Delegated Report

Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate Emergency

Date: 17th March 2022

Agenda item: N/A

Wards: Wimbledon Park

Subject: Melrose Avenue-Review & modification of existing contra-flow cycle lane

Lead officer: Chris Lee, Director of Environment & Regeneration

Lead member: Councillor Martin Whelton, Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate Emergency

Forward Plan reference number: N/A

Contact Officer: Paul Miles

Email: paul.miles@merton.gov.uk

Recommendations:

That the Cabinet Member considers the issues detailed in this report and

A) Notes the result of the statutory notification that was carried out between 10th of February and 4th March 2022 on the proposal to remove the existing contra-flow cycle lane on Melrose Avenue and to introduce a contra-flow movement on the carriageway; additional parking bays and strategically place double yellow lines (at junctions and passing gaps) as shown on plan attached as appendix 1.

B) Considers the representations received in response to the statutory consultation attached in Appendix 2.

C) Agrees to proceed with making of the Traffic Management Orders (TMOs) and the implementation of the proposed measures as shown in plan attached in Appendix 1.

D) Agrees to exercise his discretion not to hold a public inquiry on the statutory consultation process.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report presents the results of the statutory consultation carried out on the Councils' proposals to remove the existing contra-flow cycle path on Melrose Avenue and the introduction of the proposed improvements to include on-carriageway contra flow cycle lane; additional parking bays and double yellow lines as shown on plan in appendix 1.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 This proposal was originally identified as part of a Merton Cycle Contraflow Review undertaken by Transport Initiatives; it was initially proposed to remove the existing sub-standard cycle lane & allow two-way cycling along the carriageway to offer improved safety for all road users. Other changes included changes to the existing buildouts and waiting restrictions.

2.2 The report highlighted removing the cycle lane as a high priority to improve permeability and safety and considered allowing the two-way cycling along the carriageway to be low risk as the width as the carriageway is the same width as north of Stroud Road which is two-way working for all vehicles.

2.3 A review by Council officers agreed with the Transport Initiatives report and the following issues.

- The current cycle lane is too narrow.
- Parked cars encroach into the cycle lane.
- Conflict between cyclists and parked cars when drivers open their vehicles' doors.
- Reported damage to wing mirrors of parked cars caused both by cyclists in contraflow lane and by larger vehicles travelling along the carriageway.
- Potential lack of pedestrian awareness when crossing the cycle lane.
- Observations indicate that some cyclists are using the carriageway instead of the cycle lane.

2.4 Melrose Avenue is a subject to a 20mph speed limit, a controlled parking zone and benefits from street lighting. Observed vehicle speeds on Melrose Avenue indicate 85th percentile vehicle speeds of 16mph with average speeds of 12mph along the section between Ryfold and Arthur Road and 13mph along the section between Stroud and Ryfold Road.

2.5 With the substandard kerbside cycle lane removed, the carriageway width will be wide enough to accommodate the proposed improvements.

2.6 A review of the Personal Injury Collisions (PIC) data between 1st March 2015 to 28th February 2021 indicates that during this period there has been no PICs on Melrose Avenue.

3. PROPOSED MEASURES

3.1 To improve safety and in particular to safeguard cyclists riding against the flow of traffic, it is proposed to introduce the following measures:

- Remove existing cycle lane and place the parking bays next to the kerb line.
- Introduce cycle logos with directional arrows and signage erected onto existing lamp columns to raise driver awareness that cyclists are traveling against the flow of traffic.
- Widen the section of protected lane at southern end of Melrose Avenue.
- Provide cyclist passing gaps approximately half-way between Arthur Road and Ryfold Road offering cyclists the option of refuge if required.
- Double yellow lines at junctions to improve access and sightlines.
- Modification of the existing buildouts.
- Modification of the existing segregated cycle lane near Arthur Rd junction.

Details of the proposals can be seen on plan attached as appendix 1.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 A statutory consultation to introduce the proposed improvements was carried out between 10th February and 4th March 2022. The consultation included the erection of street notices on lamp columns in the vicinity of the proposals and the publication of the Council's intentions in the local papers and the London Gazette. Consultation documents were available at the Link, Merton Civic Centre and on the Council's website. A newsletter with a plan, attached as Appendix 1, was also circulated to all the properties within the catchment area.

4.2 The consultation resulted in 61 representations which are attached in appendix 2. Of those who responded 20 of the representations were negative towards the proposals with 41 being in supportive.

4.2.1 The main concern from those opposing the scheme is that cyclists will be sharing the road with vehicular traffic; however, with the removal of the existing cycle lane, the full

carriageway width of the contra-flow section will be of sufficient width and equal to the carriageway width of the existing two-way traffic north of Stroud Road. Officers' view is that the proposals are safe for contraflow cycling which has been subject to the road safety audit and an independent cycle lane review undertaken by Transport Initiatives.

4.3 All Emergency Services have been consulted and no objections have been raised.

4.4 All the ward Councilors were fully engaged during the consultation process.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 The existing arrangements adversely impact all road users and improvements are considered necessary. It is recommended that the Cabinet Member considers the representations set out in appendix 2 and approves officer's recommendations to proceed with the making of the relevant Traffic Management Orders and the implementations of the proposed measures.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

6.1 Do Nothing. This will do nothing to improve the current conditions and will not address the issues set out in section 2.3 of this report.

7.0 FINANCIAL RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The cost of implementing this scheme is estimated at £20,000. This includes the cost of the statutory consultation and making of the relevant Traffic Management Orders.

8.0 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Traffic Management Orders would be made under Section 6 and Section 45 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended). The Council is required by the Local Authorities Traffic Order (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 to give notice of its intention to make a Traffic Order (by publishing a draft traffic order). These regulations also require the Council to consider any representations received as a result of publishing the draft order

8.2 The Council has discretion as to whether or not to hold a public inquiry before deciding whether or not to make a Traffic Management Order or to modify the published draft Order. A public inquiry should be held where it would provide further information, which would assist the Cabinet Member in reaching a decision.

8.3 The Council's powers to make Traffic Management Orders arise mainly under sections 6, 45, 46, 122 and 124 and schedules 1 and 9 of the RTRA 1984.

9.0 HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHENSION IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The implementation of any scheme endeavours to meet the needs of all road users particularly the more vulnerable such as those with disabilities and children. In this case other vulnerable road users such as cyclists will also benefit from the safety improvements.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATION

10.1 N/A

11.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPICATIONS

11.1 When determining the type of parking places are to be designated on the highway, section 45(3) requires the Council to consider both the interests of traffic and those of the owners and occupiers of adjoining properties. In particular, the Council must have regard to: (a) the need for maintaining the free movement of traffic, (b) the need for maintaining reasonable access to premises, and (c) the extent to which off-street parking is available in the neighbourhood or if the provision of such parking is likely to be encouraged by designating paying parking places on the highway

11.2 By virtue of section 122, the Council must exercise its powers under the RTRA 1984 so as to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic including pedestrians, and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. These powers must be exercised so far as practicable having regard to the following matters: -

(a) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises.
(b) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected including the regulation and restriction of heavy commercial traffic so as to preserve or improve amenity.
(c) the national air quality strategy.
(d) facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and securing the safety and convenience of their passengers.
(e) any other matters appearing to the Council to be relevant.

APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report.

Appendix 1- Newsletter / Plan

Appendix 2- Representations

MELROSE AVENUE- CONTRA-FLOW CYCLE LANE IMPROVEMENTS

Statutory consultation – 10 February 2022

Dear Resident,

This is to update you on a change to the previous consultation letter as the representation deadline date has now been extended to 4th March.

You may be aware that in 2019 Merton Council carried out a consultation on a proposal to remove the kerbside contra-flow cycle lane between Arthur Road and Stroud Road but maintain the contra-flow cycle movement along the carriageway. Regrettably due to the pandemic and the withdrawal of funding the scheme was put on hold.

It is widely considered that the existing cycle lane is not fit for purpose and brings with it a variety of issues such as:-

- It is very narrow and is often obstructed by vehicles and debris.
- Conflict between cyclists and parked cars when drivers open their vehicles doors.
- Reported damage to parked cars caused both by cyclists in the contraflow lane and by wider vehicles travelling along the carriageway. Service vehicles are struggling to negotiate the relatively narrow carriageway which has not been helped by more modern vehicles being wider than since the original scheme was implemented.
- Potential lack of pedestrian awareness when crossing the cycle lane.

