

## CYCLE LIAISON GROUP MEETING

18 February 2010, 6pm, Committee Room 2, Civic Centre

**Present:** Councillor Tony Page, Councillor Richard Willis, Keith Elliott (Reading Cycle Campaign), Adrian Lawson (Reading Cycle Campaign), Greg Payne (Reading CTC), Mark Tancock (Cycle Development Officer, RBC and CTC), Pat Baxter (RBC), Cris Butler (RBC), Ruth Leuillet (RBC), Hannah Budnitz (RBC)

**Apologies:** Councillor Tim Harris, Councillor Ricky Duveen, Councillor Paul Gittings, Peter Challis (Sustrans)

### 1. Minutes from 29 October 2009 and Matters Arising

HB noted that a Decision Book Report for s106 spend approval to pave Footpath 2 has been lodged and, unless called in, will be agreed in the last week of February. **Action:** Circulate timescale for surfacing works after Decision Book completes.

MT was introduced and reported his activities in terms of rebranding Cycling for Health and Everybody Active, incentives offered for Cycling Awareness courses and cycle champions to undertake led rides for business groups. He also noted that he does have links to the cycle training for children via family events, and is working with Katesgrove Primary School.

AL commended Reading for responding quickly to emergencies related to potholes since the snow, more so than other nearby authorities.

KE noted that the previous minutes record the DfT as being 'happy' with RBC's auditing procedures, whereas he reads their position as neutral.

### 2. Cycling in Reading Maps and Branding (Hannah Budnitz)

HB offered the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Cycling in Reading Network Map and 1<sup>st</sup> edition of some route maps to the Cycle Groups. As part of the route branding, 120 signs went up just before Christmas, and RCC members were thanked for their comments on these signs as they tested the routes. It was noted that the route testing was somewhat premature, as some signs do need moving and the vinyl stickers and road markings planned as part of the signing and branding have not gone out yet due to the weather and temperature.

Further publicity (e.g. website, at route termini, to employers) should be attempted and the maps circulated more widely once the route signing is complete. **Action:** RCC representatives to be notified when signing and branding work complete on routes and how this relates to their comments.

### 3. Update on Cycle Strategy Actions

PB introduced the A3 spreadsheet circulated as a new format for updating the CLG each meeting on actions taken, ongoing, in progress, pending or on the agenda. She invited CLG members to participate in choosing which ones are highlighted to be on the agenda at future meetings. **Action:** Legend to be put on spreadsheet.

#### a. Bath Road and Route R60 (Pat Baxter)

Using a map to indicate the section of Bath Road being examined (between Downshire Square and Southcote Lane) PB explained that the options for a route are shared paths on either the north or south side, on-road cycle lanes, advanced

stop lines at the Berkeley Avenue junction or no facilities. These options were discussed by the group.

The railway bridge is a particular pinch point and any installation of on-road cycle lanes would require the removal of a traffic lane and capacity for general traffic and buses. A cycle lane outbound to the east of the railway bridge might require reconfiguring the road layout and potentially of kerblines and drainage gullies. This is why the south side shared path had been recommended, but it was noted that shared paths can create negative publicity for cycling and that the safety where traffic turns across a shared path into side roads would have to be considered. The volume of traffic over the railway bridges and the width and layout of the road further east was also questioned.

Further options suggested were giving cyclists the priority on one of the two footbridges over the railway or adding a bus lane eastbound over the railway bridge if there is the capacity instead of a cycle lane.

**Action:** Further work to be undertaken on the current use and capacity of this area of Bath Road by traffic, buses, cyclists and pedestrians. Some additional investigation of the options is required, particularly the two suggested at the CLG and what sort of costs might be involved for reallocating space on the carriageway. To be added to next agenda.

**b. Town Centre Routes (Cris Butler)**

CB showed the additional routes to and from Reading Station that will be available to cyclists once the town centre works are complete. The works are scheduled to start in the summer and run until the end of the financial year. **Action:** CB to circulate plan with both 'to' and 'from' routes, the footprint of Station Hill and the indicative new ped/cycle bridge across the Thames to group. CB to set up sub-group meeting to discuss and manage the impacts on cyclists during construction.

