Safer Cycling and Walking to and from North West Cambridge

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Abstract

We are deeply concerned that the designs of the Eddington Ave / Huntingdon Rd junction and the Bunker’s Hill / Huntingdon Rd / Girton Rd are not safe for pedestrians and cyclists coming and going between the North West Cambridge Development and Girton Village, including both Girton Road and Thornton Road; moreover these designs are utterly inconsistent with the stated aspirations of the University, the City Council, and the District Council, to enhance the transport connections to neighbouring communities.

We note that the University’s Transport Strategy aims to give cycling and walking high priority and states an aspiration for “high quality” solutions, including “safe and convenient crossings for pedestrians and cyclists”. We note that the University’s Community Strategy repeatedly mentions the goal of linking to neighbouring communities through cycling and pedestrian routes. We note that the City and District Councils’ Policy stipulates that pedestrian routes should be provided that are “direct, safe, and attractive”, and that new and enhanced cycle links should be made, “including links to nearby villages”.

The Eddington Ave / Huntingdon Rd junction design that is being built violates all these aspirations and commitments by singularly failing to include ANY new crossings of Huntingdon Road that are direct, safe, and attractive for people travelling from and to Girton and other destinations in the north-west. The design has also introduced a dangerous pinch-point into the north-west-bound on-road cycle path on Huntingdon Rd. This failure of design to conform to vision and policy is of particularly serious concern because over 100 small children need to cross Huntingdon Road every school-day to go to the University of Cambridge Primary School, and 41 of those pupils live to the North, in Girton. Future demand from the North will only increase over the coming years: based on this year’s intake, we expect that in two years’ time the school will have roughly 105 pupils who live in Girton; the adjacent nursery will surely also attract cyclists and pedestrians from the North; and all the other amenities on the North West Cambridge site will be very attractive to Girton residents.

The plans for the Bunker’s Hill cycle link at the Girton Rd / Huntingdon Rd intersection are also inconsistent with the University’s strategy and the City and District Councils’ policies. While the design is partly satisfactory (albeit not “high quality”) for inbound and outbound cyclists and pedestrians heading from and to Girton College, and for confident outbound cyclists heading up Girton Rd, it provides no satisfactory route for young inbound cyclists coming from Girton Rd; nor does it provide a satisfactory route for inbound or outbound pedestrians along Girton Rd, because there is no safe route to get between the end of the Girton Rd footpath and Bunker’s Hill. Girton Rd and Huntingdon Rd are both 3 lanes wide, and both are busy roads from 8 am to 9 am.

The hundreds of pages of work that have been published for the North West Cambridge Transport Assessment include detailed consideration of traffic concerns in locations at some distance from the development, including for example proposals for increasing traffic calming on Oxford Rd and

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Windsor Rd to reduce rat-running problems there; but as far as we can see, no attention has been paid at all to a rat-run much closer to the site, along Thornton Rd. Rat-running during the morning rush-hour often makes the road impassible to cyclists; and this is the main cycle route for children and parents cycling to the University of Cambridge Primary School from the North.

We have the gravest concern about the possibility of a tragic accident. Numerous near misses have already occurred.

We have furthermore initiated a public petition to the University of Cambridge, Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, and Cambridgeshire County Council. The petition calls on the University urgently (1) to amend the design of the Eddington Ave / Huntingdon Rd junction by adding two new pedestrian and cycle crossings across Huntingdon Rd, eliminating the cycle-lane pinch-point, and widening the southern footpath, and to implement these improvements with the utmost speed; (2) to amend the design of the Bunker’s Hill junction so as to ensure that all categories of pedestrian and cyclist have a direct, safe and attractive route in both directions.

The petition has, between 24 October and 3 November, received 438 signatures, of which 142 are from Members of the Regent House, Graduates of the University, Members of the Faculties, or Persons in statu pupillari; and 26 are from other employees of the University.

We recognise that implementing these safety improvements will require additional expenditure, which is difficult in the current financial context; but lives are at risk. Accident statistics already show a cluster on Huntingdon Road, and three Universities members have been killed on Huntingdon Road in the last twenty years. The defective designs that are now being built, combined with the new demand for crossing Huntingdon Road, will surely lead to more injuries and deaths. We therefore ask the Council to authorise contingency spending to address these urgent safety issues.

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1 Overview

1.1 North West Cambridge Development (NWCD) – Eddington

Eddington forms the heart of the new development currently under construction by the University of Cambridge on land between Madingley Rd and Huntingdon Rd. Once completed the vision behind the NWCD is to provide affordable accommodation for the staff (1,500 houses) and 2,000 post-graduate students of the university as well as 1,500 houses to be sold on the open market.

Over a third of the development site will be open public spaces including landscaping, play areas for children as well as parks, sports pitches and allotments. In addition, the development will be attractive to residents and neighbours alike by providing a primary school, community centre, health centre, supermarket, local shops, a hotel and a care home.

Planning permission for NWCD was granted in August 2012 with planning consent formalised in February 2013.

In the first phase of NWCD, which is currently under construction, 700 homes for qualifying University and College staff, 325 post-graduate student rooms and 450 market homes are being built alongside the infrastructure and Eddington community facilities (Figure 1).

![Figure 1: Left: Schematic of the extent of Phase 1 of NWCD (modified from [11, p. 10]). Right: detail map of the location of the University of Cambridge Primary School and the neighbouring community of South Girton (source: OpenStreetMap).](image)

1.2 Girton and Girton College

Girton village is the immediate neighbouring community to the NWCD to the north. It has a population of about 4,000, but relatively few public amenities such as leisure and retail facilities. The community centre, supermarket and shops around the market square, hotel, GP surgery and sports pitches and parklands of NWCD are likely to provide a very big attraction to the community. Cycling has long been a popular mode of transport between Girton and town. The cycling count conducted as part of the NWCD transport assessment recorded over 800 cycle trips along Girton Rd, south of the A14 in a 12 hr period (bidirectional traffic, [15]). The proximity of the development to the village is sure to also greatly increase pedestrian footfall across Huntingdon Rd, which has not previously been the case.
Girton College is situated immediately to the north of the NWCD on the opposite side of Huntingdon Rd. It is home to 118 Fellows, 502 undergradutes, 102 PhD students and 118 other graduate students and over 50% of the graduate students live in college.

1.3 University of Cambridge Primary School (UCPS)

The newly opened UCPS is situated at the present end of Eddington avenue south of Huntingdon Rd. At present, the only access to the school is via Eddington avenue from Huntingdon Rd (see Figure 1).

