

Delegated Report

Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the Climate Emergency

Date: 06th September 2021

Agenda item: N/A

Wards: Village

Subject: Lingfield Road-Facilitate contra-flow cycling

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 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 18th of February and 11th March 2021 on the proposal to allow contra-flow cycling by exemption only on the one way section of Lingfield Rd between Southside Common and Homefield Road and the conversion of existing single yellow line to double yellow lines near its junction with Southside Common. A copy of the notification document is attached in Appendix 1.
- B) Considers the representation received in response to the statutory consultation attached in Appendix 2 and Ward Councilor's responses to these representations set out in appendix 3.
- C) 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 allow Contra-flow cycling by exemption only on the one way section of Lingfield Rd between Southside Common and Homefield Road and proposed conversion of the single yellow line to double yellow lines near its junction with Southside Common.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This proposal was identified as part of a Merton Cycle Contraflow Review undertaken by Transport Initiatives to improve cycle permeability in the local area by allowing cyclists to travel west from High Street, providing a direct through route between Wimbledon Common and Ridgway whilst also improving the junction with Southside Common for pedestrians.
- 2.2 Council officers explored its feasibility alongside with the Merton Cycling Campaign and identified it as a safe suitable route.
- 2.3 Survey data indicated that on average 10 cyclists per day contravene the one-way restriction giving more validity to formalise the arrangement.
- 2.4 A review of the Personal Injury Collision (PIC) data between 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2019 indicated that during this period there has been no PICs recorded in the immediate vicinity of the proposals.

- 2.5 Traffic / cycle flow survey indicated that the 85th percentile vehicle speeds on Lingfield Road where it operates to the north-west of its junction with Homefield Road as one-way, is 17mph, with an average speed of 14mph.
- 2.6 The average daily vehicular flows on the one-way section of Lingfield Road are 390 and 310 for the section that operates under two-way working. Cyclists account for approximately 5 per cent of all movements on Lingfield Road.
- 2.7 An independent safety audit was carried out and no safety concerns regarding the proposed scheme has been raised.

3. PROPOSED MEASURES

- 3.1 To facilitate and safeguard cyclists riding against the flow of traffic it is proposed to introduce the following measures:
 - 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.
 - Modify the junction of Lingfield Road at Southside Common by providing buildouts either side of the road making the junction safer for pedestrians by improving sightlines and reducing crossing distance.
 - Convert a section of existing single yellow line to double yellow line to ensure that safety and access are maintained at all times.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Given the nature of the proposed measures, the proposed double yellow lines and the proposed introduction of contra-flow cycling by exemption only, a statutory consultation was carried out between 18th February and 11th March 2021. 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 Guardian 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 in Lingfield Road. The junction modification and islands do not require a statutory consultation but were shown on the consultation plan.
- 4.2 The consultation resulted in 21 representations; 19 of the representations were negative towards the proposals with 2 being in favour including the Merton Cycling Campaign. Majority of those who responded believe that there are better alternative routes despite acknowledging that cyclists already cycle against the traffic along the one-way section of the road. These are detailed in appendix 2.
- 4.3 All Emergency Services have been consulted and no objections have been raised.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 It is recommended that the proposed scheme is implemented. Whilst noting the representations against the proposal, given that on average 10 cyclists per day already travel against flow of traffic which is currently illegal, is evidence that this is a cycling desire line and therefore it would be prudent to legalise the contraflow for cyclist. The proposal will raise driver awareness that is currently lacking, highlighting the presence of cyclist travelling against traffic thereby ensuring their safety. This is also supported by Merton Cycling Campaigns.

- 5.2 Safety concerns regarding Lingfield Road being too narrow with poor sightlines were not identified during the safety audit and it is believed that the proposals will safely facilitate the proposed contraflow cycle route.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 Do Nothing. Though the consultation feedback from residents was generally negative towards the proposals doing nothing will not help to expand on the cycling network and formalise and make Lingfield Road safer for cyclists.

7.0 FINANCIAL RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The cost of implementing this scheme is estimated at £11,000. This includes the cost of the statutory consultation and making of the relevant Traffic Management Orders. This will be funded by the funding that has been approved by TfL.

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.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATION

- 10.1 N/A

11.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 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

Appendix 3-Ward Councillor - Response to representations

LINGFIELD ROAD CONTRA-FLOW CYCLE LANE – VILLAGE

Statutory consultation - 18th February 2021

Dear Resident,

To improve cycle permeability in the local area we are proposing to facilitate contraflow cycling along Lingfield Road between Southside Common and Homefield Road. This will allow cyclists to legally travel along Lingfield Road.

To facilitate and safeguard cyclists travelling against the current one-way system, it is proposed to take the following measures and as shown on the plan overleaf.

- Implementation of cycle logos with directional arrows and signage to raise driver awareness of cyclists
- Narrow Lingfield Road/Southside Common junction by building out the footway and install tactile paving to improve visibility and reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians.
- Increase the length of the existing double yellow lines at the junction of Southside Common by 20 metres

The cycle contraflow and the proposed double yellow lines elements of this scheme require a statutory consultation.

