

M27/A3024 Response

Southampton Cycling Campaign cannot support this scheme in its current form for the following reasons

1. The scheme does not adhere to any of the ideals and aspirations of Southampton City Council's 10 year cycling strategy. More specifically the cycling facilities lack safety, speed and convenience.
2. The cycle facilities proposed fall far short of those required to encourage commuters to switch modes from cars and become cycling commuters. Every person who chooses to cycle instead of driving a car will help to reduce the congestion and pollution along the A3024. This impact would be even more enhanced if cyclists commute from Hedge End and Botley as it would reduce the number of cars having to cross the M27 at Junction 8 and 7 and helping to reduce congestion on the M27 slip roads and Windhover roundabout
3. Increased Congestion and Pollution
The campaign believes that any increase in motorised traffic along the A3024, no matter how well managed, will inevitably lead to greater congestion and more pollution for local residents, which is entirely unacceptable on both health and environmental grounds. It has been evident for many decades that the private motor car while very convenient is the most inefficient form of transport by a long way compared to walking, cycling and public transport, taking up far more road space than is necessary to move an 80kg human a few miles. So if Southampton needs to be served by an ever increasing number of people, then investment in more efficient and sustainable forms of transport would be the best way to do this. This could include but not be limited to
 - 3.1. Dedicated 'Freeway' segregated cycle route along the majority of the A3024, with an additional cycle route along Thornhill Park rd (as outlined in the 10 year cycling plan) helping to link Hedge End to the City Centre. This will be joined by city routes and quietways allowing access to cyclists to and from the schools and residential areas either side of the A3024.
 - 3.2. More frequent buses, especially from Hedge End. Possibly with some dedicated fast commuter buses with minimal stops into the city centre from Hedge End.
 - 3.3. Better routes for buses including an improved Bitterne gating system to give buses preference at junctions on the A3024. When introduced in the 1970's it had a large impact on reducing journey times for all vehicles. Whilst it may need updating, the principle is still sound.
 - 3.4. Dedicated bus lanes where appropriate.
 - 3.5. More frequent trains especially from Portsmouth and Fareham. This would dramatically reduce the number of people using the M27.
 - 3.6. Increase yobike hire scheme to East of River Itchen and put bikes at all train stations. People may choose to get a train from Portsmouth and ride a bike from Bitterne Station into the city if the price could be included as part of their train ticket
 - 3.7. Park and Ride scheme at Junction 7 and/or 8 of the M27. Park and ride scheme to include bike hire and a dedicated safe cycle route to join up with the Southampton Cycle Network.
4. Further Splitting of Communities
The A3024 goes right through the middle of a densely populated residential part of Southampton, and any increase in the flow of traffic will have a negative impact on the time it takes pedestrians and cyclists to cross from one side to another. It is also likely to have a negative impact on the numbers of people using active forms of travel including walking and cycling.
 - 4.1. To illustrate just how many people, particularly families and children have to cross this road on a daily basis the cycling campaign has identified the following schools and colleges that have catchment areas that cover both sides of the A3024. Combined these school and colleges will have hundreds if not thousands of students travelling across the A3024 twice a day. The proposed scheme along the entire length of the A3024 makes some minor improvements to existing junctions for pedestrians and cyclists but does not add any additional crossings or make any significant improvements to safety or speed of crossing. This is especially important at junctions where children are likely to be trying to cross this busy road.
 - 4.1.1. St Mary's CofE Primary
 - 4.1.2. Bitterne Manor Primary
 - 4.1.3. Glenfield Infants
 - 4.1.4. Bitterne CE Primary
 - 4.1.5. Hightown Primary
 - 4.1.6. Mount Pleasant Junior
 - 4.1.7. Beechwood Junior
 - 4.1.8. Sholing Tech College
 - 4.1.9. Bitterne Park School
 - 4.1.10. Springwell School
 - 4.1.11. Thornhill Primary School
 - 4.1.12. Sholing Junior School
 - 4.1.13. Itchen College
 - 4.1.14. Oasis Academy

4.1.15. Mayfield

4.1.16. Woodlands Community College

4.2. Suitable pedestrian and cycling Crossings

Pedestrians and cyclists need to cross the A3024 safely. But crossing that take too long or take people too far from their direct route encourage people to risk crossing this busy road at locations unsuitable for pedestrians and is a large risk, especially for children. Not having suitable crossings and bike lanes leading to these crossings will again have a negative impact on active travel modes.