When the school opened in September this year the school building was the first one on site of the development. The present catchment area of the school comprises the dwellings of the NWCD only but, given no houses have been built yet, currently the school admits pupils from all over Cambridge through the regular council administered admissions process.

At present there are two reception classes, one Year 1 and one Year 2 classes with a total of around 111 students. Of these approximately 40 pupils live in the Girton area and travel to the school every day. Of these approximately 35 complete the journey by foot, bicycle or scooter. Over the coming years the school is set to expand considerably:

“The ultimate objective of the new school is to be a three-form-entry primary school, catering for children from Reception (age 4-5) to Year 6 (age 10-11) making about 630 children in all. Although the entire school buildings will be constructed in 2015 we do not expect that they will be fully occupied until 2022.” [12]

In addition, a nursery with 26 places is planned to be opened in September 2016 [12].

The school is an integral part of the NWCD, which is designed around a strong sustainability vision: "North West Cambridge will create a new University quarter, which will contribute to meeting the needs of the wider city community, and which will embody best practice in environmental sustainability" [5]. As such the school is strongly encouraging parents not to use cars for the school drop-off and pick-up:

The school has also been designed to promote sustainable transport and dissuade parents from driving motor vehicles to the school. The entrance to the school building is located adjacent to a bus stop and there will be provision for a large number of on-site cycle parking spaces. [13]

Parents of current pupils from Girton alone are planning to send at least 18 further children to either nursery or reception in the coming year. With the catchment area not yet built there is no reason to suppose that these children would not be granted places, or that a similar proportion of the school intake might be of children coming from Girton. The pupils who are already enrolled in UCPS from Girton, between them have 132,800 journeys across Huntingdon Rd to make during their time at the school and this number is going to significantly increase once the school grows in capacity as planned.

In this context it is important to highlight that one of the three targets for 2020 identified by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Road Safety Partnership is “to reduce the number of children killed or seriously injured in collisions by at least 40% by 2020.” [10] and this proposal will aid this target.

1.4 Lack of Safe Routes to and from NWCD

The North West Cambridge Area Action Plan states explicitly in its “Policy NW2: Development Principles” that

“1. North West Cambridge will be planned and developed:

(a) As an attractive and distinctive mixed-use development well integrated with the City and connected to surrounding communities and the countryside;
(b) To a high level of design quality for all parts of the community to create accessible developments and neighbourhoods with their own character and legibility;
(c) As a balanced, viable and socially inclusive community where people can live in a healthy and safe environment; [...]” [3, p. 11, emphasis added]

Furthermore the NWCD website also highlights the firm commitment that

“ [...] off-site enhancements will be made by the University to footpaths, cycleways and crossings along Madingley Road and Huntingdon Road leading into Cambridge City, for the benefit of all users. [...]” [7]

However, in reality the integration between the development and Girton is far from safe and lacks attractive and direct routes (Figure 2).

The traffic lights that are going to be installed at the junction of Eddington avenue and Huntingdon Rd will not provide a pedestrian or cycling crossing of Huntingdon Rd. There is no safe, attractive and direct connection between Eddington and South Girton for pedestrians and for cyclists there is no satisfactory two-way connectivity.

2 Huntingdon Rd Junction at Eddington Ave and Thornton Rd

2.1 Safety Context

The last speed survey we were able to find evidence of was carried out on Huntingdon Rd was in 2012, the year before the speed limit was changed from a 40 mph zone to a 30 mph zone. 113,000 cars were counted over a week (average speed 35 mph) of which 2,500 were traveling at a speed of over 46 mph [14]. Note that there is a 25% chance of a pedestrian being killed if struck at a speed of 40 mph by a vehicle, vs. 2% chance if struck at 20 mph [21].

In the Environmental Statement there is no mention of children crossing Huntingdon Rd to attend a new school and there is no evidence in this document that there has been any assessment relating to safety of pupils at the new school [1]. In relation to the existing road, the report states that for the period 2004-2009 there are no safety issues relating to the risk of personal injury collisions, (12.5.73, P374-375) but the South Cambridgeshire Police website identifies an accident cluster between Storey’s Way and Oxford Rd, i.e. as cyclists seek to cross Huntingdon Rd to the residential area and leisure facilities on the other side, a situation mimicked on a much larger scale at the new development’s Huntingdon Rd East junction. There have been 2 fatalities – a cyclist and a pedestrian, both college students and 6 serious injuries (4 cyclists and 2 pedestrians) on Huntingdon Rd over the last 10 years – hardly a low number especially given the infrequency of pedestrian journeys to date thus far on the road.

The report states that additional traffic flows as a result of the development will have no significant effect on the the personal injury collision rate, but completely fails to consider the impact of the development on the volume and composition of pedestrian and cyclist traffic, namely that there is a new school with many pupils crossing, at least for the first 8 years before the intended catchment is providing the pupil intake, as well as elderly care homes. The clinics, parks, recreation and shopping areas are all to be considered as areas of medium sensitivity, as is the southwest pavement as a road which currently high sensitivity users (children) are being instructed to use despite its narrowness and lack of a verge to separate it from the road. The environmental report generalises the south pavement to generally wide with separation from the traffic, which is true East of the Eddington ave junction but not to the West.

For the Huntingdon Rd East Junction a safety audit was conducted which we have not yet seen. Based on information we have received from Katie Parry (Senior Planning Officer, South Cambridgeshire District Council) and Mark Parsons (Principal Planning Officer, Cambridge City Council) we know that:
Figure 2: Top: location of the NWCD in relation to the neighbouring communities to the north (left) and summary of which journeys would be safe, attractive and direct (right). Bottom: Predicted road accident blackspots for pedestrians and cyclists together with the main routes that lack safe connectivity between NWCD and Girton in light blue (modified from Google Maps).
“ [...] The safety audit does suggest that the toucan crossing situated to the east of the junction (close to Whitehouse Ln) should if possible, be incorporated into the main junction upon a ‘review of pedestrian desire lines’. However, as detailed in the committee report for the application the junction will be operating at, or near capacity, when the development is completed, and therefore incorporating the pedestrian phases into the crossing that would take this junction beyond capacity. The toucan crossing close to Whitehouse Ln is situated strategically to join the two cycle routes from the Darwin Green and NWCDs on a desire line anticipated to carry significantly higher cycle and pedestrian flows.