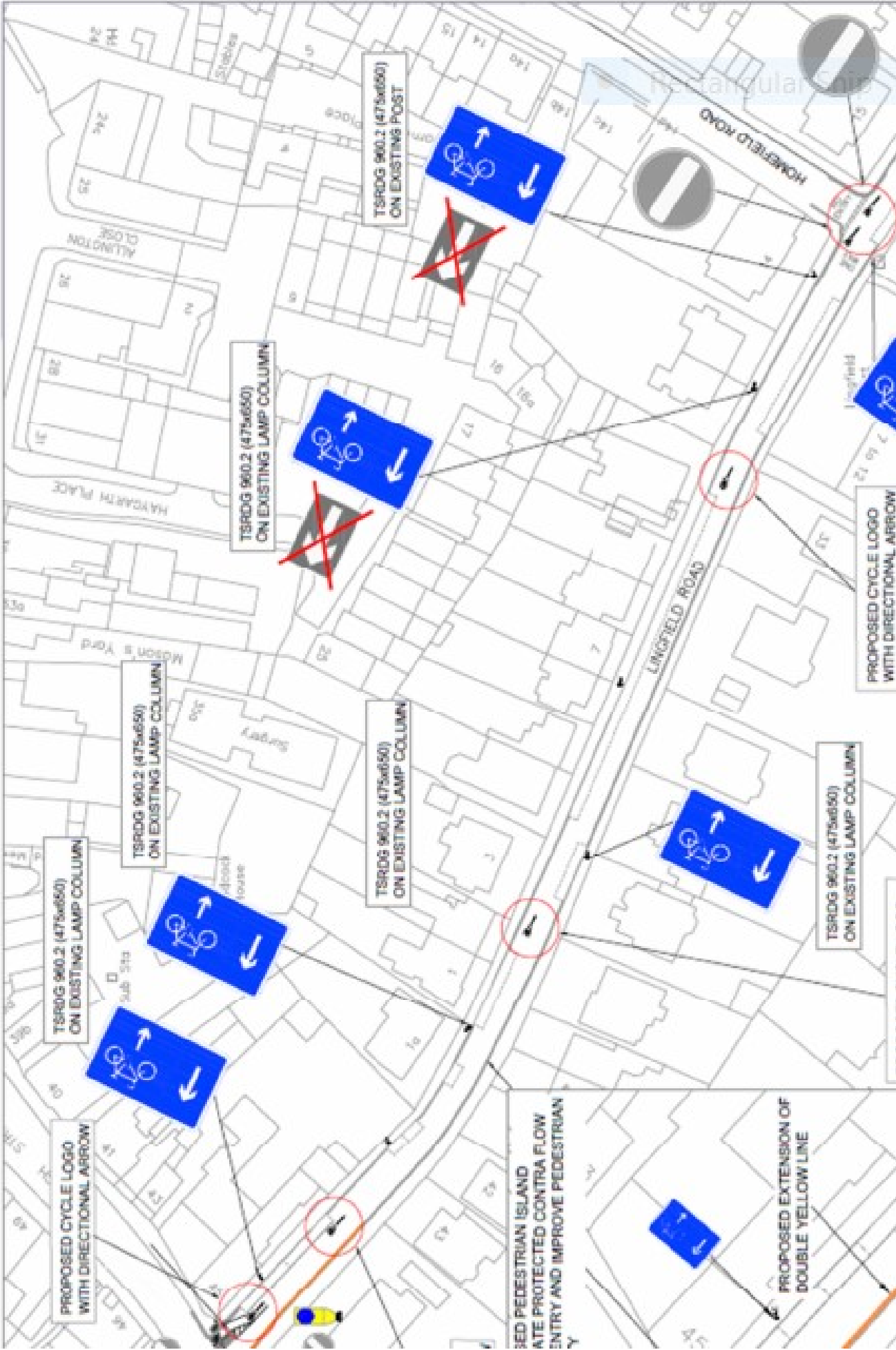
What happens next

A Notice of the Council's proposals to introduce the contraflow cycle measure and for increasing tactile paving lines will be published in a local newspaper Wimbledon and Wandsworth Times and the London Gazette; Notices will also be posted in the vicinity. Representations for and against the proposals described in this Notice must be put in writing – either email Traffic.AndHighways@merton.gov.uk or write to the E&R Department, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5DX by no later than **11th March 2021**, quoting reference **Lingfield Road-Contraflow**.

Objections must relate only to the elements of the scheme that are subject to this statutory consultation. Representations along with Officers' comments and recommendations will be presented in a report 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 the decision. This information is also available on Merton Council's website www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/traffic-and-highways/network-cycle-lanes.

A Notice of the Council's proposals for to allow contraflow cycling and the associated measures will be published in a local newspaper Wimbledon and Wandsworth Times and the London Gazette; Notices will also be posted in the vicinity. Representations for and against the proposals described in this Notice must be put in writing – either email Traffic.AndHighways@merton.gov.uk or write to the E&R Department, Traffic & Highways, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5DX by no later than **11th March 2021**, quoting reference **Lingfield Road-Contraflow**. Objections must relate only to the elements of the scheme that are subject to this statutory consultation.

All representations along with Officers' comments and recommendations will be presented in a report for 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 the decision. This information is also available on Merton Council's website www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/traffic-and-highways/network-cycle-lanes.