4.3. One example of this that needs to have a direct crossing is the junction at Bullar Rd /Athelston Road. The pedestrians crossings are phased in such a way that if a child going to school wishes to cross from the corner of Bullar Rd and Macnaghten Rd by The Station pub, to the West corner of Athelstan Rd/A3024 then it takes 7 minutes for them to cross this junction. <https://youtu.be/KZ592h4Qo6A>

4.3.1. Many pedestrians and in particular children are not patient enough to wait this length of time, and consequently they regularly risk their lives by jumping the barrier and running straight across 4 lanes of traffic. A direct crossing at this junction would prevent this happening.

4.3.2. Less confident cyclists who need to use this junction are unlikely to cycle at all because they will not wish to wait this long and don't have the confidence to use this complex junction.

4.3.3. The shared use paths proposed on the south side of the A3024 are narrow and if cyclists wish to use the proposed cycle lane extension on the north side of the Bittern rail bridge, then they will need a safe, direct way to cross the A3024 to continue their journey safely.

4.3.4. Our preferred solution for this specific junction, would be a simultaneous green for pedestrians and cyclists at this junction to allow safe access. So all road traffic would be on a red signal.

4.4. Danger from busy roads is the number one reason cited by people as a reason why they don't cycle and don't allow their children to travel to school on their own. This perceived danger from road traffic, increases the chances that parents will drive their children to school by car, having a negative impact on the number of people using active forms of travel. As people become less active they are less likely to cycle, more traffic and cause more congestion and this creates a downward spiral of increased car use and less active travel. Worse even than the impact on peoples health from lack of exercise is the increased exposure to children travelling by cars. Studies have shown that exposure to pollutants are up to 10 times higher when inside a car compared to cycling on the same stretch of road.

Good quality cycling infrastructure can be measured by the number of people who choose to use it, and particularly by the number of people who are not young and male who chose to use it (A large majority of commuter cyclists fall into this category). The cycling campaign would prefer to see segregated on road bicycle lanes for busy commuter routes allowing safe, quick and convenient access. This should then join up with other cycle routes within the local communities either side of the A3024, linking schools, shops and other frequently visited locations. This would encourage more vulnerable cyclists to cycle more often and be more active and make cycling an everyday and normal thing to do.

Response to the four Major parts of this scheme

M27 Junction / Windhover roundabout

- The alternative pedestrian and cycle route between Windhover Roundabout and Hedge End is a 3m wide shared use path along the south of the A3024 between Windhover roundabout and the M27 and signalled crossings on the M27 Eastern slip roads. This will create a relatively safe if unpleasant route linking local communities separated by the M27 so may be important for a small number of people. However the campaign does not believe it will be used much by cyclists for the following reasons
 - 1) It would take people too far out of their way if travelling between Hedge End and Southampton
 - 2) Crossing this motorway slip road then crossing Windhover roundabout would take too long. Possibly adding 15-20 minutes onto journey time for a cyclist or pedestrian
 - 3) Better alternative routes already exist from Hedge End I.E. St Johns rd and Upper Northam Drive. Money for this scheme could be better used to improve these exiting routes for cyclists. Every additional cyclist who uses these routes crossing the M27 would remove another car from using Junctions 7 and 8 of the M27 and/or Windhover roundabout, thus helping with the aim to reduce congestion on the M27.
- The additional cycling and pedestrian crossings on the Windhover roundabout will make crossing this busy roundabout safer which we support. But, as this will be time consuming having to wait at several crossings to make their way across this junction it will be inconvenient to use for most cyclists. It is unlikely, therefore, to have a major impact on the number of cyclists wishing to cross this multi-lane roundabout and as mentioned above, the campaign believes there already better alternative cycling routes that should also be developed

A3024 Corridor

- The campaign believes that fully segregated on road bicycle lanes for the majority of the A3024, would be the best option to increase modal share of cycling. Creating a safe cycle route separate from motorised traffic would encourage cyclists of all abilities to use this route.