To address the above issues and to safe guard all road users, the Council will be removing the existing cycle lane with the exception of the kerb protected section of the cycle lane from Arthur Road for a distance of 27 metres and will be allowing cyclists to ride against the flow of traffic on the carriageway. To facilitate and safeguard cyclists travelling against the current one-way system, it is proposed to implement the measures as shown on the plan overleaf. This information including the ability to view a larger plan is available on Merton Council's website https://www.merton.gov.uk/cycle

The proposed additional parking bays, double yellow lines (at junctions and passing gap) and the changes to the contra-flow cycle lane require a statutory consultation.

WIMBLEDON PARK COUNCILLORS (*contact details of Ward Councillors are provided for information purposes only*)
Cllr Edward Gretton Edward.Gretton@merton.gov.uk
Cllr Janice Howard Janice.Howard@merton.gov.uk
Cllr Oonagh Moulton Oonagh.Moulton@merton.gov.uk

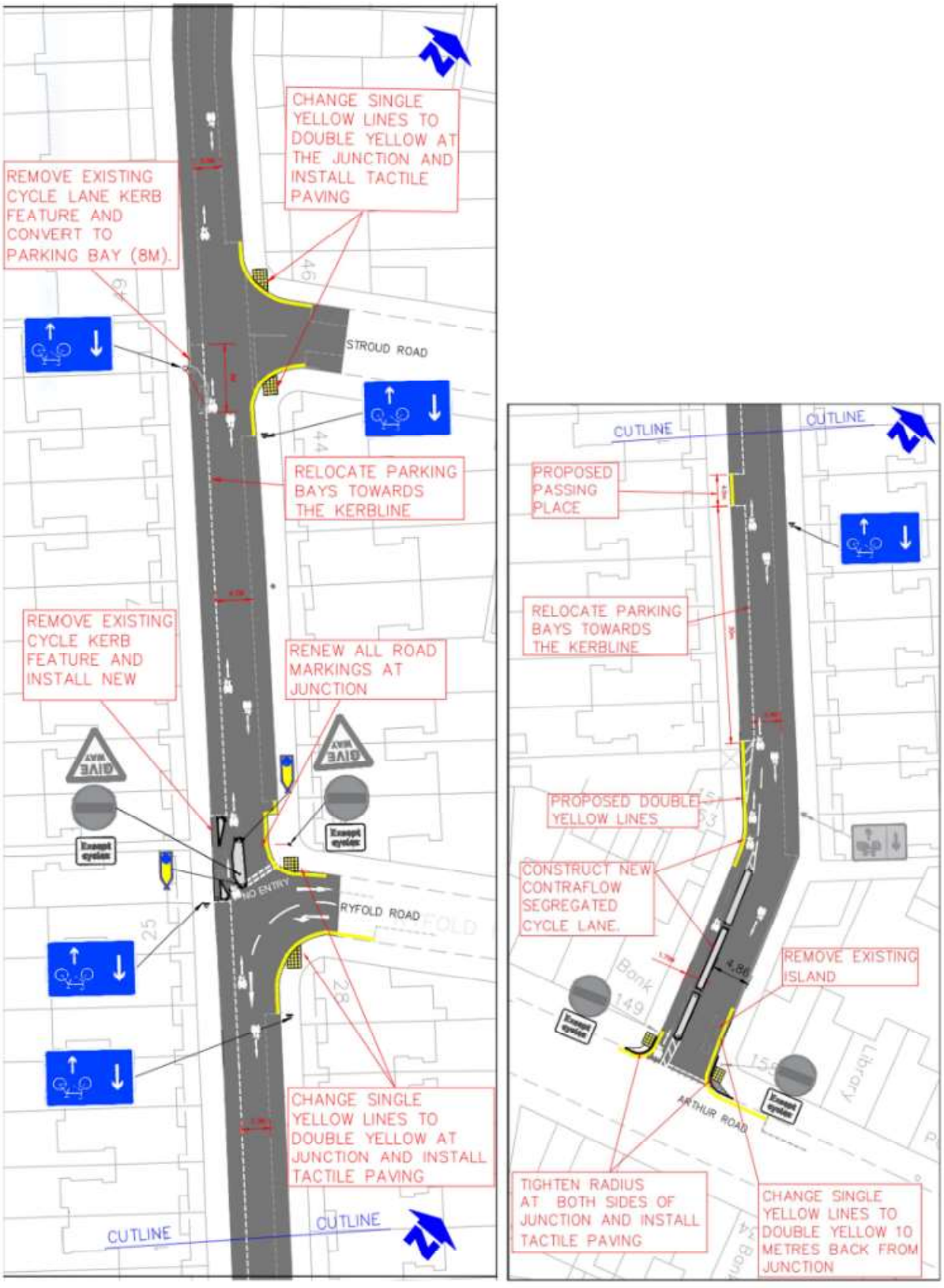
Cllr Martin Whelton Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate Emergency
martin.whelton@merton.gov.uk

What happens next

A Notice of the Council's proposals to implement the above aspects of the project will be published in a local newspaper Wimbledon and Wandsworth Times and the London Gazette. Notices will also be posted on lamp columns in the area.

Representations for and against the proposals described in this Notice must be put in writing by emailing paul.miles@merton.gov.uk or write to Environment & Regeneration Department, Future Merton, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5DX no later than **4th March 2022.** Please quote reference **ES/SS/2022/Melrose-Contraflow.**
It is essential that your full name and postal address are provided within your representation, otherwise your representation may not be considered.

All representations along with Officers' comments and recommendations will be presented in a report to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate Emergency. Please note that responses to any representations received will not be made until the Cabinet Member makes a final decision. The Council is required to give weight to the nature and content of your representation and not necessarily the quantity. Your reasons are, therefore, important to us.


CHANGE SINGLE YELLOW LINES TO DOUBLE YELLOW AT THE JUNCTION AND INSTALL TACTILE PAVING
REMOVE EXISTING CYCLE LANE KERB FEATURE AND CONVERT TO PARKING BAY (8M).
STROUD ROAD
RELOCATE PARKING BAYS TOWARDS THE KERBLINE
REMOVE EXISTING CYCLE KERB FEATURE AND INSTALL NEW
RENEW ALL ROAD MARKINGS AT JUNCTION
GIVE WAY
Keep left
NO ENTRY
RYFOLD ROAD
CHANGE SINGLE YELLOW LINES TO DOUBLE YELLOW AT JUNCTION AND INSTALL TACTILE PAVING
CUTLINE
CUTLINE
PROPOSED PASSING PLACE
RELOCATE PARKING BAYS TOWARDS THE KERBLINE
PROPOSED DOUBLE YELLOW LINES
CONSTRUCT NEW CONTRAFLOW SEGREGATED CYCLE LANE.
REMOVE EXISTING ISLAND
ARTHUR ROAD
TIGHTEN RADIUS AT BOTH SIDES OF JUNCTION AND INSTALL TACTILE PAVING
CHANGE SINGLE YELLOW LINES TO DOUBLE YELLOW 10 METRES BACK FROM JUNCTION

Melrose Avenue residents in support of scheme

1: I live at Melrose Avenue, with my partner , I understand we can both make a representation so I wanted to add further support to the plan to remove the existing cycle lane between the pavement and parked cars. I write in the context of not only being a resident on the street but also a regular cyclist, and previously a car owner. I fully support all the items raised in … email dated 19/02/2022 which in summary were:

- Crossing the cycle path can be hazardous as cyclists might not always spot you
- The narrowness, odd camber, accumulation of leaves in autumn, car doors being opened into it or indeed, cars entirely parked within it, all make the current cycle lane unfit for purpose. Please see two photos taken at the same time yesterday, outside number 3, when two separate large vans were entirely blocking it.
- The very narrow existing road layout makes parking difficult and has previously resulted in our refuge not being collected.

2: Ref: ES/SS/2022/Melrose-Contraflow
Whilst I fully support the scheme because it will provide greater usable width for motor vehicles with consequential reduction in the risk of damage to vehicles parked in that section of Melrose Avenue; it reduces the risk to cyclists and pedestrians from cycles using the cycle lane and acknowledges that many cyclists choose not to use the designated lane; and provides additional parking space, there are two problems which the plan does not address.
On occasion we get totally inappropriate large lorries trying to pass through the one way system. Widening the one-way stretch would make it easier (or possible in some instance) for large lorries and could encourage Elsenham St. / Melrose Avenue to be used as a through route. Are there weight restrictions already in place? If not, should there be? Should they be signed?