PROPOSED CYCLE LOGO WITH DIRECTIONAL ARROW

TSRDG 960.2 (475x650) ON EXISTING LAMP COLUMN

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TSRDG 960.2 (475x650) ON EXISTING LAMP COLUMN

TSRDG 960.2 (475x650) ON EXISTING POST

PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN ISLAND TO BE PROTECTED CONTRA FLOW ENTRY AND IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN

PROPOSED EXTENSION OF DOUBLE YELLOW LINE

PROPOSED CYCLE LOGO WITH DIRECTIONAL ARROW

TSRDG 960.2 (475x650) ON EXISTING LAMP COLUMN

www.angulark.co.uk

1:

As a cyclist I commend the Council's efforts to improve cycling permeability in the area. However as a resident (since 1980) of Lingfield Road I have severe reservations about the safety of the proposed contra flow.

Unfortunately Lingfield Road is used as a short cut for through traffic wanting to avoid the High Street. Frequently such traffic races along Lingfield Road at dangerous speeds- bad enough in the two way section south of Homefield Road, but potentially lethal in the one-way section to the north. Add cyclists coming the other way and you have a recipe for tragedy- speeding motorists meeting cyclists (families with children, perhaps riding carelessly, without proper lights at dusk etc). I fear Lingfield Road is a poor location for what in principle is an admirable concept. For this reason I am against the proposal.

2:

1. The proposal seems tailor - made to cause problems and needless risk of injury to cyclists and others.

2. A safer, simpler alternative would be The Grange (a much wider, straighter, less congested road with less dense on street parking) involving:

- a straightforward crossing of Ridgway from/to Ridgway Place and two simple turns into/out of The Grange and The Green along the relatively lightly trafficked Southside Common

- so avoiding the proposed dog-leg into/out of Ridgway Place and Lingfield Road and thus right turns into the busy Ridgway, and

- reducing potential conflict with horses exiting/entering High Street West.

3. The "Common" end of Lingfield Road is one way for good reasons. It is narrow and congested, yet is used not infrequently by large commercial and other vehicles (often to avoid the High Street) weaving between cars parked in bays on alternate sides of the road, as well as by residents. Lack of off-street parking for many of the houses (even numbers) on the north east (right hand) side of that end of the road necessitates the density of on street parking.

4. Crucial sightlines per the proposal would be poor or non - existent.

(i) Being necessarily kerbside, drivers of vehicles attempting to exit parking bays on the north east (right hand) side of Lingfield Road have no line of sight past adjacent parked vehicles to (proposed) oncoming cyclists. Drivers of such vehicles do have some vision behind them, via offside rear view mirrors, but cannot see ahead until well into the centre of the road.

(ii) Because of the narrow footways in Lingfield Road, drivers of vehicles exiting off street parking, at those houses which have it, have little or no relevant line of sight, in either direction, until their vehicle is well into the road, particularly if they have to reverse, as most do.

5. The existing four way junction of Lingfield Road, Southside Common, The Green and High Street West already creates a hazardous mix of vehicles, cyclists, pedestrians and horses (horses having a dedicated route through High Street West), particularly when HSW is closed for the street market, causing numerous motorists, unobservant of signs, to make U turns within the junction. The proposal would lead cyclists across this hazard, in both directions, needlessly.

6. The proposal bears all the hallmarks of being prepared hurriedly, and ill thought through. As a much safer, and simpler, alternative is readily available via The Grange and Southside Common, the current proposal should be abandoned.

3:

I very much approve of cycling as a green method of transport, however living in Lingfield Road I am really concerned that this contraflow will not be safe for anyone. Lingfield Road is very narrow with cars parked on both sides of the road. I observe cars, vans, lorries and cyclists continually weaving around parked cars and each other. For some reason the road is really busy and congested. I presume that this amount of traffic on a narrow road is why it is a one way street. Adding cyclists in a contraflow to this road would be extremely dangerous as they would be facing all this traffic weaving around and would not be able to get a clear view of what is coming. In fact the situation would be dangerous for everyone including the many pedestrians. At the moment cyclists wishing to reach the Ridgway must be using the parallel roads: the High Street and The Grange to name two. I think it would be prudent for cyclists, particularly families, to use The Grange. It is a wide, straight, calm road with very good visibility.

4:

Thank you for your letter about this new scheme. I am a resident of Lingfield Road. I would like to make the follow points against the proposal:

-the part of Lingfield Road where the contraflow is intended to operate is very narrow. With many parked cars on the road, there really is not the width to allow cycles and cars to pass safely going in opposite directions.

-Cyclists have a habit of driving the wrong way up Lingfield road from the common at the moment, and I have seen many near misses and this proposal with only likely make this worse as the volume of cyclists increases

-simply putting up some signs will not make a difference, there is just not room for the contraflow to operate safely.

-At the moment the legal option is to go via the Grange, a much wider road where everyone knows there is two way traffic.

-To reach the Grange requires cyclists to travel about 20/30 meters from the end of Lingfield road which I would suggest is not a hardship, and a much safer option.

-I am struggling to see what is to be gained from this proposal and it carries the risk of inflicting serious harm on cyclists and anxiety on all other drivers.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss any of the above.

5:

Thank you for your letter about this new scheme. I am a resident of Lingfield Road.