The town centre works will not widen Caversham Road where it passes under the railway lines, constraining any cycle route improvements, but Vastern Road under the railway will be improved to make it safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

**c. A327 Corridor Study (Hannah Budnitz)**

The final plans for the Shinfield Rise (Maidens) Local Centre Enhancement were presented and it was noted that works should run from March to September. HB noted that a previously proposed ASL had been lost southbound on Shinfield Road at the Whitley Road junction, but it was accepted that this was necessary for safe junction operation and that the area as a whole would be better for cyclists. It was explained that dropped kerbs will allow cyclists to access Cedar Road and the R2 quiet route, and that RBC is still in discussion with the private landowners to see if cycle parking can be installed at the Whiteknights Retail Park.

**d. Oxford Road Area Study (Cris Butler)**

CB showed Network Rail's video of the proposals for Cow Lane Bridges and explained that widening the southern one was scheduled for 2011-2012, while the northern bridge would not be improved until 2015.

KE requested information on some of the as yet incomplete minor measures previously proposed for Oxford Road, particularly at the Bedford Road junction. PB

explained that these had been delayed as consideration was given to the emergency need for reconstruction of the road between Norcot junction and Bedford Road sometime in the upcoming financial year. **Action:** Proposals for Oxford Road to be brought to next meeting.

**e. North Area Access Study (Pat Baxter)**

PB presented a plan of the Gravel Hill closure and noted that this quiet route would be added to the next cycle map edition. The effectiveness of traffic calming and designing it with cyclists in mind was discussed, as with appropriate design, the CLG supports the work to make Lowfield Road a quiet road. **Action:** Bring proposals for traffic calming of Lowfield Road to next meeting.

**f. Duke Street Road Safety Scheme (Cris Butler)**

CB presented a sign design to help guide cyclists through the revised Duke Street junction on NCN 4. The cycle group agreed that this concept worked, but also requested some signs, at least temporarily, to warn motorists approaching from the north that a national cycle route crosses the road and they should beware of cyclists. **Action:** Proposed signing scheme to be taken forward and options for any additional signage to be investigated.

#### **4. Progress on Major Transport Schemes**

**a. M4 J11 (Cris Butler)**

The group viewed the fly-through video of the J11 scheme and it was noted that the work will be completed this summer and the cycle/pedestrian route through will be added to the cycle maps. **Action:** Lighting plans to be confirmed to group.

**b. Reading Station (Cris Butler)**

PB noted that the subway proposed under the station will be full-width, making it easier to walk through and wheel bicycles, even if riding through is not permitted.

**c. TIF (Ruth Leuillette)**

RL noted that the Phase 1 Business Case for £58million has been submitted and includes an LEZ, the pedestrian/cycle bridge over the Thames, strategic cycle route work, junction improvements that will be multi-targeted, personalised travel planning and the southern concourse of Reading Station. TP noted that RBC is pressing for ministers to make a decision by the end of March before the election.

#### **5. Cycle Routes Maintenance Policy (Pat Baxter)**

PB introduced a draft Cycle Routes Maintenance Policy that can be integrated into the maintenance strategy being prepared for the next financial year to support the network maps. Inspections will be carried out by highways inspectors and other transport planning staff. It was noted that the official highways inspections will reduce current problems where emergency cleansing incidents reported by the public are not always officially recorded and followed up by the street care team. The lack of consistency of cleaning (e.g. cycle features through traffic calming) will also be addressed.

**Action:** Policy on signing diversions where planned road works close a route to be added and revised policy circulated.

The issue of clearing snow and gritting was discussed, as especially due to pedestrian use and compacting, certain off-road routes were impassable for much longer than the carriageway routes (e.g. Kennetside). Although there is manpower to utilise, the machinery for gritting and clearing cannot access such paths, and RBC is looking into options for smaller, more flexible kit. It was noted that bus routes should be the priority, and this will help clear the majority of cycle routes.

#### **6. AOB**

RCC noted that two of the 'no cycling' signs on Broad Street were incorrectly mounted (one just east where cycling is allowed and one facing the wrong direction), and requested these be amended.

Progress on the Napier Road link was noted and a confirmed (to celebrate!) timetable requested. **Action:** Timetable of works to be circulated when confirmed with Network Rail.

The resurfacing, removal of barriers and upgrading to permit cyclists along the footpath between Coley and Southcote is planned, but not scheduled yet due to some negotiations with Sustrans who are match funding the proposal. **Action:** Update to be brought to the next meeting.

#### **7. Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> May at 6:30pm.

**Action:** Further dates for future meetings to be circulated.