Therefore, the advice received from Cambridgeshire County Council at the time of the application was that the arrangements would operate within satisfactory levels of safety and therefore they were subsequently approved through the outline permission, the finer details were then approved through the Discharge of Condition 46 by both Planning Authorities.

It is worth remembering that within the Section 106 agreement for this site, the Primary School isn’t required to be open until the occupation of the 400th Dwelling on the site. The primary school has been opened early on the site ahead of any occupations on the development itself. This is a decision the University took that could not be foreseen.

In looking at the pedestrian desire lines mentioned in the safety audit, officers made the logical assumption that the principal demand school children for this school would have been internal to the site (which makes up the catchment area for the school) and did not feel that demand to cross at this junction from the northern side of Huntingdon Rd would be so significant, and that the adjacent toucan (120 m to the east), combined with the crossing at Girton Corner would be sufficient. [...]”

2.2 Currently Approved Permanent Solution

The NWCD team recently circulated a schematic to parents and carers of pupils enrolled at the school that outlines what we believe to be the currently approved permanent solution that is to be realised by the end of November this year (Figure 3).

This plan consists of adding a new toucan crossing to the junction at Whitehouse Ln. The recently added temporary traffic light between Thornton Rd and the BP garage is to be removed and replaced by the uncontrolled pedestrian crossing that existed previously. What is not shown on this schematic is the crossing at Girton corner and it is unclear from this document if any alterations are planned to this crossing by the end of November or whether the crossing will only be upgraded for better access to the NWCD at a later date when the access route via Bunker Hill will be established.

Katie Parry (Senior Planning Officer, South Cambridgeshire District Council) and Mark Parsons (Principal Planning Officer, Cambridge City Council) have commented on the currently approved permanent road layout for the junction (Figure 3) as follows:

“ [...] Crossing points, safe for adults and children alike are key considerations through the planning process. Options have been planned for and are available to parents choosing to take their children to the University of Cambridge Primary School, and for Girton Residents accessing the site more generally once the development is further advanced and works on Huntingdon Rd completed. Firstly there is the existing crossing at Girton Corner adjacent to Girton College, which as the development progresses will lead to a dedicated pedestrian/cycleway through the development from Bunkers Hill known as the Ridgeway. The Ridgeway will be provided in a temporary form to allow the route to be operational ahead of the completed development.

Secondly there will be the toucan crossing to the east of the junction close to Whitehouse Ln accessed from the pedestrian footway on Huntingdon Rd. The toucan will link directly
Figure 3: Currently planned permanent pedestrian and cycle access routes to the school. Note that the crossing at Whitehouse Ln is specified as a toucan crossing in the planning documents and not a pelican crossing circulated by the school on 30th September 2015.

PERMANENT ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY THE END OF NOVEMBER 2015

- **Eddington Avenue**: A dedicated cycle lane for cyclists turning into Eddington Avenue from the city centre.
- **Huntingdon Road**: The junction of Huntingdon Road and Eddington Avenue will be traffic light controlled.
- **Thornton Road**: Pedestrian crossing.
- **Whitehouse Lane**: A pelican crossing near Whitehouse Lane.
- **Lawrence Weaver Road**: Pedestrian crossing.

**Key**
- **Suggested cycle route**
- **Suggested pedestrian route**
- **Dedicated cycle lane/path**

This map is not to scale.

The map shows the suggested routes to the school. Please note these are suggested routes. Huntingdon Road is a public highway controlled by Cambridge City Council. The Highway Code applies and individuals and the University of Cambridge and the University of Cambridge (Primary School) are responsible for their own actions on public highways. If you do have concerns about Huntingdon Road more generally, please direct them to the County Council.
to the school through a footway/cycleway segregated from vehicular traffic adjacent to the planned sports pitches. I appreciate that this toucan crossing should have ideally been completed prior to opening of the school, but I understand that delays caused by utilities providers have meant that this has not been achieved.

Connectivity, along with the safety of pedestrians and cyclists is of high importance to both local authorities but I hope you’ll appreciate that it is not possible to provide controlled crossings at each and every desire line and officers must balance the amount of crossing points with reasonableness, safe operation of the road, and capacity at junctions. Following advice received from the County Council through the planning process the authorities are confident that safe crossing points have been provided in the final approved design and although I appreciate that they are not as direct as you would like it is our view that they are within an easy walking and cycling distance for adults and children alike. We understand that Girton residents will want to make use of the facilities on this site, but again feel that there are controlled crossing points within the final designs to allow this to happen. […]”

The currently proposed solution does not offer a satisfactory and safe solution for pedestrian and cycle access to the school from Girton: there are no satisfactory out-bound or in-bound cycle routes for cautious cyclists, young pedestrians or scooter users as they would have to use the pavements which are too narrow and on which cycling is not permitted. In addition the on-road cycle path on Huntingdon Rd towards Girton has a significant pinch-point as already outlined above.

Pedestrians crossing Huntingdon Rd where they currently cross would have no traffic light protection. If they were to use the proposed Whitehouse Ln crossing their travel path would be approximately 220 m longer than the desire line, which is a significant distance for a 4-year old.

2.3 Fundamental Limitations

1. The design was based on incorrect assumptions
2. The design does not make satisfactory provision for pedestrians and cyclists coming from and going to the north.
3. The current design is inconsistent with a range of policies including the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan.
4. An integrated pedestrian crossing, recommended by the Safety Audit, was cut out using an argument about “capacity” that is probably spurious.

2.3.1 Incorrect Demand Assumptions

The email by Parry and Parsons [17] clearly confirms that their past assumptions about demand and desire lines were wrong and therefore a reassessment and redesign is required. The principal demand for the school was assumed to be internal to the NWCD and hence the crossing demand to the north was not anticipated to be significant.

It is a fact that UCPS has opened as the first building on the NWCD in contrast to the anticipated situation which was considered when the travel requirements and safety were assessed. Hence the reality of the travel requirements for the pupils enrolled in the school and their families are completely different to the anticipated situation as outlined above.

Of the 111 pupils in the school at least 40 live in Girton. It is realistic to anticipate that over the next two years the number of pupils from Girton will increase to about 105 and that the new nursery will
attract toddlers from the area as well.\(^1\) We estimate that there will be more than 280,000 crossings to be made by these 105 pupils who are resident in Girton alone over the duration of their education at UCPS.\(^2\)

Beyond the school the new Eddington retail, leisure and recreation facilities will be attractive to Girton residents and will generate huge additional pedestrian and cycle traffic including many children. This is in fact the intention of the development and outlined in its strategy.