I would like to make the follow points against the proposal:

- The part of Lingfield Road where the contraflow is intended to operate is very narrow. With many parked cars on both sides of the road, there is insufficient width to allow cycles and cars to pass safely going in opposite directions.
- Cyclists have a habit of driving the wrong way up Lingfield road from the common at the moment and there are frequent near misses. This proposal with only make this worse as the volume of cyclists increases.
- Cyclists who cycle the wrong way currently on Lingfield Road often go onto the pavement because there is not enough room to allow them to pass an oncoming car. This is a danger to pedestrians. Again, this will be even worse of the volume of cyclists increases.
- Simply putting up some signs will not make a difference - there is just not room for the contraflow to operate safely.
- At the moment the legal option is to go via the Grange, a much wider road where everyone knows there is two way traffic. To reach the Grange requires cyclists to travel about 20/30 meters from the end of Lingfield road which is very close, easy and a much safer option.
- It is difficult (if not impossible) to see young cyclists coming the wrong way currently if parked between cars or reversing out from a parking spot off road.
- Because of the sight bend in the road at the top of Lingfield (near the Common), cyclists may not be able to see an oncoming car over parked cars until that car is almost upon them.

I am struggling to see what is to be gained from this proposal and it carries the risk of inflicting serious harm (or death) on cyclists and pedestrians and potentially other drivers. Please let me know if you would like to discuss any of the above.

6:

I was shocked and surprised to receive your proposal for the Lingfield Road - Contraflow. I live at No. x Lingfield Road and I would like to point out that cars driving past my house cannot see the common end of the road and therefore would have very little warning of 2 way cyclists - they are also still driving relatively fast particularly as it is a one way street. There can seem no reason for this scheme not to be rerouted along The Grange which is wider and a two way street. I am surprised at the lack of thought that this has been given.

7:

I am making representation against the contra-flow proposal for Lingfield Road. Lingfield Road is a narrow one way road with parking all the way down on one side. Encouraging cyclists to come down the wrong way will be dangerous for cyclists and for motorists who try to avoid the cyclists. When a car pulls out of a right hand side parking space, it is difficult to see cyclists who are coming the other way before the car is substantially across the narrow road.

Allowing cyclists to travel in the wrong direction will lead to accidents, potentially serious accidents. The adjacent road, The Grange, is a much wider road with room for two way traffic and it would be far safer for cyclists to use that road.

8:

I am appalled at the proposal for this contra-flow cycle lane in Lingfield Road. Lingfield Road is not nearly wide enough to safely accommodate cyclists riding against the flow of motor vehicles especially as it is usual for both sides of the road to be filled with parked cars. We will need eyes in the back of our heads to be able to see both cars coming from one direction and cyclists from the other whether pulling off a drive (reversing for many as not enough road space to swing into reversed parking) or out of a parking spot or simply crossing the road.

It is common to see cyclists riding the wrong way, in the one-way end of Lingfield Road, mount the pavement in order to avoid parked cars when faced with an oncoming car and I can only see this practice getting worse if they are allowed to come the other way too – people will get hurt!! or worse!!

There is also the problem of the bend at the end of the road which makes for very dangerous situations as cyclists approaching the bend, coming away from the common, using the proposed contra-flow, will have difficulty in seeing cars approaching from the Ridgway end until they are almost on top of the bend.

The Grange is much wider and I feel, much more suitable for this proposal.

I might add, that although a cyclist myself, I find the majority of cyclists around the common to be quite laissez-faire in their concentration and consideration of pedestrians and motor vehicles. They should be discouraged from cycling in areas where there are more hazards than in others and surely the safety of children on bicycles should be paramount?

9

I am a resident at xx Lingfield road, Wimbledon.

I object strongly to your proposal of cyclists being allowed to legally cycle against road traffic on our one way road. With parking at a premium, and both sides of the road being used for resident and visitor parking, it is madness to now allow for cyclists (who are unlicensed and often uneducated), to now be allowed to cycle against the (licensed and educated drivers), on our extremely busy one way road.

Please reconsider this move as even more cyclists will not endanger just their lives, but all the families walking, and (licensed) car drivers.

Due to lockdown, we now have many delivery vans who will surely become permanent for future deliveries to the many older aged residents in our road. These delivery drivers put even more pressure on narrowing of our one way road.

Please reconsider this drive to try and be politically correct to try and get people out of their cars. Please put more emphasis on getting cyclists educated in how to cycle on London roads, before you start legalising them to cycle against car drivers, on a one way road !

10:

I wish to object strongly to this proposal to open our one-way street to two-way cycling. Historically, Lingfield Road began as a simple field track behind houses grouped round the Village High Street. This explains two distinguishing features of our road, as compared to other roads running between the Ridgway and the Common.

First, our part of Lingfield Road is relatively narrow. It is just wide enough to permit a single line of parking at intervals on either side, under present rules, but too narrow for two cars to be parked opposite each other along this whole stretch.

Secondly, as Lingfield Road nears the Common, it makes a slight but definite bend to the right, and becomes even narrower. The driver of a vehicle approaching the Common at this point, and a cyclist coming the other way, can neither of them see far past the bend. Indeed personal observation confirms that cyclists keeping to the left from the Common end would not be able to see a car coming towards them past parked cars on the inside of the bend until it was practically on top of them.

In any case, as a consequence of the Covid lockdown and associated restrictions, noticeably more pedestrians than before are now using Lingfield Road, rather than the High Street itself, in order to access the Common for

exercise, and then return the way they came. Many of them are accompanied by children, or taking dogs for a walk, or pushing prams. Cyclists coming from both directions in the road would be an obvious hazard, especially for groups with young children.

Altogether it is hard to think of a less suitable place than Lingfield Road to choose for a cycling experiment of the kind being proposed. Surely the requirement should be for a road broad enough and straight enough to provide clear vision for all users from end to end.

