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Re: Lewes Road Transport Improvements consultation

Dear Robin,


Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the consultation about Lewes Road Transport Improvements in connection with the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.





There are a large number of issues when in the Lewes Road area including the following problems which appeared on the questionnaire (Q.4):





- Speed of traffic
- Inconsiderately parked vehicles
- Condition of roads
- Traffic congestion
- Too much pollution
- Lack of cycle parking





There are also a large number of issues experienced by pedestrians and others. Issues experienced by cyclists are described below in more detail.






1. Cycling problems when riding northbound from The Level, Brighton to Falmer. (Includes issues in adjoining areas). Listed in the order they occur.

Location	Issue
The Level	There should be speed reduction to 20 mph on the A270 from its beginning, at the junction with St Peter's Place. This would assist all those intending to cycle up the Lewes Road, and cyclists turning right into Elm Grove.
The Level	 <p>Brighton and Hove City Council has permitted parking on the pedestrian/cycle track for motor vehicles connected with events e.g. the Food and Drink Festival held in New Road. This creates unacceptable obstructions. Bricycles has complained several times.</p>

Location	Issue
Elm Grove – East of the Lewes Road	 <p>Large amount of parking in Elm Grove, even behind pedestrian railings. There is a lot of double parking, driving on the pavement and pulling out from pavements / side-turnings making cycling and sight lines difficult.</p>
Southern end of Lewes Road	 <p>Parking in the cycle lane outside Al-Amin Exotic Foods shop and neighbouring shops includes large delivery vehicles. The vehicles obstruct cyclists and force them into the traffic flow.</p>
	Frequent parking in cycle lane outside church hall (St Martin's) often during evening commuting time.
	There are too many one way streets on both the left and right of the Lewes Road to enable cyclists to go where they want to go.
	Cars pull out into cycle lane from multiple side roads
Hartington Road / Lewes Road junction	<p>It is difficult gaining northbound access on the Lewes Road from Hartington Road (eastern side of Lewes Road). Quite a number of cyclists use Hartington Road, but there are problems gaining access to the northbound Lewes Road due to unrelenting traffic going in both directions along it, particularly at commuting times. Best option for crossing the road for the cyclist is to time his/her exit to the red pedestrian light phase at the two nearby pedestrian crossings (one on each side). There is a complicated scenario even when lights are red due to traffic moving potentially in many different directions, waiting in the middle of the road to turn right, partial gridlock with cars and buses, cyclists already on the road in the cycle lanes, and the traffic trying to move at once and quickly before the lights change again.</p>
Hartington Road	 <p>Traffic is often all backed up in Hartington Road (westbound traffic shown left). Cyclists cannot pass the traffic due to roadside parking and the pedestrian build out (pinch point) at the bottom of the road at the junction with the Lewes Road.</p>
South of Gyratory	 <p>Parking lane obstruction is frequent on the northbound approach to the Gyratory due to the Pizza delivery shop on Eastern side of road (delivery vehicles park on western side), and parking connected with other businesses. Police vehicle parked here in this case.</p>
	At the northbound approach to the Gyratory: Buses too close, and too far to the left of the road when waiting at the lights, because they are aiming for the bus stops on the left of the Gyratory.







Location	Issue	
	Buses and other vehicles encroach on Advanced Stop Line at the Gyratory..	
	There is a build-out on the left which is in the cyclist's path as he/she pulls away to go through the Gyratory.	
	The multi-lane Gyratory puts cyclists off because it looks dangerous. Example of a totally car-focused arrangement.	
Sainsbury's	At the Gyratory, traffic cuts cyclists up. Buses pull in, cars go across the path into and out of Sainsbury's car park. Also a nightmare for pedestrians as vehicles cross the pavement.	
Hollingdean Road junction		If joining the Gyratory from eastbound Hollingdean Road and going southbound: The nearside lane allows traffic to go right and straight ahead, the outside lane is just for right turns. Cyclists in the nearside lane turning right are vulnerable to motorists going straight on.
Joining Northbound Lewes Road from Gyratory		Metal cover and drain on the bend as you join the Lewes Road from the Gyratory or Hollingdean Rd.
	Metal railings (occasionally with bike handlebars from parked bikes coming through) close to cyclists going round the bend. Railings could prevent escape from the road if there were a crash.	
Saunders Park	Outside Saunders Park, frequent bus stopping point. Bus movements can be intimidating whilst cycling in the adjacent lane. Concerns re increased overhanging of buses, particularly when more "bendy buses" brought into service.	
		Cycle lanes too narrow for the volumes of cyclists. Difficult overtaking because motorists drive close.
Junction at Pavillion Retail Park	Tendency to get cut up by traffic turning into Pavillion Retail Park. The vehicles that do this come from both north and south bound traffic.	
	Poor road surfaces at times (e.g. opposite Carpet Right)	
		Advanced Stop Line here and elsewhere, scarcely visible