3: My husband ……(in copy) and I are in support of ES/SS/2022/Melrose-Contraflow plans.

4: Re: ES/SS/2022/Melrose-Contraflow

I wanted to write expressing my support for the plans for altering the cycle lane layout in Melrose Avenue. I have lived alongside the cycle lane for over 25 years and I feel strongly that the current layout is –

1. Unfit for purpose
2. Dangerous to both cyclists and pedestrians
3. The cause of frequent problems as large utility vehicles find they can't get through (or indeed do get through but only by damaging perfectly legally parked cars.)

The current layout is highly dangerous. I have witnessed many near misses when drivers or passengers open car doors directly into the path of oncoming cyclists. This is not through carelessness, often sight lines can be very bad, and if a cyclist is going at any speed as some do, they can be out of sight as a driver starts to open their door. A friend of mine was killed in an accident of this nature years ago. It was not here, but I have lived here for 25 years expecting something equally dreadful to happen outside my door.

I witness cyclists every day who already choose to ride down the centre of the road against the traffic rather than use the cycle lane for precisely these reasons.

Please accept this email as strong support for the Council's proposals.

5: I would like to note my support of the proposed plan (ES/SS/2022/Melrose-Contraflow). I am the owner of a wider car, a resident of Melrose Avenue, and an occasional cyclist. I watch delivery trucks struggle daily to squeeze between two parked cars on Melrose Avenue. Fortunately, I haven't had any damage to my vehicle but I have had two visitors who have had their wing mirrors knocked off on Melrose Avenue. I also see cyclists struggling to navigate the narrow cycle lane and often electing the road rather than the cycle lane anyway. The proposal seems very sensible and has my support.

Additionally, my vehicle is an electric vehicle, and I am the founder of char.gy. Char.gy fits EV charge points to lampposts, some in Merton. I know my team has been in contact with the council to offer fully funded charge points on lampposts all over Merton but specifically in Melrose Avenue, Stroud Road and Ryfold Road on suitable lampposts. If the addition of these charge points is of interest, please get in touch.

6: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street.

The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are problems that I experience personally on a regular basis.

I fully support the proposals and look forward to seeing the works starting in the near future.

7: I have received the letter concerning the proposed improvements of the cycle lane in my street, Melrose Avenue, and give my full support for this proposal.

Melrose Avenue used to be a 'rat run' of cars speeding along Melrose Avenue trying to avoid the traffic in Durnsford Road, and the one-way system in Melrose Avenue virtually stopped this.

However, the cycle lane just added problems. As a pedestrian, it is always a moment of tension when crossing the cycle lane. Cyclists rarely consider that pedestrians might cross over and never ring their bells to warn people, particularly as the parked cars block cyclists and pedestrians from seeing each other until the last seconds of possible contact. I have been shouted at cyclists when I 'suddenly' appear. It is all very unpleasant.

Also, cars seem to be getting bigger and so often park into the lane, or vans just don't bother to notice it, and people leave open car doors into the lane. (And on the other side of the road, cars are parked partly on the pavement and parking attendants refuse to give tickets to give them notices).

I fully support these improvements

8: As a resident of .., Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street

The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are all problems that I experience personally on a regular basis.

I fully support the proposals and look forward to seeing the works starting in the early near future.

9: I am a very long time resident of Melrose Avenue, and the founder of TRIMA (Traffic Reduction In Melrose Avenue), a pressure group I set up decades ago to fight Melrose being used as a rat run to and from Wandsworth and beyond. I worked closely with Theresa May and the Merton Council traffic engineer at the time, and was appalled at the introduction of the cycle lane, which has caused endless problems ever since. I have personally suffered from severe damage to my car/s by lorries hitting them on more than 1 occasion and witnessed pedestrians crossing the cycle lane being injured by speeding cyclists when hidden by parked cars.

So I fully support the proposals, and look forward to the work being completed in the near future.

10: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was pleased to receive notification of the proposed Improvement to the cycle lane on our street.

The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are all problems I experience personally on a regular basis.

I fully support the proposals and look forward to seeing the works start in the near future.

11: As residents of Melrose Avenue we were delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle Lane on our street.

The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of existing arrangements. These are all problems we experience personally on a regular basis.

We fully support the proposals and are delighted to hear this is changing and we look forward to seeing the works starting in the near future.

12: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street.
The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are all problems that I experience personally on a regular basis.
I fully support the proposals, and look forward to seeing the works starting in the near future.

13: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was pleased to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street.

The consultation document identifies a number of issues arising as a consequence of existing arrangements. These are problems that I
experience personally on a regular basis.
I fully support the proposals,and look forward to the works starting in the near future.

14: I am supporting this improvement. It will be better with changes.

15: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street. The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are all problems that I experience personally on a regular basis. For example, our car has been damaged by motor vehicles and cycles on at least 4 occasions. Furthermore, we are considering purchasing an electric vehicle, but the cycle lane represents a serious issue to recharging outside the house.
I fully support the proposals and look forward to seeing the works starting in the near future.

16: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cylce lane on our street.

The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are all problems that I experience personally on a regular basis.

I fully suport the proposals, and look foorward to seeing the Works starting in the near future.

17: I am writing in favour of the proposals to remove the contra-flow cycle lane in Melrose Avenue. The cycle lane has caused many problems over the years for all the reasons you outline in your letter describing the proposals. We have sustained damage to our parked cars on at least four or five occasions mainly because both the carriageway and the cycle lane are so narrow. Furthermore, with more people buying electric cars, a kerbside cycle lane is no longer practicable as people seek to charge their cars on the street.
I was very pleased to see these proposals and I hope that they can be put into effect as soon as possible.

18: Reference: ES/SS/2022/Melrose-Contraflow

I live on the affected section of Melrose Avenue & I fully support these proposals.
I agree with all the issues you raise, in particular the size of vehicles trying to pass between the parked vehicles.
I look forward to the day when this current horrific arrangement is a thing of the past.

19: Reference ES/SS/2022/Melrose-Contraflow
As a resident living in this section of Melrose Avenue I am overjoyed at these proposals.
I agree with all the points listed in the letter.
I fully support the proposals & I do hope the work is soon completed.

20: I live on the stretch of road bordering the cycle contraflow and have seen first hand the numerous serious issues outlined in the consultation document. I wholeheartedly support the proposals and look forward to its implementation.

21: We support the proposed changes to the cycle lane.
Firstly, as pedestrians, crossing the cycle path can be hazardous as cyclists might not always spot you (or have their views blocked by cars straddling the cycle lane). Additionally, crossing the main section of road can also have its own hazards as vehicles often speed down the narrower road, and might not see pedestrians who are blocked behind parked cars and the cycle lane.
As regular cyclists, we find the existing cycle lane **very** unsafe. It is at an odd camber which is dangerous when wet or in the autumn with leaves. Cars are often in it, forcing you into small gaps (in an already narrow cycle lane), and pedestrians (particularly those not used to the area) often step out into it unaware of its presence.
As car users, parking is tougher in the narrower lanes, which would be easier with a little more width in the road. Spotting cyclists travelling down Melrose Avenue whilst parking is an extra concern.
We have had refuse collections not occur as the waste collection vehicles are not able to travel down the narrower road due to parked cars or building works.
We believe that the proposed changes support the new highway code introduced last month, putting the safety of the most vulnerable users first.

22: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I can confirm that the new proposals have my full support – the redesign will undoubtedly be a significant improvement to the current arrangements.

I have experienced numerous problems with the road as it is currently designed, and recognise all the points that you raise in the introduction to the proposal document. In particular, judging by my own personal experience and the conversations I have had with so many of my neighbours, it is clear that the constant

damage to parked cars is a huge problem. Over the years, the regular claims on our insurance policies have led to the loss of no claims bonus and much higher premiums. Melrose Avenue must be one of the most expensive streets in the country to insure a car! One other key point to highlight is the fact that so many cyclists no longer even use the cycle lane, but choose to cycle down the middle section. This is another clear sign that it is time for change.

I hope you receive numerous emails from residents on the street to reflect the support for these proposals, backing up the more than fifty signatures already submitted to you.

I look forward to the works commencing which will be such an improvement for the street, its residents and the local community.

23: As a resident of Melrose Ave I was pleased to see the proposed removal of the cycle lane which will be a great improvement to safety on our street.

24: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street.
The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are all problems that I experience personally on a regular basis.
I fully support the proposals and look forward to seeing the work's starting in the near future.