Representation : Object Against

Noting that only the cycle contra-flow and the double yellow line extension require a statutory consultation, we would comment as follows:

1. *Increase the length of the double yellow lines at the junction at Southside Common by 20 metres.*

NO COMMENT.

2. *Proposed buildout to narrow pedestrian crossing point on Southside Common Junction*

NOT WORTH THE EFFORT, A WASTE OF MONEY

3. *Proposed pedestrian island to create protected contra-flow cycle entry and improve pedestrian visibility*

THE PLAN DETAILS ARE TOO SMALL TO READ ALTHOUGH THE MUTUAL BENEFIT TO EITHER PARTY SEEMS UNWORKABLE.

4. *'To improve cycle permeability in the local area'*

AS THIS PROPOSAL EMBRACES ONLY A 200M SECTION OF A NARROW ONE WAY STREET WE FEEL THE TRAFFIC ON SELECTED STREETS TO CREATE A MORE ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR WALKING AND CYCLING WHILST MAINTAINING ACCESSIBILITY FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS DELIVERIES, EMERGENCIES ETC 'MAY BE GROSSLY AMBITIOUS.

Cyclists travelling against the current one-way system are to be 'facilitated and safeguarded' rather than be warned by local constabulary that they are breaking the law. This plan seeks to allow cyclists, at a stroke, to legally ride in both directions. Cycle logos with directional arrows and signage 'to raise driver awareness of cyclists should also embrace 20 MPH speed limits and reciprocal awareness of cyclists to drivers.

The road has a mixture of on and off street parking. Those drivers who park on the right hand side have absolutely no visibility to see any oncoming cyclists and in turn the cyclists also wouldn't see if there was a car pulling out of a space. On the left hand side almost every dwelling has to reverse out onto the road, No.xx has planning permission for 4 cars all of which will have to reverse out on the bend, No.xx also has planning permission for another 2 cars. An additional factor is the building work at No.xx and No.xx which will result in heavy vehicular activity with the demolition and reconstruction work on the bend in the road which is likely to last 2 years, or possibly longer. Sight lines for reversing out is extremely poor and therefore exceedingly dangerous to many cyclists especially children who have little road awareness.

Whereas another car on the road will stop and wait, a cyclist will generally keep going, regardless of direction or even mount the pavement to avoid having to slow down or stop. The introduction of a priority regime with vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians competing is unlikely to carry any weight except with the pedestrians whom, as is usually the case, have to step off the pavement to avoid the cyclists.

The 'local area' referred to for permeability purposes seems focused specifically on Lingfield Road with no other reference to adjoining one-way streets, e.g Homefield Road, The High Street and The Green. Adjacent two-way streets, The Grange and Murray Road, would be better suited for cyclists as the current proposal seems very narrowly drawn and these two roads are wider, already have two way traffic and are not rat runs as Lingfield Road has become in recent years, with many drivers exceeding the 20MPH limit which is another danger to everyone.

This proposal would be best withdrawn and abandoned.

11:

The proposal to improve cycle permeability by making the one way section of Lingfield Road a two-way section for cyclists is strongly opposed as it is a major risk for pedestrians, runners and families with children/pushchairs.

First, granting this facility to cyclists is not going to provide significant gains. They can quite easily cycle through the high street, or one of the roads to get to the Ridgway end of Lingfield Road.

More importantly, the elderly and parents with children in pushchairs have to often resort to using the road

when the pavements are blocked for up to two days a week with wheelie bins, recycling boxes and garden refuse wheelie.

At present pedestrians and other walkers/runners only have to pay attention to one way traffic and the vehicle noise is also a good alert. They will not always be aware of the special arrangements for cyclists. Moreover, they won't notice them as cyclists tend to travel at great speed silently.

This is a bad proposal bringing undue stress and scope for accidents for the benefit of a few cyclists – who have reasonable alternate routes. I am deeply concerned and would not support the introduction of the changes proposed.

12

I refer to your note LINGFIELD ROAD CONTRA-FLOW CYCLE LANE – VILLAGE dated 18th February 2021. Please note this is an update to my previous email of Sat 27/02/2021 12:52 which should be deleted in preference to this. The only material change is the significant point and follow on implications related to the existing route 73 of the LCN Waymarked Trails, see below.

I live at xx, Lingfield Road, the last house on the left in Lingfield Road as you approach the end of the one-way section.

Summary:

1. Need
 - a. Travel down the Grange or along the dedicated cycle lane to the traffic lights on the high street are existing alternatives so this scheme which therefore has no justification or business case.
 - b. The only time I can perceive a possible need is when the new market is operating when there are restrictions to travel on the cycle path on the high street.
 - c. When the market obstructs the High Street, there is a danger that cyclists entering Lingfield road from South Common will draw with them motor vehicles.
 - d. Clear signage directing cyclists down The Grange could easily be put in place.
 - e. Cyclists could be encouraged to emerge by the war memorial onto the high street by moving the paths on the common and separating cyclists from pedestrians on the common as they approach the Green.
2. The current proposal is sub-optimal but could be improved provided:
 - a. The one way section is narrowed to a single vehicle width for the entire one way section by moving into the road to narrow it all of the existing car park spaces encroaching onto the existing road to create a segregated one way cycle path between the car park spaces and the pavement.
 - b. The existing car parking spaces should all be retained so that the chicane nature of the road is retained to maintain the existing physical restriction to speed, and indeed to enforce the separation between any new cycle path and the carriageway, so the additional double yellow lines are not required.
 - c. Given the new narrowness, bollards and extensions to the kerb should be put in place at the start and end of each section of the existing parking to protect parked vehicles from collisions with vehicles travelling on the road.
3. The current London Cycling Network route 73 as shown on this map includes the route down the Grange. This proposal corrupts the integrity of the extensive planning by gratuitous and unnecessary change that will cause confusion to cyclists (see trail 73 on <https://cycling.waymarkedtrails.org/#route?id=2695&map=14!51.4247!-0.2097>). The integrity of the LCN waymarked trails should not be corrupted by this proposal going ahead, though there may be a benefit of improved signage at the crossroads of Wimbledon Common Southside, The Green and Lingfield Road. This is illustrated via the link (see the trail marked 73).