### 2.3.2 Inherent Design Problems

The pedestrian crossing now included in plans to be sited by the BP garage (Figure 3) is not controlled. Guidance is that uncontrolled crossings should not be used in areas of high flow and or high speed traffic. The suggestion by the planners is that pedestrians should use the crossings at Girton Rd/Bunkers Hill or at Whitehouse Ln instead. Given the inadequate provision of safe and usable access routes to these crossings from the Thornton Rd area (as discussed below and Figure 11) it is unlikely that all pedestrians will use these crossings and considerable numbers are potentially going to attempt to cross the Huntingdon Road at the position of the present temporary crossing (for illustration see Figure 4).

When it comes to judging a pedestrian and cycling provision as satisfactory we think it is important to highlight the fact that the pedestrians and cyclists who will make journeys across Huntingdon Road include less confident and inexperienced youngsters as young as 4 years old who may travel by bicycle but are accompanied by a parent who is also cycling (Figure 5). Another very common scenario would be a parent with a pushchair with one or more young children as a pedestrian. For all these users the route should be safe and a cyclists should not be required to dismount and push their cycles as part of their travel. We also consider it essential and obvious that the design of the route does not require cyclists to break the highway code for their journeys and that there is a legal cycling option for inbound as well as outbound travel directions.

**Pinch Point on Huntingdon Rd Cycle Lane** The cycle lane travelling outbound from the centre of town along Huntingdon Road after the junction with Eddington avenue has a constriction where the

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\(^1\)The assumption of the number of Girton pupils is based on an estimate of \((2\text{years}) \times (90\text{pupils per year}) \times (40/111) = 65.\)

\(^2\)105 Girton pupils \(\times 2\text{ crossings per day} \times 195\text{ school days per year} \times 7\text{ years} = 286,650\text{ crossings}\)
overall road narrows from its widened newly created 3.5-lane width back to its previous 2.5-lane width which results in a significant pinch point (Figure 6).

Another 10 m or so further onwards the road widens back out to be 3-lane wide to provide a right turning into Thornton Road and a right turning into the petrol station. This clearly affects the car driving desire line as a car passes the kink in the road (Figure 6 bottom). The frontage of Holly Nurseries and Trinity Farm projects further into the carriageway than all other properties to the southwest, by approximately 1.4 m and by a length of approximately 30 m along the Huntingdon Rd westbound carriageway, due to compulsory purchase of the more westerly land approximately 20 years ago to create the Thornton Rd right filter lane. Cycling on road for this stretch will never be safe until this section of road and pavement is redesigned. At present cycling westbound out of Eddington Ave or westbound past Eddington Ave will be extremely hazardous.

With regards to the pinch-point of Huntingdon Rd west of the junction with Eddington avenue on the south side Clare Rankin (Cycling and Walking Officer, Cambridge City Council) commented:

“Having cycled on Huntingdon Road a number of times recently I too am concerned by the pinch point which has appeared just to the west of the junction. As you say this is not on the approved plans and, as well as being problematic for cyclists, I understand that this has meant that the inbound cycle lane is not as wide as County colleagues within the Cycling Team had hoped it could be with the original layout. I do not know why the situation here has changed and hope I can clarify this with planning colleagues.” [20]

The pinch-point is a significant hazard for pedestrians, given the pavement is barely sufficiently wide to pass with a pram and child (see separate section on this and Figure 7 top), and for cyclists on the road the pinch-point leads to intimidation and poses a considerable hazard when cycles approach the narrowing of the road while vehicles approach (Figure 7 bottom).

The existence of this pinch point was already flagged up in an internal memo by the Cambridge City Council Walking and Cycling officer:

“[...]Huntingdon Road Junction East

The design of this junction is currently not acceptable as it will create a dangerous pinch point for cyclists travelling westbound on the carriageway. The apparent suggestion that
Figure 6: Top: Detail from the drawing Huntingdon Road final road markings, signal heads and kerbs as required by Condition 46 in Appendix A of the planning approval (dated 5th November 2013, modified from the original). Bottom: 5-fold foreshortened view of the same map to simulate the view from a car driver’s perspective. The thick dashed red line marks the width and desire line of a typical car.
Figure 7: Pinch point in both the pedestrian route (top) and for cyclists on Huntingdon Rd (middle) as they navigate on the southern side of the pavement or their lane between the Eddington avenue junction and Thornton Rd junction (17th October 2015). Illustration of the hazard for cyclists posed by large vehicles (bottom, 19th October 2015).
Southern Pavement too Narrow  The southern pavement on Huntingdon Rd between the proposed pedestrian crossing west of Thornton Rd and Eddington avenue is too narrow and not separated from the road. By the time the development is fully open, two way pedestrian traffic can be anticipated to be flowing to and from Girton, and there is no way that this pavement could be considered suitable for that (Figure 8). The pedestrian traffic on this pavement is already exceeding the capacity of the pavement at peak times.

The situation of the narrow pavement is further aggravated by the fact that once a week wheelie bins are lined up along the pavement for the weekly bin collection day.

Present Travel Expectation  A central part of the present plan is the firm idea that Girton residents will use a toucan crossing at the Girton Rd Corner with Huntingdon Rd: “Firstly there is the existing crossing at Girton Corner adjacent to Girton College, which as the development progresses will lead to a dedicated pedestrian/cycleway through the development from Bunkers Hill known as the Ridgeway.” [17]. We strongly object to the assessment that this will be a suitable access point for residents from Girton and in particular for parents with their schoolchildren given there is only a narrow pavement along a busy road with no cycle lane at all. To make matters worse, currently there is no controlled crossing of Girton Road, which is required to access the existing crossing of Huntingdon Rd. This is putting all Girton residents at extra and unnecessary risks. In Section 3 we have summarised the problems regarding road safety at this junction.

The desire line for pedestrians and cyclists travelling from the South Girton area to Eddington in the NWCD and back are plotted in magenta in Figure 9. If one considers the example of a parent with their child wanting to make the journey from Thornton Way to UCPS the plan clearly shows that pedestrians are expected to walk along Huntingdon Rd on the north pavement right past the junction with Eddington Ave until they reach the new toucan crossing at Whitehouse Ln. There they can cross Huntingdon Rd and then have to return to Eddington Ave by using the south pavement along the Huntingdon Rd.
Figure 9: Present travel options for cyclists and pedestrians accessing NWCD from the South Girton area via Thornton Rd.