25: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I am delighted to be notified of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on my road.I fully support the proposals as the current setup creates several issues, but the narrow nature of the current setup has personally caused my vehicle to be damaged 3 times in the last 18months by bin lorries or large vehicles squeezing by. I have also seen issues with bicycles using the cycle route set out for them as it is too narrow and have seen several incidents of cycle verses vehicle cart door opening.

26: As a resident of Melrose Avenue I was very pleased to receive notification of the proposed removal of the cycle lane that passes our front door. The consultation document identifies problems with the current arrangement, all of which we have encountered frequently. I support the proposals full and hope they will be implemented with as little delay as possible

27: Thank you for the latest information of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street. I am a resident of Melrose Avenue and for the last 9 years I have experienced issues with the existing arrangements. I cannot wait for the proposals and changes to be made to the existing cycling lane.

The consultation identifies numerous issues as a direct consequence of the existing arrangements and I would like to formally register my support for the proposals.

Thank you for your help and let's hope the changes can be carried out as soon as possible.

28: As a resident of Melrose Avenue , I was delighted to recieve the details of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our road. The consultation document raises a number of issues that arise with the existing arrangements. These are all the problems that I experience on a regular basis. I fully support the proposals, and look forward to the works being carried out.

29: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane in our street.
The consultant document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are all problems that I experience personally on a regular basis.
I fully support the proposals and look forward to seeing the works starting in the near future.

30: I agree with the Council's analysis of the issues raised by the existing cycle lane in Melrose Avenue. As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street.

The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise currently

and these are all problems that we have witnessed or experienced personally. I did write to the Highways Dept. about major damage to the wheel of our vehicle when it was parked (properly) in Melrose Avenue. The cost of replacement was very significant and involved a trip to the Heathrow area for the new wheel to be fitted.

I fully support the proposals, and look forward to seeing the works starting in the near future.
I note that the previously proposed parking bays outside 2B Melrose Avenue have disappeared from this current proposal. The development of two dwellings - 2A and 2B - and the permission now granted to build 2C is making pressure on the parking bay outside our house - number 2 - intense, frustrating and unavoidable.
If there could be a future consultation on creating such parking bays I would certainly be in favour.

As stated above I fully support the proposals for ES / SS / 2022 / Melrose-Contraflow.

31: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane in our street.
The consultant document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are all problems that I experience personally on a regular basis.
I fully support the proposals and look forward to seeing the works starting in the near future.

32: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street. The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are all problems that I experience personally on a regular basis. I fully support the proposals and look forward to seeing the works starting in the near future.

33: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street.
The consultation document identifies several issues that arise because of the existing arrangements. These problems I experience on a regular basis.
I fully support the proposals and look forward to the works starting soon.

34: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street. The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are all problems that I experience personally on a regular basis. I fully support the proposals and look forward to seeing the works starting in the near future.

35: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street.
The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are all problems that I experience personally on a regular basis.
I fully support the proposals and look forward to seeing the work's starting in the near future.

36: As a resident living adjacent to the kerbside cycle path, I'm writing to you to note my support for the proposal (reference ES/SS2022/Melrose-Contraflow) to have the path removed and relocated.

The cycle path produces numerous problems, such as narrowing the road and making driving/parking fraught, encounters with aggressive cyclists oblivious to the fact pedestrians aren't expecting the contraflow, and constant damage to parked vehicles.

37: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I've received notification from Merton Council regarding the proposal to remove and relocate the kerbside cycle path (reference ES/SS2022/Melrose-Contraflow). I would like to express my support for this proposal as a reasonable response by Merton Council formulated after concerns regarding the existing contra-flow have been repeatedly raised by residents of the road to the council.
The current road/cycle lane causes considerable problems for residents/cyclists/motorists as detailed in the proposal documents. As noted, the **current contra-flow is unsafe for cyclists and a stressful experience for drivers using it due to the excessively narrow layout** of both the road and lane, both producing a canyoning effect with little scope for manoeuvre available for either group.
The proposal brings the road width into line with the contiguous roads and redresses the problems caused by the current artificially narrowed lane. As a result of the proposed changes, **cyclists accessing the road will enjoy a safer, standard width lane** as part of a negotiated space with motorists. Given this negotiation it's also anticipated that there will be a natural traffic calming effect as both sets of users will have to accommodate each other.
It is notable that the proposed design offers a significant safety advantage for cyclists simply by formalising and implementing what a considerable minority of those users currently choose to do illegally and much more dangerously; cycle against the one-way direction of motor traffic to avoid what they regard as an unusable dedicated lane. It has also been noted by residents that **cycle proficiency training sessions in the area are taken to the location in order to demonstrate to students why the infrastructure is inherently unsafe** due to the poor implementation, and should be avoided. Their advice to students is to use the main lane and cycle against the flow of traffic – exactly what the proposed scheme enables.
The current layout also causes considerable difficulties for residents; **emergency vehicles have experienced restricted access, increased conflict between pedestrian/motorist/cyclists has been noted and it is impossible for outsized vehicles to park legally and unload safely without either blocking the road, pavement, or the existing cycle lane**. The required default method of parallel parking is made a fraught process given the road width capacity and proximity of vehicles against the opposite kerb.
In addition to the above existing situation and not mentioned in the proposal, **the current layout runs counter to Merton Council's unitary authority policy of encouraging electric vehicle (EV) use**. The number of available charge points currently provided by Merton to facilitate EV charging is limited and constrained by the availability of physical infrastructure, as charging points are either dedicated installations or lamp-post adaptations. As EV take-up increases, by necessity this infrastructure will have to be supported by the ability of residents to charge a vehicle domestically. The existing cycle contraflow is in direct conflict with this stated aim, as there is no way to safely charge an EV either via domestic supply or on street facility without effectively

obstructing the lane as it is currently implemented; as EV ownership increases and domestic charging becomes a default process, the lane will, in effect, become unusable.
The proposal presented is a proportionate, reasonable solution that seeks to alleviate some of the problems caused by the existing poorly designed and implemented infrastructure.
Given the continuous avoidable problems the status quo presents, I would anticipate Merton Council would seek implementation of the changes at the earliest opportunity as to my knowledge these have the support of the majority of residents.

38: ES/SS/2002/Melrose-contraflow cycle lane removal

I fully support the suggested proposals for the removal of the cycle lane in Melrose Avenue.. I have lived in Melrose Avenue for almost 30 years and have found the cycle lane dangerous and it makes the road difficult to navigate for delivery trucks and emergency vehicles. I have raised 3 children in the road, and have encountered serval dangerous situations where cyclists take no heed of pedestrians, even if they are holding a small childs hand, or pushing a pushchair. Residents are constantly having their vehicles damaged by other vehicles trying to negotiate the narrow road.
I look forward to the cycle lane being removed at the earliest opportunity.

39: ESS/SS/2022/Melrose-Contraflow

I fully support the proposals, and look forward to seeing the works starting in the near future.

40 :The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. Problems include:

I have 2 young children who struggle with the concept of crossing the road in its current state! I've also got a much-battered car as the road is currently too narrow. Also, as a cyclist it is not safe -
Too narrow and car doors often opening.

I fully support the proposals and look forward to seeing the works start soon.

41: As a resident of Melrose Avenue, I was delighted to receive notification of the proposed improvement to the cycle lane on our street.
The consultation document identifies a number of issues that arise as a consequence of the existing arrangements. These are all problems that I experience personally on a regular basis.
I fully support the proposals, and look forward to seeing the works starting in the near future.

Melrose Avenue residents objecting to scheme

42: ES/SS/2022/ Melrose-Contraflow

I strongly object to the removal of the Melrose Avenue cycle lane. I use the cycle lane regularly and am grateful for this controlled facility.

Without the cycle lane there will be little protection for cyclists going against the traffic flow.

The cycle lane has also been a useful way of controlling traffic speed. I fear that with a wider lane, cars will increase their speed and the road will become far more dangerous.

Currently many vehicles either ignore or do not see the give-way signs at the junction of Ryfold and Melrose so trying to make them aware of potential oncoming cyclists will be risky.

I urge the council to reconsider this flawed proposal.

43: I strongly object to the Removal of the Melrose Avenue cycle lane. I have lived at .. Melrose Avenue for 28 years and have seen the benefits (and relatively minor inconveniences) this lane brings to cyclists and the community.

The cycle lane benefits residents and motorists as well. It narrows the width of the street, significantly reducing the speed of motorists. By widening the street, you will immediately increase the speed of many motorists. There have been too many eye watering near misses, all it takes is one incident and serious injury or worse

will occur.