I object to the scheme as proposed because of the loss of parking spaces and the materially increased risk of collision without a separation of traffic lanes imposing discipline on cyclists. I could potentially support a revised scheme that addressed both of these points and I describe a possible solution. However:

1. I cannot see how there is a sufficiently strong business case and hence believe this proposal fails to provide value for money.
2. There is no need on a number of counts identified above.
3. This scheme would damage the integrity of the integrated London Waymarked Trails route 73 which directs Cyclists down the Grange represents a superior, well thought through and integrated system, which this proposal would damage and confuse.

4. The likelihood is that this scheme will increase the risk to cyclists of collisions in Lingfield Road.
5. Cycle discipline on the common should be re-enforced so that cycle traffic does not emerge directly off the common as a 5th "road" at the junction, but should follow the path 73 to the war memorial to enable traffic to either join Parkside or pick up signage for route 73.

Detail:

I believe this proposed plan to be unnecessary as cyclists can easily travel down The Grange which is much wider and therefore that there is no cost justification for any investment on this scheme, or can travel down the cycle path shared with horse riders to the traffic lights on the high street.

Lingfield Road is currently a relatively safe road with very low speed traffic caused by the placing of the car parking spaces that effectively create a chicane that prevents cars travelling at more than 25 mph regardless of any statutory speed limits. Were any scheme to move or remove parking spaces to effectively give a straight route through, this would inevitably increase traffic speed and hence the risk of loss of life.

It also galls me to that you should propose rewarding the those currently behaving illegally by cycling down the 1 way street in the wrong direction. These people present a clear and present danger to themselves because of the risk of a car reversing out of a drive into their path or over them.

Cyclists are regrettably undisciplined and there is a material risk of cyclists including young children not keeping to a safe lane if there is no segregation between cyclists and traffic.

Further, car parking in Wimbledon is scarce and this proposal suggests removing 4 or possibly 5 car park spaces by placing additional double yellow lines on the last 20 m on the right at the end of Lingfield Road which is to be regretted.

It seems to me that a material reason for this request may be that the market on Sundays is obstructing the cycle path to the high street, so not only do Lingfield Road residents suffer from illegal vehicles driving down the road on Sunday but are now to be subjected to further impacts by the removal of much needed car park spaces and heightened risk of collisions.

I also flag up the danger of cars following cyclists into the road when they are not permitted. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the recent market has seen a dramatic increase of car traffic due to the lack of an exit for traffic driving east along Wimbledon Common South Side when the market blocks the road. In fact, a temporary no through road sign erected at the junction with the grange to direct traffic down the Grange would be a great help.

I can though see a solution be the following:

1. Narrowing the actual driving lane to strictly one lane width (it is probably 1.5 lanes width in most places), by moving the car park spaces on the right-hand side of the road into the road to cause it to narrow to one lane, and creating a "safe path" between the parking spaces and the current path.
2. Installing a separated cycling lane for cycling in the southerly direction **only** between the pavement and the car park spaces that have been moved into the road.
3. Placing additional kerb and bollards into the carriageway at the start of each block of car park spaces to protect parked cars from careless drivers.
4. It should be clear that cycles should give way to any vehicles emerging from garages where the visibility of a driver is restricted.
5. Possibly placing bollards at the entrance to the one way section of a cars width to prevent over width vehicles subject to allowing refuse vehicles and home food delivery vehicles to gain access, and in particular on the exit of the contra flow cycle lane, with a no entry to cycles to enter the lane moving north.

Any scheme which required cycles to keep left in a contra flow lane and required them to weave in and out of the chicane without separating them from the oncoming traffic would I think be reckless endangerment of cyclists significantly increasing the risk of an accident between cars and oncoming cyclists wandering out into the opposite lane.

As an addendum, since sending the first version of this note, I have been advised that the current London Cycling Network route 73 as shown on this map includes the route down the Grange. Rather than institute gratuitous and unnecessary change, I request that the existing, established and well thought through LCN waymarks should continue to be observed, perhaps with additional signage if there is any lack of clarity on the crossroads of Wimbledon Common Southside, The Green and Lingfield Road. This is illustrated via the link <https://cycling.waymarkedtrails.org/#route?id=2695&map=14!51.4247!-0.2097> (see the trail marked 73).

Ultimately though, I cannot see a cost benefit from the investment required when cyclists can easily travel down the Grange or along the high street.

