



NCN 422 Phase 2 and 3 Route Proposals – February 2017

Thank you for sending us the large plans of NCN 422 Stage 2 which have helped members of Reading Cycle Campaign review of the route proposals. We acknowledge that there are a number of aspects of providing a quality cycle route through central Reading that are challenging and difficult, and may well only be achieved in a number of phases over a few years. Sometimes it is only clear what the problems are with a cycle route when more detailed plans are developed. We would like to see as much benefit from the current works programme as possible and make the following comments and suggestions:

Phase 2A Southcote Lane to Town Centre (Oracle)

Route Choice – Berkeley Avenue or Bath Road

Is this the best route along Berkeley Avenue or would it be better along the Bath Road and Castle Street? There are a number of problems with providing an off-carriageway shared-use path along Berkeley Avenue, in particular the long missing section by Coley Avenue and the narrow path widths and crossing issues by Temple Place. These effectively make the new route one-way eastbound.

There is probably more demand on Bath Road as it is direct to town centre? On the Bath Road there is an inbound (eastbound) bus and cycle lane. A shared path could be added on the south side to help outbound cyclists and all less confident cyclists. With changes to the positioning of traffic islands it also should be possible to make a wider outbound traffic lane possibly including a cycle lane too.

We can see little benefit of the proposed shared use in Berkeley Avenue unless it is made into a continuous route, and then doubt whether it would give much benefit over the on-carriageway cycle lanes, particularly if these were to be upgraded in width and with coloured surfacing. An uphill cycle track or shared-use path by Coley Avenue by-passing the traffic signals may be of some use. Further consideration of the potential route users (age and cycling expertise) and their destinations (town centre, RBH, University, local schools etc) may be beneficial.

We accept that there are difficulties at the Coley Avenue junction and at the Castle Street roundabout, but request that this route is reconsidered, particularly in light of the difficulties with the Berkeley Avenue route.

General Detail Design Comments

1. The ‘Share with Care’ shared-use signs may be useful as repeater signs but the legal DfT 956 signing must be used at the start and finish of shared-use sections and at other key locations. The size (530x505mm) of these signs is too large.
2. The surface slabs to show shared-use are no alternative for clear legal vertical signing, but they are a useful addition.
3. Corduroy hazard pavement provision is not consistently proposed at the start of shared-use surfaces.
4. There seems to be a lack of consideration and provision for cyclists crossing to the route from the opposite side of the road.



5. The cycle symbol 1057 signing should normally be the mall 1215 size when used on paths.

Detailed comments on the proposed route into the Oracle from Southcote Lane

Drwg GA/001: Location Plan

See comments on the route choice and problems above. The following comments are made subjects to the reservations above.

Drwg GA/002: Berkeley Avenue

1. It is unclear how cyclists will access the start of the route from the railway bridge at Bath Road, maybe we are missing a drawing?
2. There do not appear to be any of the necessary DfT 956 shared-use signs at the route start or side-road junctions.
3. Assuming the proposed shared-use path on Berkeley Avenue is two-way, how will westbound cyclists access it at Portway Close?
4. The ending of the shared-use would be done more safely at a road junction if it had to be stopped. The current ending is considered unsafe.
5. The note: ‘*Verge sidings to be carried out to exposed existing footway edgings*’ will we assume uncover the full surface width, but what will this be, 1.8m? A reasonable quality shared-use route should be wider than 2m.
6. Can raised entry treatments be included across Littlecote Drive and Portway Close. Can the radii to these junctions be made a maximum of 3m.
7. The current layouts at Littlecote Drive and Portway Close suggest that cycling can continue on the footways into those roads. National and London guidance on how to treat these junctions does not seem to be followed.

Drwg GA/003: Berkeley Avenue / Temple Place

1. There seems to be no signing opposite St Saviour’s Road for west-bound cyclists.
2. The existing eastbound (on-carriageway) cycle lane here should be retained or improved for more competent cyclists who wish to remain on the carriageway
3. The footpath on Berkeley Avenue is currently unsuitable to be shared use; it is narrow (less than 2.0m) and has obstructions. Has path widening been considered on-carriageway lanes, or a 20mph limit?
4. An entry-treatment with raised table and tighter radii should be incorporated at Temple Place junction with Berkeley Avenue.
5. Add medium size Diag 1057 cycle symbols to the road surface of Temple Place.
6. Is the lighting under the subway/bridge beside the Kennet sufficient? Can CCTV be provided here if not already?