Traffic fatalities have constantly fallen over the decades thanks to traffic calming schemes and better public awareness. By widening the road, all that good work will be undone. This is more significant than the objections to the cycle lane such as inconvenience, cyclists and drivers not having enough space and wide vehicles damaging parked cars. These objections naturally come with a cycle lane but are insignificant to the benefits, namely preventing Melrose Avenue seeing higher speed.. All it takes is one 'unlucky' driver ignoring the give way sign or emboldened by the greater width to speed up to cause far greater damage. We urge you not to turn the clock back to more dangerous roads.

44: I am writing to make representation against Merton Council's proposals to implement the above-referenced project.

Your proposal

I am against your proposal to widen the carriageway by removing the dedicated cycle lane because it will force cyclists to negotiate a dangerous contraflow into potentially fast and aggressive oncoming vehicle traffic, it will encourage more drivers to use Melrose Avenue and travel even faster than is already the case, and it will encourage more residents to own (big) cars, which is contrary to your climate emergency plans. Melrose Avenue is widely considered to be a rat run and would actually need calming rather than weaponising, for the benefit of both pedestrian and cyclist safety.

Your issues

Of the four issues you cite for removing the cycle lane, three relate to the attitude of drivers and so are easily resolved by the drivers themselves:

- You state that the cycle lane is "often obstructed by vehicles and debris". Any obstructions are usually due to drivers parking (oversized) vehicles inconsiderately (only occasionally due to debris left inconsiderately by builders working for local residents) and infringing the cycle lane. So this issue is about educating drivers to park safely, and surely safe parking should be enforced by traffic wardens?
- You state that there is "conflict between cyclists and parked cars when drivers open their vehicle doors". This issue, as well as being about driver education, has recently been addressed in the new Highway Code, rule 239 of which tells drivers to use the Dutch reach ("[...] open the door using your hand on the opposite side to the door you are opening.")
- You state that "modern vehicles [are] wider than since the original scheme was implemented". It is fact that most privately owned cars spend most of their time parked on public roads and are only used for about 5% of the time (https://www.racfoundation.org/media-centre/cars-parked-23-hours-a-day). Given the great public transport links Melrose Avenue enjoys, with the tube station a minute's walk away and the 156 bus route five minutes away, I see no justification for encouraging more vehicles, let alone bigger vehicles, by widening the carriageway.

Your "safeguards" for cyclists

You refer to the plan for the measures you are proposing that "facilitate and safeguard cyclists travelling against the current one-way system".

The only measure I can see that could potentially safeguard cyclists against oncoming vehicles is the installation of one passing bay opposite no. 11. However, the cyclist first has to get there safely. My experience of cycling on the Grid roads, parts of which effectively have a contraflow due to their narrowness, is that car drivers do not look ahead or considerately pull into passing bays or even pause on their side of the carriageway to allow cyclists to pass, but instead push their way through. Your proposal will actually force cyclists to squeeze to the side or into gaps between parked vehicles.

I cannot see any other measures on your plan that safeguard cyclists:

- The tactile paving, while welcome for pedestrians, does not help cyclists.
- The new double yellow lines, particularly on the corner with Ryfold Road, will make it is easier for vehicles to speed around the corner from Ryfold Road into oncoming cyclists. At the moment, drivers actually have to slow down to negotiate this corner because it is tight, vehicles are sometimes parked on the current single yellow line, and there may be fast vehicles coming at them from the one way

section (see above).

- The removal of the segregation between vehicles and cyclists on the left side of Melrose Avenue at the junction with Arthur Road is detrimental as it actually removes a safeguard and, in widening the junction, allows drivers to go faster.

Other risks

- The orientation of Melrose Avenue is 138 degrees SE, so a low morning sun blinds drivers, who will have difficulty seeing anything, let alone oncoming cyclists.
- Melrose Avenue is downhill for cyclists travelling against the contraflow, so cyclists could easily and legitimately be travelling 20mph, only to encounter an often speeding driver, which is a recipe for disaster.

Merton Climate Strategy & Action Plan

Your 2050 vision for transport is laudably geared towards encouraging walking and cycling. I note these statements from it about more cycling and fewer cars:

- "People will be healthier as a result of **more active travel** and cleaner air. **Walking and cycling will be accessible** and be the default choice for most local journeys. **Fewer people will own cars** and all vehicles will be electric or use other low carbon fuels. Many neighbourhoods and town centres will be **car free**."
- You will "[...] by 2022 explore options that will i**ncentivise people to move away from cars**".
- "Communities should [...] make neighbourhoods **more cycle and pedestrian friendly, limiting through-traffic**."
- You will "[...] support a national policy framework which results in an **acceleration of active travel and reduced private car use**".

But your Melrose Avenue contraflow proposal, in encouraging ownership of more and bigger cars and discouraging cycling, risks achieving the opposite of your climate goals.

Please, therefore, withdraw this proposal and instead spend our council tax wisely on achieving vital goals like your climate vision.

Objections to scheme outside Melrose Avenue

45: Stuart Road- I have read the consultation document regarding changes to the cycle lane on Melrose Avenue and cannot support the proposal as it stands and believe that further changes are required to safely remove part or even all of the cycle lane.

The reasons to make the changes set out in the proposal are as follows:

- It is very narrow and is often obstructed by vehicles and debris.
- Conflict between cyclists and parked cars when drivers open their vehicles doors.
- Reported damage to parked cars caused both by cyclists in the contraflow lane and by wider vehicles travelling along the carriageway. Service vehicles are struggling to negotiate the relatively narrow carriageway which has not been helped by more modern vehicles being wider that since the original scheme was implemented.
- Potential lack of pedestrian awareness when crossing the cycle lane.
- It is very narrow and is often obstructed by vehicles and debris.

(1) It is correct that the cycle lane is narrow however bikes do not require very much space. I ride a bike with handlebars as wide as I have seen and have safely (albeit with caution) used the cycle lane hundreds of times and can say hand on heart that I have never scraped a parked car or have any other issue.

Regarding it being blocked by vehicles I have never in five years of using the cycle lane encountered it being

blocked by vehicles however if it was then they would be illegally parked and should be ticketed by the parking wardens which would encourage proper parking etiquette going forward.

The cycle lane does attract debris from time to time however is far from impassable. I would suggest that it should be the council's role to ensure roads and cycle lanes are free from debris so if there is debris then that this a failure on the council's part.

- Conflict between cyclists and parked cars when drivers open their vehicles doors.

(2) With regard to car doors hitting cyclists this is a problem that cyclists face daily hence the recent changes to the Highway Code regarding opening car doors to reduce the chances of hitting bikes coming from the rear on the drivers side. A similar problem I would suggest would be rare on the Melrose Avenue cycle lane as drivers or rear passengers on the drivers side would be looking in the direction of any oncoming cyclist and would foresee a potential incident. The majority of drivers are local and would be aware of the cycle lane and know to check before opening their door and any cyclist should always proceed with caution and be aware of this risk.

- Reported damage to parked cars caused both by cyclists in the contraflow lane and by wider vehicles travelling along the carriageway. Service vehicles are struggling to negotiate the relatively narrow carriageway which has not been helped by more modern vehicles being wider that since the original scheme was implemented.

(3) I have much sympathy with those whose cars have been damaged. I feel the roads of the grid are being used beyond what the original design intended and traffic needs to be routed away from the residential streets and onto the wider main roads. I do not believe though that the proposal as it stands sufficiently tackles this concern as is the part of the cycle lane that will remain after the changes are due to take place that is the narrowest and I suspect causes service vehicles and car owners the most issue. My proposal below sets out how this can be avoided.

- Potential lack of pedestrian awareness when crossing the cycle lane.

(4) The majority of pedestrians in the area will be locals who are aware of the cycle lane and take care when crossing. In addition any cyclist should proceed with caution and if there is a pedestrian use a bell or their voice to give a warning if they are passing and feel someone is about to step out. Perhaps a warning sign to be added at either end of the cycle lanes warning 'Caution Cyclists'.

Further concerns with the current proposal:

I believe the changes proposed will further encourage cars away from the main Durnsford and Arthur Roads to use the roads of the grid as a cut through to avoid the traffic lights at the junction between Durnsford Road and Arthur Road, and the traffic congestion that often builds up on Arthur Road. By widening the carriageway it is easier for drivers to make Melrose Avenue their preferred route as they will be able to travel faster than at present. The speed limits on all roads are set at 20 mph however few adhere to the speed limit. Bringing more cars onto the grid inevitably increases the number of speeding cars on these residential roads and increases the chance of a serious accident. With speeding drivers on residential roads where there is less monitoring of driver behaviour and less chance for law enforcement to apprehend speeders, drivers are more likely to speed than if they were confined to the main roads where even in the absence of speed cameras they are restrained by drivers who do adhere to the laws of the road.