13:

From our reading of your proposals the scheme appears more dangerous for cyclists rather than improving their facilities. Why direct them into a street against a single flow of traffic when the already documented cycle route 73 already directs them to the adjacent and 2 way route down the Grange. As a cyclist I would much prefer the safer Grange route, especially at night and also because of the comparatively simpler and less congested exit across the Ridgway into Ridgway Place.

Surely there are more worthy schemes on which to spend your time and our money ?

14:

I was keen that residents could have their say about the proposed changes to Lingfield Road. I realise there is still just over a week of the consultation to go but from the responses I have seen it is clear that there is genuine and reasonable concern about these plans. Residents are understandably worried that these plans will negatively impact on the safety of cyclists, residents and drivers. Whilst I fully support improved access to the common and village for cyclists it seems clear that alternative options should now be looked into.

15:

We would like to object to the proposal to introduce the contraflow cycle measure and for increasing the existing double yellow lines in Lingfield Road for the following reasons:

1. The road is too narrow to allow a car to pass a cyclist(s) without one party pulling over
2. The road is already overcrowded with an ever increasing no of cars as a result of the numerous flats already existing or being approved to be built in the road. They are parked on either side of the road meaning there is no clear view along the road to see cyclists approaching from the opposite direction. When you approach the top of the road if you are a cyclist you cannot see a car coming towards you past the parked cars until the last minute which is very dangerous
3. The traffic along the road has increased recently with more cars and vans delivering to houses in the area and so is much busier than it used to be
4. There are many residents that reverse their cars out of their drives onto the road because their driveways are not large enough to turn in. It would be difficult to see oncoming cyclists arriving in different directions sometimes at speed

In conclusion, Lingfield Road is not appropriate for the proposed contraflow cycle measure because it would not be safe for cyclists, many of whom are children who have visited the common. The road is too narrow and well used by vans, pedestrians and dog walkers weaving across the road up to the Common. The proposal is also unnecessary as there are plenty of other roads nearby such as The Grange, Murray Road and Lauriston Road that are two way roads and are much wider so are much more appropriate and safer to cycle up and down.

We are keen cyclists in our household and supportive of measures to encourage people onto their bikes but unfortunately cannot see the viability of this scheme in Lingfield Road.

16:

We are writing to object to the proposals to introduce/allow the contraflow cycle measure and for increasing the existing double yellow lines in Lingfield Road.

We believe the proposals are dangerous, impractical and a gross waste of public funds. In particular:

1. The road is already narrow and to add a two way element for cyclists will mean cars/cyclists will have to pull over to let cyclists pass – this is dangerous for cyclists and most certainly does not “safeguard” them.
2. There are certain blind spots in the road which means cars would not be able to see cyclists approaching, possibly at speed in the opposite direction. For this reason alone, the proposal is highly dangerous.
3. There are many residents (including us) who have to reverse their cars out of their drives. It is bad enough doing this whilst looking out for pedestrians both ways as well as cars from one direction. If there were also cyclists both ways who may be approaching at speed, this would be extremely dangerous.
4. The road is already overcrowded and the number of cars increasing, for instance planning permission being granted for one house to be replaced with several flats. Therefore, to propose increasing the traffic further with more cyclists is adding to the risk of accidents for pedestrians and cyclists.

5. Many large delivery vans and service vehicles are part of the traffic on the road on a daily basis. This will affect visibility of oncoming cyclists and will obviously be extremely dangerous.

6. Adding a two way cycle route where there is always dense parking on both sides of the road is impractical for cyclists and dangerous.

7. There are plenty of other quieter two way wider roads adjacent to Lingfield Road that already allow cyclists safer access to the Common from Ridgeway. The proposal is totally unnecessary.

17:

I wish to register our objection to the proposed contraflow cycling in Lingfield. I do not believe that this is a sensible or a safe thing to do.

Lingfield Rd is too narrow in the one way stretch of the road to be safe for cyclists. Visibility is poor at certain points for drivers and cyclists alike. A number of people have to back out or their drives with limited visibility. At some points depending on parking it is hard enough for a car to pass through without having to worry about cyclists coming down legally.

When cyclists come down the wrong way and find themselves facing a car they clearly instinctively feel that the road is too narrow for cyclist and oncoming car and they will typically ride onto the pavement. Obviously they do this in breach of the Highway Code and puts pedestrians at risk.

There is a much better way for cyclists to reach The Ridgeway and that is by going down The Grange, which is a wide, straight two way road. Travelling down The Grange has to be the safer option for cyclists. If this contra flow is put into place I very much fear there will be accidents.

Cyclists do come down the wrong way already and they put themselves at risk by doing so. We do not need more of them. In fact I would ask that the council do more to discourage cyclists from travelling down from Village to Ridgeway, not actively encourage them.

Last weekend I saw a child of perhaps 7 (so he was very low on his bike) coming down on the road at quite a pace with parents chatting and walking a considerable distance behind him. They were really not concentrating on him. If a vehicle had been coming out of a parking space at that point or reversing out from a drive then the driver may very well not have seen him. Your proposals would not have made him any safer. Traffic is particularly heavy on Sundays since the market was moved. Increased traffic means increased risks for cyclists.

It is not clear from the plan what is to happen to the parking spaces at the end of the road, but I suspect that with the suggested changes some spaces will be lost. We have already lost two spaces at the top end of the road within the last year or two (with no consultation). There is already considerable pressure on parking in this road. We cannot afford to lose further spaces.

