

August 2020 submission from SCF to  
Southampton City Council



**To Mr. Greg Churcher, SCC Transport**

Dear Greg,

as promised here is data collected so far - raw and collated for plotting.

Survey point = Hill Lane / Burgess Road junction to be able to capture bikes on northernmost section of Hill Lane, which is the one most adversely affected by the scheme, especially wrt parking for Common users. It also captures bikes entering and leaving The Common at the corner - i.e. not using Hill Lane cycle paths. By counting cars we can show % of journeys by bike and general # of cars as a proxy for state of the economy as come out of lockdown. We have also included Burgess Road in some of these counts to compare volumes of bike and car traffic on this road where nothing has been done for cyclists.

We have done 2 x 1 week's worth of counting at 7:00-9:00 am commuting peak - as stated aim is to get more using bikes for routine things like getting to work, so weekend leisure cyclists are not really high on agenda. First count was 3-4 weeks post installation, second 4 weeks later so plenty of time for local bike users to know they are there.

Lots of caveats in terms of schools not back, uni not back, many folks still working from home. Therefore we intend to repeat every 4 weeks ongoing.

Afraid that our conclusion so far, even with the caveats is that the scheme is a failure that doesn't justify the adverse effects on local communities.

- On average in weekday morning peak one cyclist every 10 minutes in each direction and at least as many using The Common.
- A significant number cycle on pavements to get around the double roundabout (one of the cycling campaign's 10 worst blackspots in the City) - completely contrary to social distancing justifications for the lanes and completely contrary to any pretence of a holistic corridor to Rownham and N. Baddersley - without fixing the issues of these roundabouts, this is going nowhere.
- The promised disabled spaces on local side roads haven't materialised, your WWW site says 3 on each of 3 roads, whereas only one on each of 3 side roads has been installed and those are in positions which our disability advisor considers incredibly dangerous for disabled users. I attach our 2 formal submissions to Highways Legal to date, the second of which details his concerns. We will be adding a further formal submission after each 4 week period.

This scheme also seems to be in total disregard of the statutory guidance from central government - that calls for:

- Mandatory lanes - these are part mandatory, part advisory and part non-existent.
- Physically separated lanes - absolutely not just paint, the Government was very clear on this
- Speed limits - 4 education establishments along Hill Lane and local residents report speed increases resulting from wider road now no parking.
- holistic approaches.

As a cyclist myself, and for SCF which has championed green travel, it really disappoints me that I have nothing good to report on the scheme, the Government's statutory guidance was a real potential game changer, but SCC seems to have ignored their guidance for "quick and dirty", "grab the handout schemes" with no apparent merit, holistic thinking or good design. All the current schemes must be assessed against the more recent, detailed Government guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>)



[Cycle infrastructure design \(LTN 1/20\) - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120)

Guidance for local authorities on designing high-quality, safe cycle infrastructure

[www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

This was a once in a lifetime opportunity for bold thinking but in many ways it has simply made things worse for many cyclists by really hacking off car drivers, rather than trying to win hearts and minds.

It also seems to have stalled all the other things that were going on.

There was a perfectly good scheme for The Avenue up to Burgess Road, and a public engagement exercise earlier this year. Has any report ever been written on the consultation exercise we all helped promote and took part in?

The Lovers walk planning application had a determination deadline of April. Again nothing, and I note that Nick Yeats put in a submission for Parks and Open Spaces objecting to it. To our thinking it beggars belief that an application would have been submitted in the first place if Parks were going to object.

I'm now going to suggest a few thoughts about possible alternative, radical ideas, yes they would cost more than a few cans of road paint but are worth putting out there.

(1) For top of hill lane, a physically segregated bi-directional cycle path on E side, restore parking on W side - see submission to highways legal for rationale.

(2) For The Avenue up to Burgess Road. Historically there used to be a tree-lined earthen path up the W side of The Avenue on the edge of The Common. It appears on the old, high

res OS maps as a double line of trees, one coniferous, one deciduous, and there are old postcards.



It has infilled with scrub and been lost - this could be recreated, with proper drainage etc as an off road cycle route up The Common, and as earthen, wouldn't need commons consent. Yes, some trees would be lost but could be mitigated with selected choice planting elsewhere (again to mitigate species being lost through disease).

(3) Similarly, along the top of The Common, parallel to Burgess Road, there is a path which if made good could avoid needing to use Burgess Road (as a cyclist, that road is evil!)

(3) You may remember that in summer 2019, we conducted an extensive series of lighting experiments on the Common. Whilst the full report isn't yet public, the take home message was that lighting paths had minimal effect on The Common's bats, so more lighting on The Common's major paths is justified and would facilitate green travel off road.

Illegal use of eScooters is beginning to become a potential issue on The Common and elsewhere and needs careful consideration. They have huge potential to facilitate green travel but the Government's trial, only applying to loan scooters, might be good for tourists, but won't help commuters in any way that we can see.

As always, really important to keep a dialogue going to seek common ground to support.

Very best,

Dave Johnston,

Secretary to SCF