

# Bower Ashton Residents Association

Seeking to improve and protect our local environment

Customer Focus (JU/WH)  
FREEPOST BS6529  
Bristol  
BS1 5BR

Please reply to:  
Bower Ashton Residents Association  
c/o Jersey Cottage, Parklands Road  
Bower Ashton, Bristol BS3 2JR  
[grovesa@pbworld.com](mailto:grovesa@pbworld.com)

For the attention of Mr Jon Usher,  
Cycling City Team, Major Projects

29 January 2010

Dear Sirs

## **CYCLING CITY & CONNECT2 PROJECTS ASHTON COURT LINK PROPOSALS**

Thank you for your consultation on the above, dated December 2009.

This reply is on behalf of Bower Ashton Residents' Association, which currently represents residents from over fifty of the eighty or so dwellings in Bower Ashton, that part of the City most affected by the above proposals.

We have consulted local residents on your consultation and have the following comments to make.

### **General**

- 1) The consultation document presents the "Ashton Court Link" as the join between two parts of the Connect2 routes between Nailsea in the west and Hotwells in the east.
- 2) The route passes within but adjacent to the south-eastern margin of Ashton Court, the landscape of which is designated.
- 3) We note that the eastern section of the Connect2 route, between Hotwells and the A369 'Clanage' in the west, is already under construction. Residents have understandably asked whether the 'consultation' represents a *fait accompli*?
- 4) The proposed route does not represent the most direct route between these two sections but may represent the safest link, in terms of the interaction with vehicular traffic.
- 5) Notwithstanding the above, some residents who are committed cyclists have expressed their frustration that the proposed route represents a rather "pointless diversion" to the "commuting cyclist;" appearing to favour leisure cyclists, which Ashton Court has plenty of already.

Whilst we admire the aspiration behind the overall objectives behind the proposal, we have serious doubts that the *need* for it has been justified.

### **Specific**

- 6) A survey undertaken by us has indicated that the greatest single local concern is associated with public safety in relation to the increasing density of vehicular traffic and parking on local roads.
- 7) The eastern edge of the proposed route crosses Clanage Road, which is a fast and dangerous highway. We hope that the proposals under consideration will not be considered in isolation but will include the need for a suitable pedestrian crossing on this road, a situation which is badly in need of rectifying.
- 8) The junction of Clanage Road with Kennel Lodge Road is also dangerous. Northbound traffic on the A369 Portishead Road often turns into Kennel Lodge Road at speed (i.e. >40mph), which represents a serious risk to cyclists and pedestrians, particularly those unfamiliar with the local situation.

# Bower Ashton Residents Association

Seeking to improve and protect our local environment

- 9) The northern end of Kennel Lodge Road, at the point it enters Ashton Court, in the vicinity of the gate, is narrow and represents a hazard to pedestrians and cyclists in the presence of vehicles. The current layout will need amendment if it is to be fit for purpose at 'peak' times, which are likely to be at weekends. The consultation document provides no details about what is proposed here.
- 10) Current guidance recommends a minimum width of 3m of cycleway, with segregation for cyclists and pedestrians. The consultation document makes no reference to whether the proposals are for a metalled surface or one that is more 'natural', such as is present in Queens's Square. We would object to the provision of a permanent metalled surface in the grounds of Ashton Court, considering it unnecessary;
- 11) The proposals also make provision for a fence along the whole of the northern edge of the proposed route, the consultation justifying this on grounds of public safety in the presence of livestock. We find this slightly laughable. Are you suggesting that the Park is populated by wildebeest and rhino, rather than the half a dozen or so young stock that occasionally graze adjacent to that margin? Most of us who currently walk along that boundary with our children do so because it is open grassland and are quite happy to take our chance in the possible presence of a few young cows. Come on.
- 12) More seriously, several residents have raised concerns about their safety within what would, in effect be, a *cordon sanitaire* between a hedgerow to the south-east and a metal fence to the north-west, and would feel much happier without a fence, particularly where the need for one is tenuous.
- 13) Furthermore, producing a corridor with such a fence will cut several existing footpaths between Bower Ashton and Ashton Court. The consultation document makes no mention of these or what measures are proposed to retain them.
- 14) At the southern end of the proposed route, we note that it is proposed to open up a new opening through the Estate wall, which will no doubt be costly. Has no consideration been given to use of the old gatehouse on Ashton Road?
- 15) We also note that the proposals are for 24 hour access to the route. Why is this, when the Estate roads and gates are normally locked at night? Is it honestly thought that the proposed fence will prevent mischievousness?

In summary, whilst, we do not object to the proposals outright, we consider there to be many weak points in their justification and that a considerable amount of serious thought is required before we can be convinced of joined-up thinking on this matter.

## Close

I trust this reply is useful. Should you require clarification on any point or wish to consult with the Association further on this, please contact me at the above address or on direct telephone no. 0117 9339305 during work hours. I can confirm that our Committee would be pleased to discuss our response with you in more detail.

Yours sincerely

**Alasdair Groves, Chairman**