

Wheelrights Routes Group
Notes of meeting on 12th September 2020
in Ripples Café, West Cross

Present Dennis Dwyer (DD), Nick Guy (GG), Mike Lewis (ML), David Naylor (DN), Dareyoush Rassi (DR), John Sayce (JS), Patrick Tribe (PT), Chris Walsh (CW).

1. **Matters arising** from meetings on 7 March, 1 and 22 August.
Covered in the other agenda items.

2. **Mayals Road.**

DN explained that Alan Ferris (AF) made it clear at his 3 September meeting with DN and PT that he could not accommodate Wheelrights request for extensions to the planned SUPs, both because of the physical width available and his terms of reference. He had no option but to go ahead with the hybrid cycle lanes, now modified to increase the road edge upstand from 25mm to 125mm. We were therefore left with the alternative of either accepting the plans (with possibly minor changes) or finding some way of changing AF's terms of reference.

We were unanimous (as were, DR confirmed, Mayals Road residents) that on safety grounds the hybrid cycle lanes were not acceptable. We were also unanimous that we should push for a solution which omitted the north side hybrid cycle lane thereby freeing up space to allow safer cycle provision on the south side. DN tabled a proposal, which he had drafted, which makes the case for this.

DN kicked off a discussion by going through the bullet points in the notes of the 3 Sep. meeting. (Available on the Mayals Road section on the Infrastructure page of Wheelrights website.) A particular issue was whether the south side cycle lane should be one- or two-way. We were divided on this. The case for it being one-way was that it would be free of oncoming cyclists descending the hill too fast. Motorists emerging from driveways (which persist the full length) would not expect cyclists coming from that direction. It is therefore a safety issue. The case for two-way was that this was the only way of providing downhill off-road cycle provision. JS noted that Wheelrights were obliged to cater for all cyclists. DN suggested that we seek AF's views and proposed to email him to find out. DN would also ask him would he, if allowed to, be willing to modify the plans to omit the north side hybrid. **[Action DN]**

Those attending the virtual CAP on 15 September (NG, JS and probably PT) would try and find out if and how AF terms of reference can be altered to enable him to respond to our recommendations. DN's proposal (included as the Appendix on p.3.) seeks to explain the situation in simple terms with a view to it being used, first at Council level and then if necessary at Welsh Gov. level, to get AF's terms of reference changed. He felt that it should be signed by either JS or NG. JS was reluctant but would think about it.

3. **2020/21 routes.**

- (a) Pontarddulais link. NG reported that the B4296 (Pentre Road) would be closed for five months while Network Rail maintained the rail bridge. Sustrans were pushing for a cycle bridge alongside, but it appears the funding is not available.
- (b) Swansea Central Bridge. JS reported that there was no change to the plans, ie narrowing to 4.5m width in the middle, but cycling would be allowed. (See notes of 7march meeting.)
- (c) Gors Avenue. JS, referring to the sub-standard cycle provision – 'dooring' was a particular danger – , advised that Simon Jones has agreed to a Risk Assessment and would have a video meeting with him. **[Action JS]**
- (d) NE Swansea. ML had an idea for a new link between Cwm Level Road and the DVLA. We agreed to consider this at the next meeting and hopefully check it out on a ride.

4. **Links to schools.**

DD noted that there was a move afoot to provide routes to 12 schools in west Swansea ranging from West Cross to Olfcha and Bishop's Gore. Mayals had a generous budget. Cllr Mark Childs was supportive, as was Sustrans Roger Dutton.

5. **Next meeting.**

10.00 am on Saturday, 3 October in Ripples Café, West Cross.

The ride

NG, DN, JS, and CW looked into the possibility of Clyne Gardens being used as an alternative route for cyclists on the north side of Mayals Road east from Westport Avenue.

They noted that the existing (approx. 3m wide) road was suitable for cyclists who could access it by the existing entrance at the top end. While not following the shortest route to this entrance it did provide an attractive alternative to the road.

They also noted that close to the top end of the lower SUP there was a Council owned property and a suitable entrance to connect to the road within the park could be made here.

Notes prepared by
David Naylor

APPENDIX on next page.

Mayals Road reconfiguration a proposed amendment

Introduction.

Swansea Council's plans to reconfigure this road offer improved safety for on-road cyclists but not for off-road. This was inevitable because of the restricted width. This proposal offers a way forward.

Where we are now.

In July 2020 Swansea Council had their application for Active Travel funding approved by the Welsh Government. This has enabled them to complete their plans to reconfigure Mayals Road, the essence of which is shown on the plan below. It comprises shared use paths (SUPs) at the top and bottom (There is a 80m fall from west to east.) connected by 'hybrid' cycle lanes on both sides of the road. Wheelrights, on seeing the plan had concerns, in particular about the hybrid lanes, and sought an alternative which would cater for both experienced cyclists and the less confident. They were however happy with the SUPs and with other aspects of the plan.

At a meeting on 3 September between two Wheelrights representatives and Alan Ferris, the officer responsible for the design, it was made clear that because of the conditions of the funding and restrictions imposed by the width available there was no alternative to the hybrid cycle lanes. These at 1.5m wide were the "absolute minimum" allowed in the Active Travel Guidelines, less than the "desired minimum" of 2.0m. They had however addressed a key concern of Wheelrights by increasing the "upstand" between the road and the cycle lane from 25mm to 125mm.

The resulting plan, shortly to be implemented, provides a route which is safer for on-road cyclists, but unfortunately not for off-road. This has been achieved by narrowing the carriageway to 6.0m to take it out of the 'critical range' and by providing greater separation from driveways. However the narrow hybrid cycle lanes, with no verge to separate them from the road, do not provide a safe off-road alternative. To enable a solution to be found the Councils' terms of reference, which do not permit a significant change to the plans, need to be changed. Hence this proposal.

The Proposal

Abandon the north side hybrid cycle lane but retain that on the south and the other parts of the scheme, ie the two SUPs, carriageway narrowing and raised platforms across junctions. The space freed up will allow greater width for the south side cycle lane, allowing a safer and more attractive facility to be provided.

In view of the requirement to complete this work by 31 March 2021 approval from the Welsh Government is urgently needed. Meanwhile construction on the two SUPs can proceed.

To be signed.

