




Route Name: A6 Greaves Road / Scotforth Road, (Pointer Roundabout to Galgate)
Date / Time of Visit: 10 th and 11 th December 2008
By: Andy Mayo (Local Transport Projects Ltd.)
Drawing Title: OS plans of the route were provided by Gary Bowker (Lancaster City Council), and also road casualty details.
Summary of Problem: The A6 is used by some cyclists as a commuter route, offering a fast and direct link to Lancaster from several settlements to the south, and also between the City Centre and University. It has favourable gradient though it is heavily trafficked, with a significant proportion of HGVs.
Objective of Advice: To identify potential improvements to the existing A6 route in order to help make cycling safer and more enjoyable. In particular, the Pointer Roundabout requires looking at to identify any improvements that may be possible to improve the safety and convenience of the junction for cyclists.
Methodology: The full route was surveyed by bicycle and notes taken plus a photographic record of any issues identified. The following table summarises this work and recommends suitable improvements where appropriate.


ISSUE 1


Table 1 – Summary of Issues and Recommendations

Location	Picture	Issues	Recommendations
<p>1. South Road between Penny Street Junction and Pointer Roundabout</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volume of traffic, (including large proportion of HGV / bus), • Heavy demand for on-street parking, particularly on west side, • No facilities for cyclists – intimidating traffic environment for cyclists, particularly for the less confident. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory cycle lanes would provide space for cyclists and some segregation from the heavy traffic. They would also serve to highlight the presence of cyclists to motorists and help cyclists feel less vulnerable. • Carry out parking turnover surveys to determine the location and duration of on-street parking along the route. This will inform the decision on whether advisory cycle lanes are feasible on this section. Site observations revealed a significant amount of on-street parking takes place, and there are likely to be significant objections to the introduction of any waiting restrictions. However, without such restrictions, there does not appear to be sufficient carriageway space available in order to implement advisory cycle lanes. It may be possible to implement advisory cycle lanes in one direction only, but care must be taken to ensure this would not result in a worsening of conditions for cyclists in the opposite direction, (for example if the width of the remaining traffic lane was significantly reduced).


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<p>2. Pointer Roundabout - southbound</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volume of traffic, (including large proportion of HGV / bus), • Problems for cyclists typical to most large roundabouts, including vehicles entering roundabout into path of cyclists and general lack of visibility of cyclists due to circulating traffic and speed differential, • 5 cycle casualties in period 2003 to 2008 (4 in 2007-08). All 5 appear to involve motor vehicle drivers 'failing to see' cyclists. 4 of the 5 occurred on the west side of the roundabout, • No facilities for cyclists – intimidating traffic environment for cyclists, particularly for the less confident, • Pedestrian buildout at southern end of roundabout, leading to potential pinch point for cyclists, (though there does appear to be approximately 4 to 4.5m width available), • The shape of the roundabout, with long straight sections to the east and west sides, encourages high speeds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install advisory cycle lanes around the outside of the roundabout (subject to sufficient carriageway width being available). Continue cycle lanes across the entry legs and provide coloured surfacing in order to highlight the potential presence of cyclists to approaching drivers. 1.5m cycle lanes in the vicinity of the recent buildout areas would also help to address concerns over cyclists being "squeezed" in the vicinity of these features. A preliminary drawing of the above suggestion is appended to this report. • For southbound cyclists it may be possible to also provide an off-road path, utilising the existing footway, with suitable improvement works. Southbound cyclists would enter the shared footway immediately south of the surgery entrance, then use the footway, (suitably widened), in order to ride up to Bowerham Road. There is a wide splitter island out of Bowerham Road which could be utilised in order to enable cyclists to cross in two stages, continuing southward on the converted footway to emerge back onto the southbound carriageway of Scotforth Road just north of the telephone box. Though this would require cyclists to give way to traffic entering and emerging from Bowerham Road, and also upon re-entering Scotforth Road, the advantage is that they would be segregated from heavy traffic in the vicinity of the roundabout junction. Those cyclists who wished to remain on the carriageway could do so and the proposed cycle lanes on the roundabout would facilitate this.



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<p>3. Pointer Roundabout - northbound</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above. This junction could act as a key deterrent to more cycling along the A6. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the large size of the central island, consideration was given to the possibility of providing some form of off road track through the centre of the roundabout, for cyclists. However, due to the relatively long east and west sides of the roundabout circulatory speeds are high, and this would introduce additional conflict points where cyclists may be vulnerable. Also, the central area of the roundabout is significantly higher than the surrounding carriageway and there are mature trees and other vegetation in place. This option may have some merit if the junction was signalled, but this would have a very high capital cost and may also have implications for traffic capacity. Given that the remainder of the A6 route is likely to only be suitable for experienced cyclists, (see below), it is recommended that a thorough cost / benefit analysis is carried out if the signal option is to be taken any further. A useful link for cyclists can be provided relatively easily along the southern part of the roundabout, linking Greaves Road with Ashton Road. This could be accomplished either by providing a short section of new off road cycle track to cut through onto Alma Road, or else widening the existing footway which runs adjacent to the roundabout. Either option would enable cyclists to emerge out onto Ashton Road without having to enter the roundabout. Careful design would be required at either end to ensure safe access / egress for cyclists, and also the issue over how any cyclists using it in the reverse direction (west to east) would need to be