This route is not direct (it adds about and extra 220 m distance which is significant for a toddler, young child, elderly person or a wheelchair user) and is not attractive as it goes along an extremely busy road. More importantly however still is that this creates an extra hazard: young friends seeing each other across such a busy road is too great a temptation for them to imagine that at no stage is a child likely to run across the road to see each other.\(^3\) Government statistics show that a third of child pedestrians stuck by cars are accompanied by an adult at the time [2].

The other option would be to take the route along the south pavement of Huntingdon road to the west of the Huntingdon Rd East Junction. In order to do so pedestrians first would have to cross Huntingdon Rd at an unprotected crossing (Figure 10) and then make their way along the narrow pavement towards Eddington avenue.

For cyclists in the same scenario the situation is slightly better with regards to the outwards journey from Thornton Rd to UCPS. Here a cyclist with their young child also on a bike could use the on-road cycle path along Huntingdon Rd. Whilst this is a busy road and the route is not direct, the newly built path is wide and well designed, allowing for a relatively safe passage between Thornton Rd and the toucan crossing at Whitehouse Ln.

However, the main problem for cyclists (here we consider a 4-year old and a parent both on bikes) in this travel scenario is the reverse of the route. If one were to reverse the journey just outlined it might be perfectly safe and legal to return to the Whitehouse Ln toucan crossing along the shared use cycle path used for the inward journey. However, once Huntingdon Rd is crossed it would be illegal and against the Highway Code to continue the journey towards Thornton Rd by bike on the pedestrian footpath. Even if that was legal it would also be highly dangerous to then attempt to cross Thornton Rd at the corner with Huntingdon rd by bike coming from the pavement.

\(^3\)There has already been a near miss of this nature since September.
Figure 10: Uncontrolled crossing of Huntingdon Rd near the junction with Thornton Rd (Google Street View). This is how the crossing used to be prior to the present temporary pedestrian lights and it reflects the state that the crossing is proposed to be in the permanent plans.

The alternative would be to use the on-road cycle path from Eddington avenue and turn into Huntingdon Rd on-road. As outlined above the pinch point at this location is very likely going to be an accident black spot. Further on the 4-year old cyclist would have to either attempt a turn across the 3-lane wide Huntingdon Rd alongside the normal vehicle traffic on this busy road or use the unprotected traffic crossing (Figure 10) where no traffic light would be in place to ensure a safe crossing. In summary, the return route is not satisfactory nor safe for cyclists.

2.3.3 Inconsistencies to Policies and Commitments

North West Cambridge Area Action Plan

The summary of the policies the council drew up for the NWCD includes the implicit statements that there should be new and improved cycling and walking routes that would include links to nearby villages:

“Policy NW17: Cycling Provision New and improved cycle links will be provided as part of the development, including: […] c) Linking the development with the surrounding walking and cycling network and orbital routes including links to nearby villages and open countryside.” [3, p. 26]

“Policy NW18: Walking Provision Development will be required to provide attractive, direct and safe walking routes as part of the development, including: […] c) Linking the development with the surrounding walking network, including links to an improved rights of way network and to nearby villages and open countryside.” [3, p. 27]

University Aspirations and Commitments

We note that this proposed solution does not satisfy the expectations published by the university in the ‘Non-Technical Summary of the Transport Assessment’:

“…”Complementing this, enhancements will be made by the University to footpaths and cycleways along Madingley and Huntingdon Road leading into Cambridge City which will benefit all users. These measures include: […] new cycling and pedestrian crossings at all entrances into the development along Huntingdon and Madingley Roads as well as an additional cycle crossing linking to Whitehouse Ln.” [4, p. 7]

On the following page of the document it is further clarified that:

“From North West Cambridge there will be two new road junction accesses onto Huntingdon Road – the Huntingdon Road West and East junctions – and another new road junction
onto Madingley Road at the forthcoming West Cambridge junction – the High Cross junction. These three junctions will be traffic signal controlled, and will include pedestrian and cyclist controlled crossings to aid their movement.” [4, p. 8]

The commitment to integrated crossings is repeated in the Environmental Statement Non-Technical Summary. Under the heading “Improvements directed at improved connectivity and safety for pedestrians and cyclists” it states:

“[…] new cycling and pedestrian crossings at all entrances into the development along Huntingdon and Madingley Roads as well as an additional cycle crossing linking to Whitehouse Ln.”[8, p. 38]

We have since been informed that this aspiration is indeed satisfied by the proposed permanent design in that there will be a two-stage toucan crossing to cross Eddington avenue and that the statement above does not imply a crossing of Huntingdon Rd at this point.

However, in the Transport Assessment it was stated that “It is apparent that the numbers of cyclists counted along Huntingdon Road are over double the number counted along Madingley Road – implying that Huntingdon Road, serving the Girton area, is currently the more important cycling link;” [6, p. 25]. The report goes on to state:

“7.4.1 The pedestrian and cycle infrastructure strategy for the Development has been determined to respond to the following three aspirations: […] ii) to provide connectivity between the Development and the surrounding area; […]” [6, p. 58]

“7.4.6 These pedestrian and cycle connections through the Development will ensure quality accessibility and connectivity to the surrounding areas. They will also significantly enhance and improve the linkages between existing developments – such as Girton and the West Cambridge Development, and Girton and the south of the City – by providing direct quality links on desire lines.” [6, p. 59]

“7.6.1 The Development is well-located for walking and cycling with respect to existing pedestrian and cycle facilities, and to connect to other developments in the area. The Development will deliver safe, high quality walking and cycling infrastructure in the area further to support and encourage the walking and cycling mode. In addition, further infrastructure will be provided to enhance the connectivity to the surrounding countryside. As such, it is considered that walking and cycling will form a significant percentage of the mode share for local trips, reflecting local and national policy guidance and strategies.” [6, p. 61]

“9.6.4 The Development Access Strategy and site layout have been designed to ensure the focus of the accessibility strategy for the Site remains strongly in favour of sustainable modes of transport over the private car.” [6, p. 80]

2.3.4 Capacity Argument

One of the main arguments cited by Parry and Parsons is that “[…] the junction will be operating at, or near capacity, when the development is completed, and therefore incorporating the pedestrian phases into the crossing that would take this junction beyond capacity […]” [17].

We have consulted with Professor Frank Kelly, CBE ⁴, if he agreed with us that the capacity argument is spurious, because moving the pedestrian crossing to an extra set of lights 120-130 metres away will not eliminate any capacity problem, and indeed it might make the capacity problem worse.