Location	Issue
	 <p>Mithras House / Watts Building Park and Ride bus obstructs cyclists by parking in cycle lane. Data needs to be gathered on the amount of increased traffic on the Lewes Road due to Park and Ride schemes operating from these sites, also increased traffic and parking on match days.</p>
Watts building	Cyclists cut up by vehicles turning left into the Watts Building, University of Brighton
Moulsecoomb Place	Occasionally, coaches wait near Moulsecoomb Place for students to board / assemble, obstructing cycle lane.
Bates Estate	Very poor surface outside flats near Bates Estate bus stop. Old kerb stones seem to be visible.
	Series of drains in the centre of the cycle lane along Selsfield Drive area.
Approaching railway bridge	 <p>Debris in cycle lanes – possibly from Kingspan recycling centre. Also on southbound cycle lane.</p>
	Cycle lanes too narrow. Vehicles often come too close and fast.
Wild Park	No indication (e.g. signage) saying that it's OK to cycle in Wild Park.
	Cyclists cut up by vehicles turning left into Wild Park
Approach to Coldean Lane junction	 <p>Traffic crosses cycle lane on approach to Coldean junction making cyclists feel vulnerable.</p>
Cycle track north (east) of Coldean Lane	 <p>Shared use path parallel with A270 between Coldean Lane and Stonymere Way: narrow, easily blocked by pedestrians, subject to encroachment by vegetation, grass etc.</p>
Stonymere Way / A270	Cyclists have to give way to motor traffic to cross at lights. This entails looking backwards. De-prioritisation of cyclists.

Location	Issue	
traffic lights		
North of junction with Stonymere Way, track next to A270.		Narrow two way unsegregated facility next to fast road (site of Joanna Walters' death). Bus stop also on the track, reducing space further.
Southern boundary of University of Sussex		Cyclists and pedestrians preferring the road route through University of Sussex are only directed to shared use path.
	Lighting needs to be reviewed along the whole route.	
		No signage for Brighton University for cyclists using underpass to Falmer Station. Also quite convoluted winding route.
Road bridge over A27	 	Cyclists using road bridge over A27 to access University of Brighton or Falmer Stadium told to dismount. Overhanging branches on path
	Presence of cyclists not made clear to motorists leading to poor awareness.	
	Cyclists arrive at junction with Village Way where they are not prioritised	
Woodingdean / Falmer	This route needs to be completed, and also there needs to be a 30 mph speed limit on the Woodingdean to Falmer Road so that cycling is facilitated.	


2. The following points apply to the route if going North from Moulsecoomb Way using the pedestrian/cycleway parallel with the A270.



Location	Issue
North of Moulsecoomb Way	No signage of route to stadium / University of Brighton by crossing the Lewes Road and using Ringmer Road or Barcombe Road and Lucraft Road, with / without use of old tunnel below railway (pictured below) to access the pedestrian / cycleway.

