposed bridge and this is also nearing completion, taking account of some recent revised cost estimates.

Although much of the attraction of such a new bridge would be for leisure trips, and including much more pleasant, safer and more direct connections for cyclists and walkers between major leisure areas on both sides of the Trent such as Holme Pierrepont Water Sports Centre and Country Park, Colwick Park, Trent Bridge Cricket Ground and the two major football stadia etc, as well as Sustrans National Cycle Network Route 15 and the Trent Valley Way, we do also very much see this as being an increasingly important commuter link. This will especially be the case if access routes on the south bank can be upgraded in association with the implementation of major new housing schemes, especially in the Gamston-Tollerton areas.

This will require close cooperation between the County Council as Local Highway Authority, the Borough Council, and Highways England, particularly in respect of the need for HE to include improved safe cycling provision alongside and across the A52 in its current Major Project plans for the A52 between Dunkirk and Radcliffe on Trent.

Cycling provision at and near the A52 Gamston roundabout

Although some of the existing provision for cyclists at and near the Gamston roundabout is hard to reach conveniently and safely, and although the cycle path by the A52 between this roundabout and the RSPCA junction by Radcliffe on Trent has been poorly maintained, it does provide a useful link and, for most cyclists, much safer and more pleasant than cycling on the A52 itself!

However, to be more attractive to existing and potential new cyclists from the Radcliffe area it needs to be upgraded and extended, e.g. to and from the Harlequin Junction and Bingham, as well to have more convenient safe connections at its Gamston / West Bridgford end. This would be of particular benefit to all the proposed further housing sites on the south side of the village, e.g. RAD1 (Land N of Nottingham Road, RAD5 (Land N of Grantham Road, S of railway line) and RAD7 (Land N of Grantham Road, S of railway line).

The existing toucan crossing of the A52 east of Gamston and west of Bassingfield

The existing toucan crossing of the A52 east of Gamston, which up to now has been mainly of value for leisure trips (connecting to and from the Grantham Canal towpath as well as the wider Vale of Belvoir area with its many quiet roads and, in the east of the Borough Routes 48 and 64 of the Sustrans National Cycle Network).

However, it will in future be of great extra value for commuting trips to and from the new housing areas (planned to provide a total of 2500 homes by 2028 and a further 1500 homes after 2028) between Bassingfield and Gamston, if combined with good approaches on both sides, and including upgrading of the existing route through Gamston between the crossing and the Grantham Canal towpath near Eltham Road / Buckfast Way, and West Bridgford town centre, etc.

Despite the presence of some awkward barriers the towpath has considerable potential value as a commuter route, e.g. for people in Cotgrave, especially since the recent surface improvements in the Cotgrave Country Park area and west of Hollygate Lane. This would also benefit some of the proposed further housing site closer to the north side of the village and the towpath, e.g. COT1 (Land rear of Mill Lane / The Old Park and COT11 (Land S of Hollygate Lane)

Need for a new safe crossing of the A52 between Tollerton and Edwalton

This existing safe connection of the A52 should now be supplemented by a safer crossing to the south, between Tollerton and Edwalton, preferably in the form of a foot-cycle bridge, upgrading the present footpath and bridleway connections and across the A52 and connecting to the path now to be upgraded by the County Council connecting Village Street, Edwalton, with Beckside, and from there to the existing north-south path (which already has a good surface) through to its merger with the Gamston section of the Grantham Canal towpath west of Morrison's and the connection to Eltham Drive / Buckfast Way, etc.

The value of a safer crossing of the A52 at this point would be all the greater in the context of any of the proposed new housing sites in the Tollerton area being selected for development, especially TOL1 (Land at Burnside Grove) and TOL3 (Land E of Tollerton Lane) and also if it linked to a safe connection for cyclists to and from the A606 (Keyworth direction) as well as to any plans for new / expanded cycling provision in one or both sides of the A52 between the Gamston and Lings Bar roundabouts, and including improvements for cyclists at the Gamston roundabout as part of the current Highways England A52 Major Project.

Improved links for cyclists between Tollerton and Edwalton / West Bridgford would also benefit cycle access from the existing and possible new housing areas in the Keyworth area, especially those on the north side of the village, e.g. KEY8 Land between Platt Lane and Station Road. The existing toucan crossing of the A606 provides a useful, if not ideal, safer link between Keyworth and Tollerton, and, with some upgrading this could be connected to a much better route across the A52 between

Tollerton and Edwalton / West Bridgford, as well as on to Nottingham via the proposed new foot-cycle bridge across the Trent between The Hook and Trent Lane, Sneinton, connecting to the City Council's Eastern Cycle Corridor, on which work is now well underway.

