

From: [REDACTED]
To: [North East Cambridge AAP](#)
Subject: Consultation: Draft North East Cambridge Area Action Plan
Date: 03 October 2020 12:52:07
Attachments: [BHS Access Cambs NE Cambridge Area Action Plan Diagrams 2.10.20.pdf](#)

Dear Sir

As the County Access & Bridleways Officer, I represent the riders and owners of the 25,500 horses (excluding the racing industry) in Cambridgeshire on behalf of the British Horse Society. This response is therefore a Stakeholder Response from a specific user group.

The survey fails to meet the requirements of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan (LTP) in that there is no reference whatsoever to equestrians – Active Travel is defined in the LTP as pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. This document therefore discriminates against one whole user group by excluding their opportunity to input.

The majority of the maps / schematics included in the survey are inaccurate and contain misleading information. The survey maps should have included the public rights of way correctly labelled. Describing a Byway as a cycle route is not only misleading but can be the cause of conflict between cyclists, expecting a path to themselves to speed along, becoming angry to find pedestrians and horse riders rightfully using the route and impeding the cyclists' way. This also raises the question of the status of the routes you are creating. Multi user routes should be created as Bridleways and included on the Definitive Map as such.

The complete omission of equestrians from the non-motorised user transport and travel sections needs to be corrected. The Greater Cambridge Partnership Greenways initiative is to deliver high quality non-motorised user routes for walkers, cyclists and equestrians. There are many equestrians located in and around Cambridge city and its rural surrounds on all sides. Horses live within the city confines and are regularly ridden across, through and around it.

The GCP Board have given equestrians some important undertakings :

1. None of their projects will reduce the public rights of way / access amenity of horses – in fact, they have undertake to improve the amenity.
2. They will seek to secure alternative routes where equestrians are excluded from any new path creation.
3. All Road Safety Audits will include the need to assess the impact of a route on the safety of equestrians. This is particularly important where the intention is to create on road cycle or shared cycle pedestrian paths which leave horses dangerously sandwiched between vehicular traffic on their outside and fast moving cycles on their inside.

These undertakings must be applied to all Cambridgeshire projects, including this one.

Any crossing of any major transport barriers, road, rail or river, needs to provide access for equestrians as well as pedestrians and cyclists. For example, equestrians from Waterbeach should have safe off road access to the Guided Busway bridleway. There should be a pleasant,

gold standard, Greenway link between the Waterbeach Greenway and the Guided busway. A pleasant route would benefit all users, walkers, cyclists, horse riders, runners, dog walkers and with careful design, could benefit the environment / biodiversity. The benefit of a rural environment on mental health and wellbeing is well documented and again has been highlighted during Covid 19 and Lockdown. The design team should consider a peripheral bridleway, similar to excellent peripheral bridleway at Cambourne, with links to existing rights of way.

Every opportunity should be taken to create multi user access, especially in links between communities and rights of way, as it is morally, socially and environmentally correct to spend public money to benefit the most users / user groups and enhance the environment. Covid 19 has demonstrated the need for public access which is something other than a tarmac path. We do not support the provision of tarmac only paths – there is a myriad of alternative pleasant surfaces which would enhance a rural feel of a path in an urban area and this is the standard to which Cambridgeshire should be aspiring.

Your map 2.1.3 shows Mere Way as a "non-surfaced off road cycle route". This is incorrect. It is a Public Byway and therefore open to walkers, cyclists, equestrians (ridden and driven) and unless there is a wet season closure gate on it, it is also open to motorised traffic.

The Chisholm Trail project underway should be usable by equestrians as well as cyclists and walkers. All three groups are vulnerable and need safe routes across the city. This project no longer complies with the requirements of the LTP and should be immediately reviewed.

No reference is made to the potential A10 transport project which will also impact on this area. It has already been stated that these major transport projects will include provision for equestrians along with the other non motorised users. It is therefore essential that similar provision should be provided in this project.

The following are comments against specific survey questions:

Q1 Question fails to meet the requirements of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Transport Plan which refers to Active Travel not just walking and cycling – Active Travel is defined as pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. Question also fails because it excludes any reference to leisure transport which includes equestrians.

Q1.2 No. Creation of restrictive pedestrian and cycling only access discriminates against females because the majority of horse riders are female. Excludes any equestrian access despite the fact that some of the links are to places equestrians use e.g. Milton Country Park, Waterbeach, proposals for Cambridges Lakes, some are to bridleways e.g. the Guided Busway bridleway and some are multi user routes e.g. the Greenways.

Policy 17: Connecting to the wider network

To improve the wider connectivity between North East Cambridge and adjoining areas including nearby villages, Cambridge city centre, employment and residential areas, and open spaces within the wider countryside and Rights of Way network development will be required to contribute to new and improved connections for non-motorised users, as shown on [Figure 37](#). The following new and improved provision must be incorporated early in the design stages and layout

of the development:

This refers to non motorised users but there is no reference whatsoever to equestrians. The British Horse Society has consulted and advised throughout the early stages of this project but its input and comments have been completely ignored. This is totally unacceptable. There is not one horse shown on Fig 37 despite a reference to provision for horse riders (with, of course, the usual caveat 'where appropriate') in connection with structures. These proposals fail to meet the requirements of the Equal Opportunities Act by excluding one group of NMU's.

Q7 No because you have not included any provision for equestrians.

Q9 Care needs to be taken not to endanger equestrians in the race to provide cycling facilities. Equestrians must not be left sandwiched between fast moving vehicular traffic and speeding cyclists. This will not apply to all roads but it could to some.

The needs and ambitions of equestrians and their riders is a specialised knowledge area. The BHS Cambridgeshire Access Team, together with the various local bridleway groups, are able to provide this specialised knowledge and are experienced in communicating with transport project groups. We would be very happy to provide you with any information you need.

I have attached some quick visuals to give you an idea of where equestrian rights of way have been omitted and ignored from your survey, where horses are currently kept – I have no doubt there are far more horses in the area than I have actually shown – and areas where equestrian access is permitted / should be permitted. I would be happy to elaborate on this brief submission.

Finally, I have tried to respond to your survey online but since we have not been included in any of the information, it is impossible to respond with any degree of clarity. I have therefore advised local riders to write to you direct. Please can you reassure me that lack of horse rider responses to the online survey (from which you have excluded the needs of horse riders), will not impact negatively on the evidence of the need for horse riders to be taken into consideration within the project?

Yours faithfully

Lynda Warth
County Access & Bridleways Officer – Cambridgeshire
British Horse Society