

Wheelrights Routes Group

Notes of meeting on 22nd August 2020
in Ripples Café, West Cross

Present: Claudine Conway (CC), Dennis Dwyer (DD), Nick Guy (NG), David Judd (DJ), Mike Lewis (ML), David Naylor (DN), Dareyoush Rassi (DR), John Sayce (JS), Patrick Tribe (PT), Chris Walsh (CW).

Apologies: Allyson Evans (AE), Gordon Gibson (GG).

JS chaired the meeting. It was entirely about what we should put before the Council to enable them to address the concerns (of both Wheelrights and local inhabitants) about their plans for the reconfiguration of Mayals Road.

JS advised that four years ago the Council decided that new Active Travel routes would be created in ten wards. Mayals Road would be the tenth. The provision has generally been in the form of shared use paths (SUPs) rather than cycle lanes.

NG reported on his (virtual) meeting with cllr Mark Thomas. He (MT) had asked Lee Waters for three years to implement the Mayals Road work but has been allowed only one. JS noted that there was a precedent for the Council overrunning time limits; some of the work funded for 2018-19 was still not being complete. Cllr Thomas confirmed that there would be a consultation period but that because of the urgency it would be for less than three months.

There was a general discussion on what we should put before the Council. This would brief DN and PT for their meeting with Alan Ferris scheduled for 3 September and NG, JS & CW for the 15 September CAP meeting. We agreed to respond to the Council's proposals as follows:

Abbreviations: SUP: Shared use path; E, W, N, S: compass points.

1. SUPs. (Upper: S side, W from E of Fairwood Rd; lower: N side, E. from W of Clyne Dr.) **Accept**.
2. Raised platforms. **Accept**. They set a useful precedent.
3. Crossings. (Upper: Toucan at E end of upper SUP; middle: pedestrian from Mayals Green to Southerndown Ave; lower: Toucan at W end of lower SUP.) Accept all these but request that all are parallel crossings so that the middle one is also for cyclists.
4. Hybrid Cycleways. (On both sides of the road between the upper and lower crossings.) **Reject**, but replace them by measures to enable uphill cyclists to avoid the road and the inexperienced downhill as well. Options discussed include 2.0-2.5m wide 'uphill' SUPs with measures to restrict their downhill use to slow moving cyclists. These should be behind the trees, but on the north side we were uncertain whether the SUP should continue W of Southerndown Ave due to driveways. (See DN's post meeting note.)
5. Carriageway narrowing to 6m. **Neutral**. Possibly accept if they enable laybys at bus stops and for loading.
6. Tree felling. **Oppose**, except one or two at crossings if necessary for safety reasons.
7. Clyne Gardens link. **Promote**. While this had been rejected we agreed that it should be kept on the table. It had strong support, incl. from cllr Mark Childs.

In the exchanges leading to the above DJ, who had to leave the meeting early, noted that he was against the hybrid cycleways and accepted that cyclists would cycle down the road. This view was generally supported. He favoured SUPs on both sides but noted that there were more entrances on the south side.

PT noted that it appeared that this scheme was a necessary precursor to the GAP, for which funding would come later.

Regarding the 'uphill' SUPs, it was noted that if the cycle route counted as secondary the AT Guidance (DE024) allowed a minimum width of 2.5m, but if primary 3.0m. We thought that in view of the expected usage the route would be secondary. NG noted, however, that Ryland Jones thought it should be primary.

DN emphasized the need for the road to be made safer for downhill cyclists, highlighting the danger from cars emerging from driveways. He also felt that that the 'uphill' SUPs needed to be behind the trees both to provide a verge and to make them less obtrusive so that road cyclists are not intimidated by motorists telling them to get on to the path. With 2.5m clear space behind the trees this means that the path width would locally have to be restricted to about 2.0m, but could be wider between trees. 2.5m was suggested. DN also noted that measures may be needed to prevent root damage and that this should not be a major problem. To deter speeding NG liked the slogan "Slow your pace, share this space."

Regarding the proposed carriageway narrowing to 6.0m DN noted that this would take the traffic lanes out of the critical width of 3.2-3.9m thus making it safer for cyclists. He thought that this, together with islands at the crossing points, if provided (We don't know if they are planned. GG has advocated them.), should slow traffic. Both CC and ML noted the need to slow traffic.

CC noted that with the increased use of e-bikes we can expect more cyclists.

CW wondered if consultation is mandatory. NG advised that it is not, but, as noted above, will take place. DR noted that local residents are concerned about the plans, particularly the hybrid cycleways. They are being kept informed by means of the Mayals Residents Association. Those of them involved believe that working with Wheelrights is the best way of addressing their concerns.

JS advised that in making presentations to the Council we needed to keep things simple. In summarising the meeting he confirmed his support for the measures we are asking for.

DN: post meeting comment: Whether or not the north side SUP should continue past the houses between Southerndown Ave and the upper crossing was barely touched on at the meeting. If it does then inexperienced downhill cyclists, having crossed the road by the upper crossing, could use it. If not they could stay on the south side and cross either at the middle or at the lower. Experienced cyclists who had used the GAP to cross Clyne Common would cross the road at the upper crossing and then continue down on the road. (PT had commented to the effect that experienced cyclists are disinclined to keep crossing the road. This suggests that coming from the west they would stay on the B4436 rather than cross it twice to use the GAP.)

Photographs which illustrate key sections of Mayals Road follow as the appendix.

Notes prepared by
David Naylor

APPENDIX

Mayals Road

From west to east.
(Top to bottom.)

Across Southerndown Ave.
towards Westport Ave.



The upper pinch point.
Clyne Cresc. on left.



Above: E. of Westport
Ave. Gardens on left.

Right: lower
pinch point.



From east to west.
(Bottom to top.)



Mayals Road from
bottom. (Pinch point
in background.)



West of Clyne Drive opposite
Gardens entrance.



Fairwood Road junction.