⁴From 2003 to 2006 Professor Frank Kelly served as Chief Scientific Adviser to the United Kingdom’s Department for Transport.
Professor Kelly said that while it is conceivable that moving the crossing to the site near Whitehouse Ln might improve traffic flow compared to the integrated-crossing design, it was also conceivable that it might make it worse; a detailed review would be required (and he was willing to assist such a review) [16].

Professor Kelly also pointed out that, at present, the cause of peak-time congestion on Huntingdon Road may lie elsewhere, closer to town; in such circumstances, the choice between these two options will make negligible difference to congestion. Professor Kelly also noted that the three-lane width of Huntingdon Road at the Eddington avenue junction is substantial, compared to the two lanes that exist from Lawrence Weaver Road onwards. So he thought it was important to understand from the data where the main bottleneck was likely to be on Huntingdon Road.

3 The Bunker's Hill / Girton Rd Crossing

On a southbound journey towards Huntingdon Road there is only a pavement on the eastern side of Girton Rd and no cycle lane at all (Figure 11 top). Immediately prior to the junction Girton Rd is 3-lane wide and there is no pedestrian crossing to the other side of the road in order to access the existing toucan crossing that can be used to access Bunker's Hill (Figure 11 bottom).

On the western side of Girton Rd there is no foot- or cycle path along the road except for a short section (20 m or so) directly next to the junction with Huntingdon Rd. Thus at present it is not possible to safely travel by bike or foot from the Thornton Rd area to Bunker's Hill or back.

Once the Bunker's Hill connection to the Ridgeway route has been established there will be little change to the crossing of Huntingdon Rd (Figure 12). The drawings reveal that there will be some minor alterations to the pavement and signage on the south side of Huntingdon Rd to accommodate the new
cycle path into Bunker’s Hill but the drawing does not contain any details regarding additional provisions that would enable a safe crossing of Huntingdon Rd to the east pavement of Girton Rd or a crossing of Girton Rd in order to access the east pavement via the existing toucan crossing of Huntingdon Rd.

In summary, the only route that is reasonably safe for a cyclist is that travelling from Eddington along the new cycling path at Bunker’s Hill towards Girton Rd by using the existing toucan crossing and back onto the road at the beginning of Girton Rd. It is needless to say that even this route is not advisable for a 4-year old cyclist. Other than that all routes for the journeys between Eddington and Girton are inherently not safe for cyclists or pedestrians.

4 Proposed Alternative Solution

We propose the following alternative solution (Figure 13) which would align the desire lines for travel (magenta lines in Figure 9) with the crossing points into NWCD:

1. Integrated toucan crossing at the Eddington Ave traffic lights, ideally on the SE side.

2. Add toucan crossing at Thornton Rd junction in almost the same location as the present temporary pedestrian crossing, but closer to Thornton Rd, so that the crossing enables a cyclist coming from Cambridge to Thornton Way to cross and go directly down Thornton Rd.

3. Widen footpath to the SW of Huntingdon Rd so that it can be a shared footpath and off-road cycle path so that the on-road cycle path can be straighter and safer.

4. Flashing amber lights and children warning sign during school travel times.

5. (Mothball or delay the proposed crossing at Whitehouse Ln until the connections are in place with Darwin Green development)
Figure 13: Proposed permanent pedestrian and cycle access routes to the school as suggested in this paper.

**Our Proposal**

**PERMANENT ROAD SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY THE END OF NOVEMBER 2015**

- **Flashing children warning sign**
- **Add Toucan crossing at Thornton Road**
- **Pedestrian crossing**
- **Widen footpath into a shared footpath and off-road cyclepath**
- **A dedicated cycle lane for cyclists turning into Eddington Avenue from the city centre**
- **A pelican crossing near Whitehouse Lane**
- **A cycle lane will be located on the northern side of Huntington Road for cyclists not planning to turn right into Eddington Avenue**
- **The junction of Huntington Road and Eddington Avenue will be traffic light controlled.**
- **Add Toucan crossing to Eddington Ave junction**
- **Traffic heading towards Cambridge and turning into Eddington Avenue will use a dedicated filter lane.**
- **Along Eddington Avenue, there are dedicated off-road cycle paths providing access to the school.**

Key:
- **Suggested cycle route**
- **Suggested pedestrian route**
- **Dedicated cycle lane/path**

This map is not to scale.

The map shows the suggested routes to the school. Please note these are suggested routes. Huntington Road is a public highway, controlled by Cambridge City Council. The Highway Code applies to individuals (and the University of Cambridge or the University of Cambridge Foundation) as responsible for their own actions. If you do have concerns about safety, please direct them to...
If there turns out to be a capacity problem at the crossing, which would mean that the position of the integrated toucan across Huntingdon Rd to the SE of the junction, as drawn in Figure 13, was unsuitable because it would disrupt sufficient flow through this junction from the development onto Huntingdon Rd the toucan crossing could be moved. For example it could be shifted to the other side of the junction (Figure 14 left) or indeed all the way back to Thornton Rd (Figure 14 right) as long as the cycle path on the south side of Huntingdon Rd is widened as outlined above in point 3.

Another detail worth mentioning is that in the long term future there will be another new toucan crossing at Whitehouse Ln in the future to provide a link between Eddington and the Darwin Green Development and Histon Rd. For the time being the Darwin Green Development does not exist and the cycle path to Histon is only a muddy track. For the time being there is little demand for this route and hence we feel that the toucan crossing at Whitehouse Ln could be mothballed or delayed. This would reduce the number of lights on Huntingdon Rd in the area.

This proposal would not increase the number of traffic lights on Huntingdon Rd (Figure 13) and would have the following advantages:

- Anyone who wanted to cross at Whitehouse Ln can cross at the new toucan at Eddington Ave instead.

- Pedestrian going to school from Girton walks along Huntingdon Rd to the toucan at Eddington avenue, crosses there, then walks along Eddington Ave towards the school without needing to cross Eddington Ave. Pedestrian going home reverses the same route. Pedestrians may also make use of the route via the toucan off Thornton Rd, if they want.