Drwg GA/004: Fobney St / Bridge St



1. The crossing point of Bridge Street may be better improving the existing crossing location as it is more direct. The proposed location takes east-bound cyclists off their desire line, but in particular does not really help those heading west. Current crossing point for NCN 4 on Bridge St is often blocked by cars waiting at the traffic lights. Maybe a raised table at the crossing point would help.
2. The position of the proposed island seems to create a pinch-point for cyclists, the traffic gap should be 4.5m to enable cyclists to safely pass, (no dimension given).
3. The cycling provision on the east side of Bridge Street is poor with the bus stop (and taxi stand!?). Having the route on the west side is probably preferable.
4. A 'raised table entry treatment' at Fobney Street would be preferable for cyclists and pedestrians.

Drwg GA/005(6!): London St / Yield Hall Place

1. Add shared-use legality and signing on the path between the two crossings.
2. Add an 'All Routes' direction sign pointing into Star Lane instead of the 965 'End of Route' before the bridge.
3. Is cycling allowed or intended on the path around to Queens Road? Signing to warn pedestrians from Queens Road of shared-use.

Phase 2B The Oracle to Watlington Street and RBH

This is probably the best route, with little traffic.

Drwg GA/006: Kennetside

1. No comments.

Drwg GA/007 Kennetside / Watlington St

1. Suggest that the bottle banks located at the junction of Sidmouth St and Kennetside be relocated away from a designated cycle route.
2. This section of the Kennet tow-path is often quite busy with pedestrians. We suggest allowing eastbound cycling (with or without a designated contra-flow cycle lane) to Kennetside to reduce pedestrian / cycle conflict on the tow-path.
3. Remove the END and 965 End of Route signing at the proposed crossing point by Grantly Heights. If any signing it should be 'SLOW' and/or 'Give-way'. Most cyclists coming from Watlington St and heading westbound along Kennetside will probably use the road rather than the shared pedestrian facility. The additional crossing shown on Inset #13 is therefore of little benefit except to slow and warn traffic.
4. The proposed crossing point at Inset #14 (not 13) will be useful for cyclists heading towards Kings Road Forbury Road on Watlington Street.
5. The existing crossing of Queens Rd has separate crossing points for cyclists and pedestrians. The control for the crossing is not accessible at the cyclist crossing



point. Suggest that the control is repositioned or duplicated so that it can be used by cyclists as well as pedestrians.

6. During busy times the crossing of Queen's Rd is frequently blocked by vehicles that have advanced beyond the stop line but are then halted by a red light. Suggest that road markings are provided to deter drivers from doing this. The imprint surfacing to warn motorists off the crossing will be useful, maybe a similar surfacing could also be used for the pedestrian crossings which also get blocked.
7. A centreline marking in the cycle-track on the approach to the Queens Road signals should be retained and extended. The other cycle symbols on the track should be staggered and made the small 1215mm size to reinforce the two-way nature of the track. Many cyclists in Reading are clearly used to cycling or driving on the right!

Drwg GA/008: Watlington Rd Junction with London Rd

1. Can an additional give-way marking to Diag 1003 also be added before the raised-table on the approach to London Road. This will help cyclists turning from London Rd into Watlington St.
2. Are the shared-use signs to diag 956 and the corduroy hazard paving correctly located?

Phase 3 London Road to Wokingham Road via Erleigh Road and Whiteknights Road

Is this the best route or is a route via Crescent Road and Wokingham Road preferable? On any of the potential routes there are a number of problems with traffic and the possibility of creating conditions suitable for cycling.

Erleigh Road

1. There is a lot of traffic and parked vehicles with frequent opening of car doors on the Erleigh Road near the hospital.
2. The junction with Alexandra Road would need the priority changing or double roundabouts provided.
3. Speed-tables with cycle (and bus) friendly curved ramp profiles should be added to help reinforce the speed limit 20mph(?).

Whiteknights Road

Alternative route via Crescent Road and Wokingham Road

See previous comments for Erleigh Road OR use London Road then ?? Road



"Working for a cycle-friendly Reading"

www.readingcyclecampaign.org.uk

Crescent Road

Currently 20mph.

Restrict traffic at Wokingham Road

Wokingham Road

*Remove parking on one side of road to allow adequate width (on-carriageway) cycle lanes
OR a segregated track off carriageway.*