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			<p>considered as part of the design.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options to improve the northbound movement for cyclists off road are restricted by the existing footway being indirect / narrow, and also the presence of a retaining wall along the western side of the roundabout. It may be possible to extend the western kerbline into the roundabout by approximately 1m in order to facilitate the introduction of an off-road cycle track. However this would still require cyclists to emerge back into the circulatory carriageway further north creating a potential conflict point and the swept paths of large vehicles are likely to encroach into the widened cycletrack area. Any barriers / bollards placed here to prevent this would significantly reduce the width of the cycle track so this option is unlikely to be viable. Furthermore, this would have a negative impact on any on road cycle lanes provided along this side of the roundabout (see point above). The advisory cycle lanes outlined above would be particularly useful in the northbound direction. The casualty data shows that 4/5 of the cycle collisions occurred on the western side of the roundabout (northbound), and from the clear language descriptions it appears that the drivers entering or circulating the roundabout 'failed to see' a cyclist who was on the circulatory carriageway. Coloured cycle lanes would help to draw drivers' attention to the possibility of encountering a cyclist and should help address the identified collisions.

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<p>4. Greaves Road / Scotforth Road - Pointer Roundabout to Rays Drive (end of built-up area).</p>	<p>No pic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section of the route has a 30mph speed limit with safety camera enforcement. Intermittent on-street parking was observed along parts of the route and there are a number of kerb buildouts either at side road junctions, pedestrian crossings or to protect parking bays. These reduce the amount of carriageway space available for cyclists. A reasonable number of cyclists were observed using the route during the site visits, most of whom appeared to be the confident commuter type. • The carriageway appears to range from approximately 7.3m wide up to around 10m, though there are various right turn lanes / central hatching areas which reduce the effective lane width for traffic (and cyclists). • Over the last 5 year period there have been 9 injury collisions involving cyclists along this length, (no details provided). • The Advanced Stop Lines on the approach to the A6 / Ashford Road signals do appear to offer some advantage to cyclists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the wide range of conflicting demands along this section of the route with regards to parking, loading, pedestrian crossings, and the heavy traffic which the A6 route is required to carry, it is difficult to identify any viable on-road measures that would significantly improve conditions for cyclists or help to provide route continuity. The nature and volume of traffic would make the implementation of any traffic reduction / traffic calming measures very difficult, and it does not appear possible to provide cycle lanes due to width constraints and the varying demands for space highlighted. • On-line cycle facilities off the carriageway also do not appear to be feasible. There are numerous side road junctions, accesses and narrow footways in places,

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<p>5. Scotforth Road, end of built-up area to Galgate</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section has a 50mph speed limit and generally lies in open countryside. It forms a direct link between Lancaster University and the City Centre, for cyclists. The road appears to be between 7m and 8m in width, with localised widening at some junctions. The main issue for cyclists is the speed and volume of traffic, the significant proportion of HGVs and the constrained carriageway width. These issues combined make it unpleasant to cycle along. • There are no carriageway margins ('metre strips') for cyclists to ride in. • There are a number of carriageway surface defects that, whilst perhaps not meeting Highway Maintenance intervention levels, cause significant problems for cyclists, with a risk of loss of control. These tend to be concentrated in the first 1.0 to 1.5m out from the kerb in the strip where cyclists tend to ride. Specific areas noted for attention are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In vicinity of the derelict "Lancaster City Garages" building; 2. On the southbound approach to the University access road, (just before the start of the dual carriageway section). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although no speed measurement data was available, experience from the site visits would suggest that the current 50mph speed limit is appropriate for the route, given the open nature of the road and volume of traffic that it carries. It is suggested that the route is unlikely to meet the guideline requirements for a reduction in the speed limit to 40mph, (DfT Circular 01/06 "Setting Local Speed Limits"). Only a significant reduction in speed by means of traffic calming would be likely to result in significant benefits to cyclists and this is unlikely to be appropriate on this route. • There are no direct parallel routes that offer the same directness between Galgate / The University, and the City Centre. There is, however, a further route to the University via Bowerham Road and quiet streets / off road cycle tracks which is useful for cyclists, (see separate report). • Given the restricted width available on the carriageway it is not possible to provide cycle lanes. • Off road facilities for cyclists would be difficult to provide. Though there is a footway along most of the route along the eastern side it is very narrow in places, with little prospect of widening without land purchase, as only minimal verges exist. • The full route should be surveyed for surface defects and remedial measures implemented where appropriate, to provide a smooth running surface for cyclists.

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<p>6. Scotforth Road junction with University access road</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This junction has a left turn lane for traffic turning into the University (southbound), with 2 straight ahead lanes for through traffic. Cyclists travelling straight ahead are therefore required to either use the left turn lane then move across into the straight ahead lane on nearing the stop line, (potential conflict with left turning vehicles), or else cycle between the left turn lane and the straight ahead lane for approximately 170m, where they are vulnerable to being hit by fast moving traffic. The lanes widths appear to be between 3 and 3.5m which is insufficient to allow cyclists and larger vehicles to mix comfortably. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the possibility of removing one of the straight ahead traffic lanes in order to provide a cycle lane of up to 2m width highlighted in a contrasting coloured material, to provide for straight ahead cycle movements. This should not have significant capacity implications for the junction as either side of the short dual carriageway section the route is only one lane in each direction. This option would provide more space for cyclists, highlight their presence to passing motorists, and could also allow them to access the front of the traffic queue if the signals were on red. A similar arrangement is in place at the new Hazelrigg Lane signal junction approximately 1km south, which appears to work well. Though there is little scope for on- road enhancements for cyclists either side of the University junction, this key area could act as a deterrent for the more confident commuter type cyclists who may otherwise use this

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			route.



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