- The A3024 forms part of route 10 of the proposed Southampton Cycle Network (SCN10), and has been designated a Cycle Freeway which should be capable of carrying over 100 cyclists per hour at peak times in complete safety. To quote from Cycle Southampton – A strategy for our city 2017-2027. “Freeways – these are a network of high quality, safe and easy to use direct cycle corridors that radiate out from the city centre along the main arterial transport routes. They connect to the main places of employment, education, health, leisure, transport, new development, and onwards into the neighbouring towns and villages (IE Hedge End). They carry high volumes of cyclists (over 100 per hour) and be an exemplar ready to carry more. As a minimum they will look to have extensive safe segregation along the length of the corridor”
- Shared use paths as proposed along the whole route, are not suitable for commuter cyclists who will be put off using them because they often have to stop at every side junction slowing their progress. For this reason they will prefer to go on the road which would become more dangerous due to the faster and increasing volume of traffic predicted. This will have the inevitable consequence, in time, of slowing traffic speeds and increasing congestion making it more difficult again for commuting cyclists. Having no special facilities on-road, save a few advanced stop lines (ASL's) they will then have no-where to turn for alternative facilities which a Cycle Freeway system would provide. So the campaign does not support the use of shared use paths for such a busy commuter route.
- Shared use paths when used on busy routes, and particularly on narrow pavements cause direct conflict between cyclists and pedestrians and are disliked by equally by both. The last cyclist fatality on the A3024 was a young woman who worked for the fire service, cycling on a shared-use pavement and killed by a lorry while crossing a side junction.
- If the scheme does go ahead with shared use paths along any part of the A3024 then they should meet the following minimum criteria or they will not be supported by the cycling campaign.
 - 1) Ideal width would be 4.5m – 2m for pedestrians and 2.5m for cyclists to pass safely.
 - 2) Minimum safe width along busy sections would be 3m. The campaign has not had access to detailed information along the entire A3024 but some sections appear to have shared use paths as narrow as 2m wide which is completely unacceptable as it will cause potentially dangerous conflict.
 - 3) All non signalled side junctions should have raised tables and priority for cyclists, with give way signs for motorists. These junctions have so far been identified as
 - 4) Business entrances where practical including (but not exclusive to) Entrance to Dolphin Motorhomes, BP and Esso petrol stations, Ravenscroft Motor Company & Enterprise Car Hire, heading West and Riverside Family Church, Elite Service Centre, BP Petrol Station, Peugeot garage heading East.
 - 5) Heading west into the city the following junctions; Coates Rd, Warburton Rd, Burseldon Rd (Nos 306-332), Sedgewick Road, Burseldon Rd (Leading to 180A Burseldon rd), Chatsworth Rd, Chessel Crescent, Quayside Rd, Northam Rd – leading to Coalporters Rowing Club, Kent St, A safe way to cross A33 Kingsway into New rd
 - 6) Heading east from the city centre the following junctions; Radcliffe rd (requires dropped kerb) Hawkeswood rd, Roman Court, Englefield rd, Midanbury L, Maple Rd, Glenfield Avenue, Upper Deacon rd, High Point.

Bitterne Railway Bridge

- The interesting part of this section is the proposed extension on the north side of the railway bridge to create a 3m wide shared use path. We do not understand why this is being added if the existing paths to the north and south are also being widened.
- If the shared use extension is created this would be a great opportunity to include a ramp to the West bound platform of Bitterne Station which currently does not have wheelchair access.
- If the shared use extension of the bridge is proposed to be the main cycling route, then how will people on the southern side of the A3024 access this?
- This is the most confusing part of the whole scheme and we wish to seek clarification of what is proposed.

Northam Rail Bridge

- The campaign supports the rebuilding and widening of this important strategic route into the city centre, as this will allow the continuation of buses across the bridge and offer more space for cycling. As with the rest of this route our preferred option would be segregated cycle lanes across this bridge with a direct route into the city centre through Six Dials junction and along New Rd.
- National Cycle Route 23 – this very important safe cycle route currently runs underneath the railway bridge through a subway, and is used extensively by cyclists. Two options have been proposed.
 - 1) Option 3A will reroute the NCR 23 across the A3024 and down Britannia rd. The cycle campaign is not in favour of this option, and will fight any attempt to build this for the following reasons
 - It is not a continuous route across the junction and will force cyclists to stop and wait for lights
 - It is likely to be broken into two with a wait in the middle off the junction exposing cyclists to unnecessary pollution and wasting more time
 - Cyclists would have to cycle along a route into an industrial estate used by many HGV's
 - 2) Option 3B will change the location of the subway but maintain the same general route underneath the A3024 joining Radcliffe rd with St Marys Football Stadium. This is the option supported by the cycling campaign.

- As this is such an important cycling route, during construction of the new Railway bridges, the campaign would recommend a temporary direct toucan crossing from Radcliffe rd to Britannia rd allowing cyclists and pedestrians to cross this dual carriageway in a single phase.
- Currently, despite being a National cycle route, there is no dropped kerb for cyclists to access this to and from Radcliffe road. This will need to be remedied.