I believe this proposal should be abandoned. It will only put cyclists, drivers and pedestrians at risk.

18:

Thank you for your letter of 18 February 2021 headed Lingfield Road Contra-flow Cycle Lane - Village.

We live at x Southside Common SW19 4TG on the corner of Lingfield Road and Southside Common. As you would imagine, we use Lingfield Road and the junction between Lingfield Road, Southside Common, The Green and the High Street extensively. We do this on foot, by car and by bike. Of course, we also see usage by others in all three modes.

We strongly object to the proposal. With due respect to the Officers suggesting it, based on experience and observation we believe the proposal is bad for cyclists, bad for pedestrians and bad for motorists. Our reasons are as follows:

1. Lingfield Road between Homefield Road and Southside Common is simply too narrow to sustain two way traffic of any sort. Although Lingfield Road appears straight on the map, because of parked vehicles, the actual roadway itself is windy and subject to reduced visibility in places - further problems for two-way use. Thus the proposal unacceptably involves the risk of collision between bikes going the "wrong" way and vehicles.
2. The footpaths on Lingfield Road are narrow in many places resulting in pedestrians often having to step into the road (even before this is currently compounded by the need for social distancing). Thus the

proposal unacceptably involves the risk of collision between bikes coming the "wrong" way and pedestrians.

3. The junction between Lingfield Road, Southside Common, The Green and the High Street is often busy but we perceive it works well. Indeed, we cannot recall seeing an accident in the 15 or so years we have lived here. Where we believe the chance of an accident has been increased recently has been due to the recent pedestrianisation of this end of the High Street on Sundays: every Sunday there are large numbers of vehicles arriving along Southside Common who have to turn around when they find the High Street is blocked off to them. The one saving grace, in our view, is that there is a lot of road space allowing the turning around to be completed relatively easily and therefore safely for all users. We believe that the proposal (which reduces the amount of turning space considerably) will increase the risk of accidents.
4. More generally, further complicating this junction by adding another direction for cyclists (compounding the two way flow for cyclists on the High Street which already has disadvantages for pedestrians) unacceptably increases the risk for everyone.

There are several other residential roads running from Southside Common to the Ridgeway which are generally quiet: we suggest these already provide ample access for cyclists at much less risk to them and others than the proposal would entail. If there really is a concern that cyclist access from the Common to the Ridgeway needs enhancing in some way, we would suggest exploring options on such roads which are already two way. However, we would respectfully suggest that any Council money to improve cycle permeability is better spent elsewhere in the Borough.

19:

I object to the proposed Cycle Lane. It would certainly be very dangerous, given how narrow the road is with the parked cars. Any of the other roads to the south West of us would be better suited.

20:

I am in favour of the scheme. However if you want to save some money there's no real need for it - quite easy just to cycle down the road as it is and nip onto the pavement if a car is coming the other way.

21:

At Merton Cycling Campaign we would like to emphasize that we are very much in favour of the proposals for southbound contra-flow cycling in Lingfield Road.

When Cycling from the Common area of Wimbledon Village, if taking the High Street, the first impediment to safe cycling is the Church Road roundabout which has three equally spaced exits. The result of the exit spacing is that when approached from the north there is a tendency for motorists not to indicate their intentions. 'Straight over' is ambiguous for motorists which makes it intimidating for the less intrepid cyclists (it can also cause confusion for pedestrians). The roundabout is followed by a bank of car parking and, after a double yellow line, a bus stop. Both forcing motor traffic into part of the northbound carriageway making it uncomfortable for someone cycling in the busy traffic situations as usually encountered in the High Street. This deterrent to many who cycle can be avoided by cycling the short contra-flow in Lingfield Road. It will not attract a vast quantity of cyclists but it will certainly help locals to cycle through the village in a reasonable, civilized and sensible way for southern destinations, particularly Wimbledon town centre shops, while avoiding the troubled traffic of Wimbledon High Street.

The type of cycling contra-flow, as proposed in the latest drawings, is well tried and successful in Britain in places where roads are of the proportion and layout of Lingfield Road.

Kind regards

Merton Cycling Campaign

I think most agree that shared road usage is a good thing, but it's important to acknowledge the practicalities and particularly the safety of all concerned, including pedestrians to whom even bicycles are a hazard. In that latter regard we also need to consider the increasing dangers presented by e-scooters which also make free use of cycleways and can easily cause accidents and injury.

You've noted 19 objections (vs only one submission in support), and I'd imagine that a significant proportion were lodged on safety grounds...so I'm surprised that you feel these concerns can be addressed with some markings on an otherwise narrow roadway. I'm also rather shocked that you regard the current illegal practice of cyclists as proper grounds on which to recommend the change in their favour; this seems to set a precedent whereby repeated offences simply result in the relaxation of restrictions.

I note that you are also proposing significant extensions to double-yellow lines; this could have an impact on other road users and residents far disproportionate to whatever benefits you feel might accrue from the changes proposed.

Cllr Andrew Howard

I agree with Cllr Howard's comments and recall expressing concern at the time of the consultation.

Residents will once again find themselves asking why they spend time responding in detail to consultations when their views aren't taken into account. Given the vocal and mostly reasonable support for improved cycling infrastructure, to only have one submission in support suggests that even amongst cyclists there is not great demand for this change.

I don't want to be alarmist but think we can reasonably expect that accidents will happen if this proposal goes forward.

Cllr Thomas Barlow