- Cyclist going to school can pause at the new toucan at Eddington Ave, wait for light to change, then cross safely (they can also follow the conventional on-road route, if they are brave, turning right with the cars). Cyclist going home from school or Cambridge to Girton can either turn right into Thornton Rd as they currently can (using the on-road right turn bubble) or they can use the safe option of the toucan adjacent to Thornton Rd.
5 Comparison of Huntingdon Rd with Similar Major Roads Around Cambridge

In our proposal we suggest redesigning the junction of Huntingdon Rd and Girton Rd, adding a toucan crossing at the Thornton Rd junction as well as an integrated toucan crossing to the Eddington avenue junction (Huntingdon Rd East Junction). This would result in three toucan crossings along Huntingdon Rd within a distance of about 580 m. Is it unprecedented to have so many helpful crossing over a busy road within such a short distance in Cambridge? We will look at three examples of similar configuration looking at distances between toucan crossings, whether there are crossings near to schools and at roads that lead to schools, are there four-way traffic lights with pedestrian or cycle-only phases and what are the distances between traffic light protected crossings.

There would be a distance of approximately 285 m between the redesigned crossing at Girton Rd and the new toucan crossing at Thornton Rd (Figure 16). From there onwards it would be about 160 m to the newly proposed integrated toucan at Eddington Ave and another 110 m to the toucan at Whitehouse Ln (which would not yet been needed to be operational as outlined above). The final gap would be another 110 m from Whitehouse Ln to the existing crossing at Lawrence Weaver Rd.

Histon Rd In northbound travel direction there is a first controlled pedestrian crossing separated by about 313 m from a secon controlled crossing and then followed by another 156 m by a four-way traffic light junction with a full pedestrian phase (Figure 16 left). Warwick Rd, the road at which junction this traffic light is installed leads directly to Mayfield Primary School in a similar fashion to how Eddington avenue leads to UCPS.

Note that the distance between the four-way crossing and the nearest controlled pedestrian crossing is very similar to the distance of the crossings between Thornton Rd and Eddington Ave in our proposal.

Trumpington High St In the case of Trumpington High Street there is a primary school (Fawcett Primary School) about 400 m away from the main road and at the junction between Alpha Terrace and Trumpington High St there is a controlled pedestrian crossing (Figure 16 centre). To the south there is another
Figure 16: Examples of the spatial distribution of other crossings in Cambridge. Left: Histon Rd; middle: Trumpington High St; and right: Hills Rd (modified from Google Maps)
crossing after 362 m, another one a further 159 m south followed by a traffic light controlled junction with pedestrian crossing after a subsequent 106 m.

This crossing of Trumpington High Street towards Hauxton/Shelford is not unlike the situation at the junction between Huntingdon Rd and Girton Rd. It is interesting to compare the view at both crossings: three integrated crossings for pedestrians and cycles at Trumpington High St compared to the situation at Girton Rd where there is no connection at all for pedestrians and cyclists except for the existing staggered two-stage toucan crossing (Figure 17). Maybe the Trumpinton Rd solution could serve as a good starting point for a redesign of the Girton Rd crossing.

**Hills Rd**  At Hills Rd the gaps between the controlled pedestrian crossings are quite large here but it is notable that the crossings are located directly at the entrance to the Perse School, Homerton College and Hills Rd Sith Form College (Figure 16 right).

**Accident Statistics and Comparison with Madingley Rd**  These examples show that what we are proposing seems reasonable in the context of what already exists in the rest of Cambridge.

From looking at the accident statistics in the vicinity of the north of the NWCD (Figure 18) it becomes clear that there is already a cluster of accidents along Huntingdon Rd. The data shown in the plot is already more than four years old and unfortunately there has already been another pedestrian fatality at the Girton Rd junction earlier this year which is not represented in this plot. In comparison the frequency of accidents along Madingley Rd appears to be significantly smaller. In this context it is important to keep in mind the gender and age specific distribution of road accidents for children given the recent opening of UCPS as the first building on the NWCD site and the large volume of pedestrian crossings as a direct consequence of this from Girton (> 280k over the coming seven years).

In the NWCD Transport Assessment there seems to be a very symmetrical discussion of Madingley Rd and Huntingdon Rd:

> “From North West Cambridge there will be two new road junction accesses onto Huntingdon Road – the Huntingdon Road West and East junctions (the east junction is the Eddington Ave junction) – and another new road junction onto Madingley Road at the forthcoming West Cambridge junction – the High Cross junction. These three junctions will be traffic signal controlled, and will include pedestrian and cyclist controlled crossings to aid their movement.” [4, p. 8]

Hence one might think what goes on at Madingley rd would be quite similar to what is going to be built at Huntingdon Rd. In addition the following statement is made elsewhere:
“the numbers of cyclists counted along Huntingdon Road are over double the number counted along Madingley Road – implying that Huntingdon Road, serving the Girton area, is currently the more important cycling link;” [6, p. 25]

However, strangely enough the proposed infrastructure for NWCD does not reflect this assessment (Figure 19). On the map four red arrows indicate toucan crossings along Madingley Rd while there are no red arrows at the Girton Rd junction or Eddington avenue. The only red arrows along Huntingdon Rd are the West junction opposite Girton College (this will not be built as part of Phase 1 of NWCD) as well as the existing crossing at Lawrence Weaver Rd as well as the planned toucan at Whitehouse Ln (for which there will be no demand for quite a few years to come as the Darwin Green Development that this crossing connects to is yet to be built).

6 The Thornton Rd Rat-Run

As shown in Figure 19 there has been quite careful consideration in the Transport Strategy into the impact of the NWCD on the traffic to the south of the development around Madingley Rd, Storey’s Way and Histon Rd. The Transport Assessment for NWCD even includes a suggestion of a enhanced traffic calming scheme for Oxford Rd / Windsor Rd (Figure 20) where the traffic is already constricted to avoid “rat-running” between Huntingdon Rd and Histon Rd.

However, no such considerations appear to have been made for the impact of NWCD on South Girton. There is already a “rat-running” issue via Thornton Rd (Figure 21). Southwards bound vehicle drivers from Girton are using Thornton Rd to avoid having to queue at the end of Girton Rd to joining Huntingdon Rd in the morning rush hour. This has been going on for decades and is especially bad on school days (there are frequently over 20 cars queueing at the Girton junction into Huntingdon Rd at school-run time and a similar number in Thornton Rd).

The situation is quite remarkable in that the residential Thornton Rd has no traffic calming measures fitted at all while Girton Rd, the main Rd, does have speed bumps fitted in order to control the traffic.
Traffic calming feature. Priority to northbound vehicles

Traffic calming feature. Priority to southbound vehicles

Oxford Road

Windsor Road

Wentworth Road

Existing road hump to remain

Existing 'Give Way' markings removed

Proposed 'Give Way' marking

Existing traffic calming feature priority changed from priority to eastbound vehicles to priority to westbound vehicles

Enhanced signage scheme

Possible lighting column to emphasise traffic calming feature

Bollard

Existing on street parking

1.0m wide cycle lane bypass

Utilities Note: The position of any existing public or private sewers, utility services, plant or apparatus shown on this drawing is believed to be correct, but no warranty to this is expressed or implied. Other such plant or apparatus may also be present but not shown. The Contractor is therefore advised to undertake his own investigation where the presence of any existing sewers, services, plant or apparatus may affect his operations.