Location	Issue
Stonymere Way junction	 <p>No signage of route to stadium / University of Brighton via eastbound road under new road bridge (and use of old tunnel below railway pictured below)</p>
Brighton Aldridge Community Academy	 <p>The number of lockable gates in this area reduce cyclists' confidence that the route will always be open.</p>
Cycle / pedestrian route to stadium / University of Brighton	   <p>Steps on pedestrian / cycleway to stadium near the boundary of Falmer Aldridge Academy. A new gutter has been inserted on one side of steps too close to the end, and it is therefore impossible to use if carrying luggage or panniers are attached. (If used, gutters should always be installed on both sides of steps to allow for different handedness of people). In addition, this minimal gutter is not a solution for tandems, trikes, trailers, bikes with child seats and specially adapted bikes, nor for any wheelchair user or most disabled people. An effective wide ramp needs to be installed.</p>
Old Tunnel under railway.	 <p>Gate under railway. This should not be subject to discretionary locking, and it should be signed as a route, both north and southbound. Where is the pedestrian walkway? Not the tunnel, because it is signed as a "no entry" and is therefore a road. 2-way cycling should be enabled.</p>

Location	Issue	
Falmer stadium		Bike parking at stadium consists of wrong "front wheel bender" type. Parking unprotected from motor vehicles. More parking needed. Racks full on match days.

3. Additional cycling problems when riding southbound from Falmer. (Includes issues in adjoining areas).
Listed in the order they occur. Omits most points already made in the northbound journey.

Location	Issue	
Southbound from University of Brighton / Sussex	Clear signage for cyclists and pedestrians needs to be put in place. Obstructions listed above in northbound journey (steps, gates) should be dealt with. The useful route from Stanmer (going under new road bridge, pictured in section above) and turning right to continue southbound on A270 to Coldean Lane junction should be signed.	
Southbound (2-way) track from University of Sussex via Stonymere Way to Coldean Lane junction	Shared use path parallel with A270 from the University of Sussex via Stonymere Way junction and Coldean Road junction is narrow, easily blocked by pedestrians, subject to encroachment by vegetation, grass etc.	
Coldean Lane junction	Cyclists de prioritised at Coldean Lane junction. They can only join the flow of traffic when the lights are red, or when there is a gap.	
	ASL worn away and invisible at Coldean Lane junction	
		Cyclists vulnerable to traffic also going southbound, particularly as they leave the Coldean Lane lights and turn right
	Cyclists vulnerable to left turning traffic on approach to Moulsecoomb Way	
	Cyclists extremely vulnerable to left turning traffic at the first Lewes Road / Highway junction,	
	Cyclists vulnerable to traffic on northbound Lewes Road turning right into the Highway.	
	Cyclists vulnerable to traffic exiting the Highway at the second Lewes Road / Highway junction,	

Location	Issue
Bevendean	 <p>Cyclists going to/from Bevendean subjected to ineffective "facilities" on the Highway which simply create an obstruction for cyclists (rather than facilitating them) and are not kept swept of leaves etc.</p> <p>This area also suffers from a limiting one way system which is a barrier to cycling, and extensive parking on pavements as a common response.</p>
Natal Road	Buses overhang the bus stop at Natal Road and at subsequent southbound bus stops, sometimes due to car parking.
Mithras House	Motorists using entrance / exit to Mithras House do not have good sightlines of cyclists due to on-road parking.
	Cyclists vulnerable to being doored or having cars pull out into their path due to extensive close on-road parking.
	"Costcutter" mini supermarket: Delivery vans obstruct cycle lane
	Pelham Terrace: Double parking obstructs cycle lane and forces cyclists out into the road
	 <p>Coombe Road / Lewes Road junction: southbound cyclists vulnerable to left turning vehicles, turning from Lewes Road eastbound into Coombe Road. It appears that greater than 50% of vehicles are in the nearside (left-turning) lane.</p> <p>Photo shows aftermath of eastbound car / southbound cyclist collision where cyclist had right of way. (Ambulance in attendance; cyclist hospitalised).</p>
	Coombe Terrace: Double parking obstructs cycle lane and forces cyclists out into the road. Notorious area for inconsiderate parking.
	Cyclists vulnerable to multi-lane traffic if they wish to turn right into the Gyratory to access Hollingdean Road / Upper Lewes Road
Bear Road junction	One way system prevents west bound cyclists from Bear Road being able to go straight across the Lewes Road and straight up. One way systems are never designed for the benefit of cyclists.
	Cyclists get cut up by traffic turning left into Melbourne Street.
	Parked vehicles (connected with glass shop and other shops) obstruct cycle lane
	Cycle lane has poor line. It clings to the left hand side of the road and the cyclists usually ends up boxed in by traffic and buses.
	Difficult joining southbound lane from side roads on western side of the road.
	Frequent obstruction of cycle lane by parked vehicles connected with furniture shop just north of Elm Grove junction
	Challenging right turn for cyclists wanting to enter Union Road due to multilane traffic.
	Traffic goes too fast and intimidate cyclists on southbound road between Elm Grove and Edward Street
Whole route	Invisible hazard is the reduction of air quality due to vehicle emissions caused by too much traffic.
Railway stations	Better access needed, with better solutions for enabling cyclists with luggage / children etc to cross to the other side of the line e.g. at Moulsecoomb and London Road stations.
Bendy buses	Some of the bus stops are very tight for the ordinary bus. There will be more bendy buses soon which will also require very careful parking at bus stops so as not to overhang the space.