These paths by the A52 in the Tollerton/Edwalton area would also connect with the Grantham Canal towpath, a very popular leisure route, which with the A46 trunk road changes a few years ago, including several new overbridges, gives a much safer and more attractive route to and from the Vale of Belvoir and the east side of Rushcliffe Borough. The value of the towpath route has also been improved by the recent surface improvements by the Canal and River Trust in the Cotgrave / Cotgrave Country Park area, helping to provide a very attractive leisure route.

A606 / A52 Lings Bar Junction

Safer connections for cyclists through this junction would help encourage cycling from Ruddington etc, and would connect to the new provision on the A606 south of Edwalton, and to the County Council's current cycle lanes scheme on Melton Road, as well as to the route mentioned above running north from Village Street, Edwalton.

Subway under the A52 south of Sharp Hill and north of Landmere Lane, Ruddington

Upgrading of this wide former agricultural subway (designated a public footpath in 2011) would provide another safe link across the A52, much easier and cheaper to install than a wholly new subway, and would connect to a series of cycle paths to be implemented through the new housing areas (providing 1500 homes in total) on the east side of Sharp Hill, thorough to Boundary Road and West Bridgford town centre etc. It would also help provide much safer connections to and from Rushcliffe School from the parts of its catchment area south of the A52.

On the south side of the A52 it would connect via quieter roads such as Landmere Lane and Old Loughborough Road to and from Ruddington, preferably with a safer connection across the A60 such as a toucan crossing and then quieter streets such as Ashworth Avenue, Rufford Road and Easthorpe Street to and from the Village Centre, as well as Rushcliffe Country Park to the south of the village.

Existing cycle path under the A52 on Ruddington Lane (serving Ruddington and Compton Acres, etc.)

This existing and relatively flat cycle path would be of particular value to the proposed new housing sites on the north side of Ruddington, and especially with some upgrading, e.g. of the present poor layout at the junction of Ruddington Lane with Landmere Lane. This path is now all the more valuable since its connection to the tramside path between the Ruddington Lane tramstop and the City Centre via the west side of Compton Acres and Gresham Park / east side of Wilford, especially if the present tramside path crossing of Wilford Lane can be made safer and more convenient, as now being discussed with the County and City Council.

This tramside path now forms part of the City Council's proposed Southern Cycle Corridor connecting the City Centre with Clifton including a new stretch of path alongside the Clifton tram route under the A52 Ring Road. This in turn links not only to other routes in Clifton but also to the new cycling provision provided by Highways England as part of their A453 (M1-Clifton) widening scheme, completed in 2015, part of which also forms part of Sustrans National Cycle Network 15. With better connections, e.g. near the new Mill Hill roundabout, this could encourage cycling to and from the major new housing development (c3000 homes) already committed to the south of Clifton.

Cycle access to this major site would also be improved by better connections to and from the east side of the development, e.g. in the Fairham Brook area, and including a better connection via Farnborough Road, Clifton, to and from the south end of the City Council's Southern Corridor route. A

direct connection across the tram route south of Silverdale Estate to and from the possible new housing areas to the north of Ruddington (RUD1 and RUD2, Land to the west of Wilford Road, North and South) would also further encourage cycling. These connections could be combined with better cycle access to and from Rushcliffe Country Park, south of Ruddington, as well as to and from proposed housing area RUD7 (Land NW of Asher Lane)

This path also has various other good connections including the route now being upgraded by the County Council across Compton Acres from by the Compton Acres tram stop past the redeveloped Rushcliffe Arena through to Collington Way and the new toucan crossing of the A60 (Loughborough Road) between Northwold Avenue and Chaworth Road. It also has good connections to and from Wilford and other local routes in the Wilford, Silverdale and Clifton areas.

Proposed further housing sites within the West Bridgford area

Site WB3 (South of Wilford Lane) will directly benefit from the County Council's planned improvements in the Compton Areas area, especially the route between Wilford Lane and Rugby Road, and its connections north of the Wilford Lane toucan crossing at Bede Ling, including to the west, the connection to and from the tramside path near the Wilford Lane tram stop, and, to the east the series of paths near Gresham Park Road, etc. which serve the two Secondary Schools in this area.

Proposed site WB2 (Central College) would also benefit from the planned route improvements in the Compton Acres / Rushcliffe Arena area, upgrading the already quite extensive network on the west side of West Bridgford, with links to Ruddington, Wilford and Clifton etc, as well as West Bridgford Town Centre.

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