The increase in cars using the Melrose Avenue junction with Arthur Road also increases the chances of an accident at this spot as drivers turning right are forced to cross the traffic at a point when they are often unsighted to the left due to cars parked illegally on Arthur Road next to the corner of Melrose.

I believe that the reduction of cycle lanes is also at odds with the global drive towards living with and managing climate change. Individually people have a responsibility to do their bit but governments and councils also need to drive better behaviour through discouragement of cars (especially larger heavily polluting vehicles) and towards public and environmentally friendly forms of transport. The removal of a cycle lane does not do this.

Proposal

Closure of the Melrose Avenue exit to Arthur Road and removal of the existing cycle lanes.

I suggest this proposal would route traffic via the main Durnsford Road / Arthur Road and safely allow the removal of the entire cycle lane/widening of the road. I believe this would solve the issues which the removal of the cycle lane is looking to solve with the added benefit of reducing traffic on the residential streets of the grid. A turning circle could be introduced at the Arthur Road end of Melrose Avenue to assist service vehicles although with total removal of the cycle lanes it may be easier for service vehicles to reverse back down Melrose Avenue. In order for this to successfully push drivers onto Durnsford Road / Arthur Road changes would need to be made to the current parking provisions on Arthur Road to allow for more free flowing traffic. Any reduction in spaces would in part potentially be offset by new spaces introduced where the current Melrose Avenue / Arthur Road Junction is. Additionally part of the pavement on Arthur Road could be converted to short term parking to offset concerns of business owners regarding loss of parking spaces.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposal and your time in reading my objections.

46: Stuart Road- I have read the proposals in relation to the cycle path in Melrose Avenue, which I read in disbelief and I am amazed that the Labour Council are thinking about doing this; if the council has any money for work on roads, etc. I would have thought that it would have been a priority to ensure that potholes were dealt with as a matter of urgency, rather than changing the lay-out of the cycle route in Melrose Avenue!
There is nothing wrong with the current lay-out of the cycle lane in Melrose Avenue.
As a resident of Merton for over forty-two years, I have seen many changes; some of which have been terrible and this proposed change falls into that category.
I would have thought that Merton Council would be encouraging people to cycle or to use public transport, rather than to further pollute the air in Merton.
One of the additional problems concerning the parking in Melrose Avenue (as well as the surrounding areas) is that many families own more than one car, thus contributing to the difficulty in finding parking places.
What happened to a cleaner and safer environment for everyone? Does Merton Council not think this is important for all but especially for children?
I am a wheelchair user and I can't stress enough the endless problems, which I have with uneven and very high kerbs and of course, the dreaded potholes!

47: Stuart Road- After studying the proposals for Melrose Avenue, it is clear to me that the proposals are very much centred on the needs of the local residents and motorists, rather than the safety of cyclists. This is astonishing, particularly in a period of time when people are being encouraged to cycle rather than drive polluting cars, even the updated Highway Code is putting greater emphasis on the needs and safety of cyclists. How can these proposal be justified?
Which would a cyclist prefer, a narrow, safe cycle lane, or riding into oncoming traffic, traffic which at some times of the day can be very heavy?

I wish to raise strong objections to the proposed changes to the Melrose Avenue cycle lane.

Council rationale for changes to cycle lane.

> *The cycle lane is very narrow and is often obstructed by vehicles and debris.*
> Yes, I agree, but a narrow cycle lane is much safer than the proposed contra-flow system from which cyclists will emerge onto the narrowest section of Melrose Avenue. Also, it is highly dangerous for cyclists, in that they will emerge at an angle to oncoming traffic, where the motorists' view will be obscured to their presence.
> Yes, vehicles do obstruct the lane, but that is the fault of drivers not cyclists. A raised dividing kerb would help to solve this problem.
> Debris is a problem, but this is only during late Autumn, when the leaves fall. I have personally contacted the council regarding this matter and the problem has been resolved by swift action by the street cleaning team
>
> *Conflict between cyclists and parked cars when drivers open their vehicles doors.* Again, drivers' fault not cyclists. If drivers bothered to observe the **oncoming** cyclists, there would be no problem. Also under the proposed scheme, passenger-side doors can still be opened into oncoming cyclists, especially as cyclists will need to cycle to the left to avoid oncoming traffic!
> *Reported damage to parked cars caused both by cyclists in the contraflow lane and by wider vehicles*

Service vehicles are struggling to negotiate the relatively narrow carriageway which has not been helped by more modern vehicles being wider than since the original scheme was implemented.
Cyclists' damage to cars is inexcusable, as it is by service vehicles/large cars, but unfortunately somewhat inevitable, in the narrow streets that London has.
Most modern cars have wing mirrors that can be folded in, so there is no need for this to happen. With the narrow nature of Melrose Avenue, it is likely that cyclists will be forced to their left to avoid oncoming traffic, with the likely damage to passenger side wing mirrors. Wide vehicles using Melrose Avenue can also cause car wing mirrors to be damaged. A width restriction on vehicles using Melrose Avenue would help, with access only allowed for service vehicles.
Larger vehicles is another reason why the contra-flow idea is so dangerous to cyclists! Imagine meeting a Refuse Lorry/large vehicle head on with the cyclist being nowhere near the one 'proposed passing place.' Where does the cyclist go? Have cyclists no right to space on the road?
I am aware that Veolia, the company running the South London Waste Partnership, want to increase the size of the vehicles they use to save time and money on the rounds that they run. Is this another factor that is pushing for these changes?

I live in one of the roads off Melrose Avenue and make use of the present cycle lane in both directions, on a daily basis; on some occasions using it several times a day. Whilst I agree that the cycle lane raises some concerns, most of these issues relate to car drivers/pedestrians not paying attention; it is not the cyclists' failings!
In most cases, drivers parking next to the cycle lane take great care not to obstruct the cycle path, when parking their vehicle.

It is clear that the proposed changes centre on improving drivers' well- being and increased parking spaces, at the expense of putting cyclists' lives in peril! I thought one of the aims of Merton Council (and London wide) was to encourage cycling. This proposed plan hardly contributes to this aim.
Whilst I have used contra-flow systems, as outlined in your plans, they are exceedingly dangerous to cyclists, even when clearly marked. Also, they tend to be on much wider roads than Melrose Avenue. With Melrose Avenue, cyclists and car drivers will have to share a width of 3.4 metres. The narrowness of Melrose Avenue, at the junction of where the cyclists emerge into, is a really worry. Average width of cars is now 1.6 to 2 metres (Range Rovers and other SUVs – lorries even wider!). This 'leaves' 1.3 metres for the oncoming cyclist! Hardly much of an improvement over the 1 metre wide cycle path that now exists, but massively increasing the danger to cyclists! The space for cyclists, of course, is not really 1.3 metres as oncoming cars won't be driving right up to the parked vehicles, neither will the cyclists be right up to the stationary vehicles! In reality, the space is likely to be less than 1 metre and unprotected, from motor vehicles as opposed to the protection, by parked cars, of the present cycle path.
When using the present cycle lane, I am at risk of being hit by an opened car door. If I am using the proposed contra-flow I am at risk of being hit by an opened car door, *and oncoming vehicle or both!* A destructive pairing as illustrated by several cyclists' death in London, particularly the one on the A13 several years ago

48:Beckenham-After studying the proposals for Melrose Avenue, I wish to bring strong objections to the moving of the cycle lane. To move the lane and put it in direct line of on-coming traffic seems extremely dangerous.
With the update to the Highway Code which is putting greater emphasis on the safety of cyclists and pedestrians, to change this safety layout seems ill thought out. Also, how can the costs and the fact that it makes it less safe be justified? This cycle lane works well. Therefore why is there a need to change it? The lane is well used because it is safer.

49: Beckenham-I am somewhat bemused by the proposal to change the existing cycle lane. If cars are given as a reason for changing it, then surely, car drivers should adhere to driving and parking with due care and attention.
Moving the cycle lane to face the oncoming traffic seems to put cyclists more at risk. I frequently visit relatives along this stretch but will not feel safe if this proposal goes ahead. Hoping that you will put the safety of the cyclists at the core of this, ie, leaving the cycle lane as it is.