The main problems are:

- Too much traffic
- Speed of traffic (should be no more than 20 mph where motor vehicles and cyclists are in proximity).
- Narrowness of cycle lanes.
- Lack of acknowledged priority for cyclists at junctions
- Hazard from motor vehicles pulling out at side roads.
- Hazard from motor vehicles cutting across cyclists to turn off the main road.
- Parked vehicles blocking cycle lanes
- Loss of mobility for cyclists due to the large number of unnecessary one-way streets.
- Poor road surface
- Lack of coherence / continuity / standard of route.
- Poor signage

Transport in the Lewes Road area can be improved (Q5 on the questionnaire) by reduced speed limits, improved road safety, cycling improvements and other measures such as better parking controls. Pedestrian improvements e.g. crossings, widening and resurfacing of pavements, decluttering of the street environment and better bus shelters and seating.

We support:

- 20 mph speed limit for motor vehicles along the length of the Lewes Road between Brighton and Moulsecomb Way, followed by a 30 mph limit until the A27.
- The conversion of all advisory cycle lanes on the Lewes Road (and elsewhere in Brighton and Hove) to mandatory lanes i.e. marked with a solid white line, double yellow lines and accompanied by enforcement against illegal parking. This includes the northbound lanes between the Level and Gyratory, and also the southbound lanes between Coombe Rd and the Level.
- Successful enforcement against parking on the Lewes Road cycle lanes.
(The degree of success should be reviewed after 6 months and further action taken. Any hint of non-viability should be firmly addressed. Cyclists are currently subject to an intolerable discontinuous route.)
- Construction of the suggested bus and cycle lane between the Gyratory and the old Sussex University entrance, i.e. an adequate-width nearside cycle lane with a bus lane next to it, and a further lane for cars and other motor vehicles.
- 2-way cycling in all streets.
- Adequate widths instated for all cycle facilities in Brighton and Hove in line with current guidance, or exceeding current guidance. Adopting evidence-based best practice.
- Review of streets in housing estates / residential areas neighbouring the Lewes Road to remove poor infrastructure and to instate 2-way cycling where one-ways have been created. One way roads prioritise motor traffic and increase traffic speeds.
- Removal of parking on pavements and green verges.
- Instatement of solid white "Stop" lines across all roads entering the Lewes Road.
- Improved signage for cyclist and pedestrian routes.
- De-dualling of all roads around the Old Steine / The Level.
- Information to cyclists about the use of the southbound route from the Stonymere Way junction under the new flyover to go southbound to the Coldean Lane junction or to access the pedestrian / cycleway.
- Negotiation with the University of Sussex to ensure that cyclists are welcomed to access Sussex University via Stonymere Way.
- Introduction of "cyclist and pedestrian first" lights at the Vogue Gyratory, whilst holding back motor vehicle traffic.
- Review the use of pavement and the current entrance / exit of motor vehicles at Sainsbury's Gyratory supermarket with a view to ensuring greater priority for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Advanced stop lines at all junctions
- Facilitation of access by providing a well designed ramp at the steps on the pedestrian/cycle route to Falmer (parallel to the A270).
- Ensure that gate below railway leading to pedestrian / cycle route to Falmer is not locked, and that all other gates are not locked.
- Road traffic reduction.
- Improved travel planning by the universities and other businesses in order to significantly reduce car use.
- Better access to railway stations e.g. enabling cyclists to cross to the other side of the line.
- Improved access to the South Downs National Park and other country areas by bike.
- Better liaison with neighbouring authorities such as East and West Sussex County Council, and the Highways Agency, so that journeys can more easily cross administrative boundaries, and that facilities are of a consistent standard.