50: Bromley- I am not a resident of Merton but a frequent user of the borough's roads and I want to raise a strong objection to the proposed changes to the Melrose Avenue Cycle Lane. I have attached an outline of my objections and my contact info is below should you want more information.

51: Hamilton Road Sw19
Please consider this as my formal opposition to the proposal to alter/ remove the cycle lane on Melrose Avenue. It provides safe passage for cyclists and is far more preferable to the idea of cyclists being forced to ride into oncoming traffic.

52: No Address Supplied Thank you for the recent consultation regarding Melrose Avenue cycling contraflow. My interest in this is that I use the route daily on my cycling commute as do many others as a relatively safer option than the Dunsford road.

I can't disagree with your rationale to review the cycle path - many residents seem unable to park properly within their spaces defined by the white lines meaning the gap is often so narrow one has to get off and walk along the pavement. There is often debris from construction works such as concrete, pipes and glass - there is also a habit of sweeping leaves from the pavement into the cycle lane in the autumn despite the obvious dangers wet leaves cause. There are drains which are blocked in the lane which are hazardous and dangerous.

I also sadly cant agree with your proposals to remove the cycle lane altogether - this doesn't help various problems you have sought to solve - drivers can still open their doors and injure cyclists, pedestrians can still step into the road without looking.

You have referenced the fact that cars are damaged and create blockages for service vehicles - surely the council cannot prioritise the rumoured damage cars bigger than there is space for over the safety of vulnerable road users. For large cars or Van's struggling to get through they can simply use the main road which is designed to take all sort of traffic. Given the speed of vehicles travelling on this narrow residential street I can only imagine they're trying to cut the corner on the Durnsford / Arthur road traffic lights.

If you are looking to make genuine improvements to this route I would propose a raised kerb / protected cycle lane so that cars cant just ignore the current white lines when parking, this would also reduce the chance of damage also occurring. Or why not propose something more radical like creating a low traffic neighbourhood for these local streets meaning that cyclists and pedestrians can feel safer in this area.

53: Havana Road SW19 I am a regular user of the cycle lane on Melrose. While I agree that the lane needs improvement, I do not consider changing it to a contraflow system makes it safer for cyclists in any way.

In answer to some of the reasons:
It is often obstructed by cars or debris - Car owners need to take responsibility with their parking - perhaps tickets could be issued if they are in the cycle lane?

Conflict between cyclists and parked cars when drivers open their doors - drivers could pause for the short time to allow cyclists to pass or cyclist may have to wait if someone is exiting their car, surely this is human courtesy.

Potential lack of pedestrian awareness- how will this be altered or improved by removing it. Pedestrians will be less aware of a cycling contraflow.

In light of the climate crisis it is essential we promote cycling and other forms of active travel. This proposal continues to prioritise the car and even provides more parking spaces! How do you plan to meet net zero carbon emissions when we continue to make policies that encourage car ownership.

I hope that you reconsider this proposal.

54: No Address Supplied If the existing system were looked after better then I believe it would be better than the proposed alternative.
On a different note , if a way could be found to charge extra to those who insist upon the “Chelsea tractors”, that would be good. They need to be discouraged.

55: Martin Way SW20 I am writing to state my objection to the proposed changes to the cycle lane on Melrose Avenue.

Whilst it is acknowledged that the cycle lane is narrow and is often obstructed by inconsiderate owners of parked cars, it remains safe for cyclists. To replace it with a contraflow that requires cyclists to cycle onto oncoming traffic is absurd and patently unsafe.

The road width appears to be a little more than about 3m. Where the cyclists are asked to 'merge' into oncoming traffic is a disaster and tragedy waiting to happen.

56: Daybrook Road SW19 I strongly oppose the removal of the cycling contraflow provision on Melrose Ave (consultation ref: ES/SS/2022/Melrose-Contraflow). I use this route regularly when travelling by bike from Wimbledon to Wandsworth, and on to central London. It is a much safer route than Durnsford Road, which is dangerous due to vehicles (including HGVs accessing Weir Road industrial area), as well as parked cars. This infrastructure allows access to quiet streets (Melrose Ave -> Revelstoke Road -> Ravensbury Road and on to the Wandle Trail) allowing safe cycling from Wimbledon Town/Village/Park to areas towards central London.

In terms of the specific reasons given for the removal:

- It is very narrow and is often obstructed by vehicles and debris - **if it is obstructed by parked cars then this is due to poor parking, potentially requiring parking enforcement. The latter points to the need for improved street cleaning**
- Conflict between cyclists and parked cars when drivers open their vehicles doors - **the same thing will also be the case with a contraflow cycle lane, perhaps even more so as there will be even less physical infrastructure making it obvious to car drivers to expect cyclists**
- Reported damage to parked cars caused both by cyclists in the contraflow lane and by wider vehicles travelling along the carriageway. Service vehicles are struggling to negotiate the relatively narrow carriageway which has not been helped by more modern vehicles being wider than since the original scheme was implemented. **There is arguably GREATER risk to cyclists' safety through forcing them to confront oncoming traffic (which is potentially too wide to safely access the street) if the dedicated cycle lane is removed. As above, if damage or road blockage is caused to due to cars being incorrectly parked (ie either in the cycle lane or carriageway) then this is the fault of the drivers of these cars and should be addressed by enforcement/education/improving signage rather than penalising cyclists through making the provision worse.**
- Potential lack of pedestrian awareness when crossing the cycle lane **- as above, I would argue that there is MORE of a risk to pedestrians crossing a road with a cycle contraflow without any infrastructure than with the current arrangement where there is clearly a designated cycle lane**

Whilst I agree that there is scope to improve the current cycling provision for cyclists on Melrose Ave, the proposed changes make the area more dangerous for cyclists (and actually do little to address the identified issues). They will certainly not improve the cycling infrastructure in the borough, which is so needed to enable more cycling to combat climate change, improve congestion and air quality.

57: Cambridge Rd SW20

I am writing to raise my objection to the proposal to remove physical protection from motor traffic for people cycling west to east along Melrose Avenue from Arthur Rd which I use fairly regularly.

Four reasons are given for prioritising this scheme, three of which are primarily for the benefit of drivers. This is a great shame, particularly in the context of a borough which lags behind and is so desperately in need of measures to enable walking and cycling which make a genuine difference. Merton cycling levels have not changed over the past 20 years hovering at around 2% of trips and cycling and walking rates are among the lowest of all the boroughs in London.

While the width of the existing cycle contra flow is substandard, it at least offers people cycling some protection from drivers.
The proposal will force cyclists head on into the path of van drivers such as this:

We know from evidence this is very likely to reduce the inclusiveness of the route; children, women and older people are seriously put off cycling if it means mixing with traffic the scheme will likely have a negative impact from an equality perspective.

If the junction is being re-kerbed at the Arthur Rd end then the 4.86m wide space for drivers on the proposal could be much reduced and the footway should be made continuous to provide priority for people walking straight ahead as per this junction below.

58: Cambridge Road SW20

I wish to object strongly to the proposed replacement of the existing protected cycle contraflow on Melrose Avenue with an unprotected cycle contraflow.
I have been using the route on my commute for a number of years.

I have responded to the Council's justification, my comments and questions in red below:

- It is very narrow and is often obstructed by vehicles and debris.
  It is of adequate width. It is certainly preferable to the proposal for cyclists to share a narrow lane with vehicles coming in the opposite direction. I have never seen it obstructed by vehicles or debris. Please confirm if you have received any complaints from cyclists on these issues, and if so how many?
- Conflict between cyclists and parked cars when drivers open their vehicles doors.
  I have not seen this happen. Any danger from opening car doors usually occurs when a cyclist approaches a car from behind, but on this route driver and cyclist are facing each other so there is good visibility. Please confirm if you have received any reports of incidents, and if so how many?
- Reported damage to parked cars caused both by cyclists in the contraflow lane and by wider vehicles travelling along the carriageway. Service vehicles are struggling to negotiate the relatively narrow carriageway which has not been helped by more modern vehicles being wider that since the original scheme was implemented.
  It is true that cars have got wider, but service vehicles haven't. Are you talking about damage from cars or service vehicles? How many reports of actual damage have you had?
- Potential lack of pedestrian awareness when crossing the cycle lane.
  This is extremely vague, and could equally apply to any cycle path or road anywhere. Please confirm if you have received any complaints on this issue, and if so how many?

Please provide answers to all of these questions.

Other comments and suggestions:

-The junction with Arthur Road should have a continuous footway, ditto the junctions of Stroud Road/ Ryfold Road with Melrose Avenue. All these junctions are quite old fashioned with very wide splays, and give cars priority over pedestrians. While you are spending money, you should upgrade them.
-The 'passing place' is I assume for cyclists to get out of the way of cars, if so it prioritises cars travelling towards Arthur Road and is inadequate.
-The section of road near Arthur Road is under used and could potentially be used for car parking to free up space elsewhere.
-With some more thought, it should be possible to design a better scheme but you would need to rethink priority. For example a single lane chicane giving priority to cyclists may work, using space freed up by the suggestion above.

Although the existing facilities aren't perfect, the suggested change is by definition worse as you are removing the contraflow protection for cyclists. Cyclists are the most vulnerable group in this context, so you should be prioritising their needs, both for safety and to allow more active travel, which benefits everybody. The whole area needs to be reviewed to reduce rat running and car dependence.

The scheme hasn't been thought through properly; I urge you to cancel it and try again.

59: Kingsley Road-Sw19

I would like to oppose the change to the cycling lanes in the area on the basis of the safety of cyclists. I'm not personally a cyclist but it affects a lot of my friends and their safety is certainly my concern.

60: Kings Road Sw19 I would like to second the views expressed by my…… below about the proposed removal of this cycle lane. I also have used this lane for the last 20 years, alone and with my growing children on 2 wheeled explorations of our neighbourhood to boost their cycling confidence.

A protected bike lane is a precious find for a parent so to hear this one will be removed to make room for those who choose wider, more polluting vehicles is deeply disappointing especially as cyclists will be forced into a more dangerous situation. As a GP I am doing my best to raise awareness of air quality and the many benefits of active travel choices. Merton council should be doing everything it can to protect and expand cycling infrastructure for healthier people and planet.

61: Merton Cycling Campaign

2022 review of Melrose Avenue contra-flow cycling
Scheme drawing Merton Traffic and Highways 'General Layout 2022'

In 2019 Merton Cycling Campaign stated that when given the choice of a compromised segregated cycle lane or a compromised one-way street cycle contra-flow then cyclists choose segregation. Merton Cycling Campaign's objections remain as that 2019 statement (attached) which included support for the solution that was put forward by Merton's Consultants in 2004 for raising the existing contra-flow facility to footway level allowing for more cycling width. However we would like to add these additional points.

1.Continuous roadside parking.
Unlike many roads in the Wimbledon area the Melrose Avenue houses have small front gardens where a car will not fit; this means that the roadside parking is not interrupted by the occasional crossover leading to a front garden car spot. Also the pavement supports continuous trees so part-parking on the pavement is out of the question. As a result the residents of the one-way section of Melrose Avenue have been able to enjoy the convenience of continuous roadside car parking with no breaks in the parking. The long-standing opposing-flow cycle facility, segregated between pavement and cars, was the solution selected that allowed this convenience of continuous parking to remain. Thus accommodating one of Merton's earliest cycle links. A strategic cycle-link pin-pointed and made necessary through the random contortions of railway and associated street planning.

2.Breaking up the parking
In order to enable 2-way traffic for contra-flow cycling without a dedicated cycle lane, within the dimensions available, it is necessary to make breaks in the continuous car parking. The reasonable frequency of specific breaks in the continuous roadside parking are the only reason that the road continuing northwards from the present one-way section can work as a 2-way carriageway.
We estimate that a minimum of 1 in 10 of the parking places needs to be removed to make these breaks. Without the breaks cyclists will experience extreme discomfort being relentlessly squeezed against the flow of motor vehicles. It is therefore without question that the current proposal is not an improvement and might only

be acceptable with a 10% reduction in roadside parking in the contraflow section. Having experienced excessive speeding by motor vehicles in the 2-way sections of Melrose Avenue we also recommend that speed humps are introduced in the one-way section should it become contra-flow for cycling.

3.Transport Research Guidance

Merton Cycling Campaign's 2019 previous statement, regarding the same proposed alterations, pointed out that Transport Research Laboratory Report 358 gives just one example of contra-flow without a dedicated cycle lane with roadside car parking on both sides. Before the introduction of that contra-flow, the clear width in two places was 3.9 metres and 3 metres. In order to make the road a cycling contraflow without cycle lanes, car parking was removed until leaving clear passage through, with width dimensions of 4.6 and 4.5 metres respectively.

The previous 2019 statement quotes the London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS) 'golden rule': that traffic lanes restricted to dimensions between 3.2 and 3.9 metres should be avoided, because of the discomfort it causes cyclists moving together with motor vehicles. This has now been revised in the latest LCDS to a width between 3.2 and 4 metres. It perhaps can be understood why passing places must be introduced in Melrose Avenue by removing some car parking if contra-flow cycling without a dedicated lane is proposed and why any change to the existing situation without strategic removal of car parking makes cycling considerably more intimidating.

4. Road Safety Audit

The Road Safety Audit used in justification of this proposal is of questionable validity for the following reasons:

4.1 The Safety Audit results from a site visit by 2 auditors undertaken on Tuesday 13th November 2018 between 13:25 and 14:00. This gives little indication that the auditors had taken note of their Guidelines in DMRB GG/119 item 5.43 which says the RSA team *'shall determine the need to vary the time of the site visit to observe specific traffic conditions'* at all stages of RSA. This is accompanied by the *NOTE 'Specific traffic conditions can include peak periods, the beginning or end of the school day or during frequent events'*. The fact that the auditors chose lunchtime for their only visit and not a peak hour period on this key commuter route for cyclists, when the Audit is entirely to do with a change to be imposed on cyclists, throws doubt on the validity of the Road Safety Audit's findings.

4.2 As the proposal is very particular to cycling it is unfortunate that the auditors visit only comprised 'a walk and a drive' when their guidelines suggest testing on each type of transport is beneficial in any Audit.

4.3 The DMRB GG/119 item 5.3 states that the needs of all road users shall be assessed when undertaking the RSA. Even though this case is primarily concerning a change to a cycling facility there is no indication that the auditors have made a point of assessing the needs of cyclists except at the Arthur Road start to the contra-flow when the 'protected' cycling section terminates. This has accordingly been amended in the present proposal. However the 'exacerbation of the problem' that the auditors refer to in their item 2.10 is the width of the carriageway at this location (although they confirm the carriageway width is constant). The auditors are admitting to reservations about the general width of the carriageway for cycling but these are not given any attention in their report.

4.4 The Road Safety Auditors refer to their client's request for auditing 'the proposed improvements to the contra-flow cycle lane at Melrose Avenue' which suggests that they are testing how the so called 'improvements' affect other modes of transport; because they are assuming improvements for cycling are a given. Shortly after receiving this Road Safety Report in Dec 2018 Merton Council were made aware of the arguments put by Merton Cycling Campaign and others that expressed strong doubts that the proposed changes could be described as 'improvements'. It suggests a lack of diligence that at that point the Highway Authority did not ask their Road Safety Auditor to revisit their findings.

4.5 A contributory factor to the Auditors' misjudgement of 'improvements' may be due to their interpretation of the brief in the Road Safety Audit Report item 1.9 where they interpret the proposal to be that the 'existing contra flow cycle lane' will be 'revised in order to run to the east of the parking bays on the western side of Melrose Avenue'. The Road Safety Audit appears to be based on the assumption that there will be a dedicated cycle lane as a contra-flow, which is not the case. If this is the basis for their findings then it suggests that the 'contra-flow cycle lane' should stay where it is.

5. Why is Melrose Avenue important to cyclists?

As stated in item 3 above the random contortions of railway and associated street planning make Melrose Avenue strategic for cycling. The only alternative to Melrose Ave is Durnsford Road which is heavily trafficked and intimidating throughout its length, particularly at the narrow railway bridge. This bridge is always dangerous for cycling due to the incline slowing cyclists down with inadequate width for motor vehicles to safely overtake approaching the brow of the hill. The Highway Authority have made this considerably more dangerous, and tight for cycling, by the installation of pavement railings. In recognition of this further hazard the Authority have since put up 'Do not overtake cyclists' signs. Due to the slow pace of cyclists on the inclines

these signs are invariably ignored.
For an administration that pledges to encourage active travel there appears to be a policy of squeezing cyclists out. Having changed an already dangerous bridge to make it more hazardous for cycling, the current inappropriate proposal for Melrose Avenue sets out to change the only alternative to the bridge by making that also more hazardous for cycling. Are cyclists to conclude that despite the hierarchy established in the New Highway Code this administration puts cycling at the bottom of the list?