- Better liaison with the University of Sussex and the University of Brighton and other organisations to ensure that cycling (both on and off the National Cycle Route network) is encouraged and not impeded by poor infrastructure or barriers.
- Good quality road traffic collision and casualty data to be more easily available and posted on the internet.
- "Road safety" initiatives directed at the really dangerous activities on the roads, (i.e. likely to injure other road users) not just penalising cyclists for minor misdemeanours. Also, Police / PCSOs need to be sure of facts before erroneously issuing tickets for "illegal" cycling as happened at Wild Park in April 2010.

We want to see urgent casualty reduction on the Lewes Road because council figures show that the proportion of cyclists involved in collisions (24%) is higher than the citywide figure of 15%. Hence our request for more accessible road casualty data so that we can be informed.

We understand that there will be a comprehensive travel planning project undertaken with the Universities of Sussex and Brighton as part of the Local Sustainable Transport Fund award. There is room for huge improvement when 26% of students and 38% of staff are travelling to the University of Brighton Falmer campus as single occupant drivers.

Urgent attention is needed to realistically review all cycle lanes south of the Gyratory and also the lanes between Natal Road and the Gyratory, particularly the southbound one. They are problematic areas. The lanes are regularly obstructed by trade vehicles belonging to local shops, delivery vehicles, buses, post vans, parents collecting children, customers' parked cars etc. Vehicles from side roads also continuously enter cycle lanes whilst waiting for an opportunity to pull out across the road. Exiting vehicles cut across cyclists. Some junctions (e.g. the Coombe Road / Lewes Road junction) put cyclists at risk due to the various filters for left and right turn which can leave cyclists in very vulnerable positions. All these problems are worse in winter due to poor light and weather conditions.

There needs to be confirmation of the council's Cycling Strategy published at:

http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/downloads/bhcc/transport/B_Hcycling_strategy.pdf

The current document on the council website dates from June 2003. This document includes some key policies such as the hierarchy of measures.

Comments on the questionnaire used for consultation:

- Due to the design of the questionnaire, it is not possible to analyse data by most used transport mode.
- The meaning of the phrases "cycling improvements" and "pedestrian improvements" is not defined, and is likely to be subjective.
- We are unsure how the list of points for Q4 were chosen, for example there is an option for "Not enough buses" but not for "Too much traffic".
- Although lack of safe crossing points is listed as a possible issue in the consultation, Bricycles received a letter dated 5/12/11 from BHCC about the intention to remove a pedestrian crossing at Aberdeen Road / Lewes Road.

Measurement of success:

We would consider appropriate measures of success of improvements to the Lewes Road for cyclists to include:

- Improvement in air quality, (particularly a reduction in Nitrogen Dioxide, NOX emissions and particulates)
- Reduction in number of motor vehicles
- Reduction in motor vehicle crashes
- Reduction in rate of crashes involving cyclists (per kilometer cycled)
- Reduction in killed and seriously injured rates to cyclists (per kilometer cycled)
- Reduction in seriousness of injuries to cyclists (per kilometer cycled)
- Increased number of cycling trips
- Reduction in journey time for cyclists

Equivalent measurements would be necessary for pedestrian users of the road.

We would like to be kept informed and to be able to participate in processes leading to improvements being decided and put in place. Many thanks,

Yours sincerely,



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