Scaling Note: Do not scale from this drawing. If in doubt, ask.

Figure 20: Oxford Rd / Windsor Rd potential enhanced traffic calming scheme[9, p. 38].

Figure 21: Rat-run route via Thornton Rd (modified from Google Maps).
The installation of a permanent controlled crossing at the Thornton Rd junction with Huntingdon Rd will potentially increase the amount of drivers from Girton Rd “rat-running” via Thornton Rd into Huntingdon Rd by exploiting the fact that a pedestrian crossing will create opportunities for convenient access.

We feel that there would need to be a consultation with regards to introducing constriction barriers, signage and potential speed limits of 15 or 20 mph in Thornton Rd to make such behaviour unattractive. Potential solutions could be modelled along the lines of proven designs such as in Storey’s Way or Windsor Rd.

7 Conclusions

Nationwide the reduction of road accidents with children has been identified as a priority area of required action. A recent report by Public Health England starts with the statement “Children and young people have the right to safe roads. Our analysis of data from 2008 to 2012 shows that over that period there were more than 320,000 road casualties and 2,300 road deaths among children and young people under the age of 25 years in England.” [18]. The first (of four) recommended actions in this report is:

“1. Improve safety for children travelling to and from school
The largest numbers of child injuries occur between 8am to 9am and 3pm to 7pm. During these times there are around 16 deaths or serious injuries to children under 16 years every week.
Local authorities can work with schools to develop school travel plans that encourage active travel to and from school and address safety issues throughout the whole journey. School travel plans can be supported by road engineering measures to reduce vehicle speeds and activities to enforce traffic law.” [18, p. 4]

We feel it is unacceptable that children as well as other residents of Girton are currently put at risk by the existing arrangement and we hope we can achieve a swift improvement by unifying the efforts that have already been made to resolve this situation whilst ensuring that the permanent solution will be safe and fit for purpose for years to come.

References


[17] K. Parry and M. Parsons. email with Nicola Pearson, 15 October 2015 16:58:00 BST.


[20] C. Rankin. email with Nicola Pearson, 16 October 2015 17:04:00 BST.

Figure 22: View of Huntingdon Rd from the junction of Huntingdon Rd and Thornton Rd looking south-east. The construction site to the left completely blocks the pavement and severely impacts on the road layout at the junction with Eddington avenue (6th September 2015).

**Appendix – Near Miss Incidents and Temporary Road Safety Improvements**

**Near Miss Incidents**

When the UCPS opened on 7th September the junction between Eddington avenue and Huntingdon Rd was not finished and a construction site by BT Openreach opposite the entrance of Eddington avenue completely blocked the north side of the pavement for pedestrians towards Whitehouse Ln as well as part of the road in the same direction (Figure 22).

For the pupils and their parents walking from Girton access to the school was by means of crossing Huntingdon Rd in the morning for drop-off by using the traffic island between the BP garage (highlighted by pink shading in Figure 1) and Thornton Rd. The crossing was of the unmarked and unaided type with no signage indicating the presence of schoolchildren. For cyclists the only option was to join the Huntingdon Rd traffic and then turn right into Eddington avenue in the middle of the narrowed section of Huntingdon Rd where the construction site narrowed the Cambridge bound lane (Figure 22).

Almost immediately after the start of school parents started reporting near misses as a result of the road safety provisions in particular at the pedestrian crossing of Huntingdon Rd near Thornton Rd.

Thus far there have been at least 17 near misses, with children and parents having had to run out of the way to avoid being hit by vehicles. Following the initial reports of near misses at the uncontrolled crossing a temporary traffic light was installed quite quickly. As a consequence, the incidents that are summarised here occurred mainly as a result of motorists running a red light of the temporary pedestrian crossing.

There are two incidents that were particularly severe: In one case a driver went over at red missing a mother pushing her bike with baby in a trailer, missing her by around six inches. The driver then berated the parent for obstructing the road. In another incident, a 4 year old from reception broke free of his father’s hand and ran into the road, traumatising the oncoming HGV driver who was so shaken he had to get out of his cab and recompose himself.

In total we are aware of 7 cars, 3 motorbikes and 4 bicycles running the red lights at the now installed temporary crossing in the period 6th September until 19th October. In the same period there have been 3 reported near misses when cyclists made the turn directly from Huntingdon Road into Eddington.
avenue. In the week starting 19 October there were more than 10 vehicles who failed to stop at the red lights.

A number of hazards were identified: presence of large number of inexperienced and unpredictable young children on the pavements; lack of provision for crossing the road safely; insufficient width of the pavement on the south side of Huntingdon Rd west of Eddington avenue (width of 110 cm where narrowed by telegraph poles and street lighting to 140 cm in this section); pinch point in Huntingdon Rd travelling out of town immediately after the junction with Eddington avenue; and no warning of new school by signage and/or flashing lights. There are a few further hazards specific to the turn from Huntingdon Rd into Eddington avenue: difficulty in trying to get tag along or cargo bike across into filter holding pen at the turn as these bikes are heavy and hard to make sharp turn on.

**Temporary Improvements**

Following the report of safety concerns a number of temporary measures were introduced by Skanska in order to improve the road safety. By the end of September a temporary traffic light was installed at the site of the previously uncontrolled pedestrian crossing between the BP garage and Thornton Rd (Figure 23).

For cyclists the present temporary solution has not improved safety as the only cycle route is still to use the cycle lane on Huntingdon Rd from Thornton Rd and then to cross into the inside of the lane before turning into Eddington avenue with the vehicle traffic within the currently narrowed road (due to ongoing construction work). This route is clearly not safe for cyclists when vehicle traffic is undercutting stationary cyclists while waiting for the turn and more than one near miss has been reported in this situation where HGV traffic has narrowly passed stationary cyclists in this situation.

Currently the only option for cyclists with small children on bikes is to cross Thornton Road, dismount and push the bicycle over Huntingdon Rd at the pedestrian crossing and then to continue pushing along the pavement until finally reaching the cycle path in Eddington avenue.

The initial design of the temporary crossing improved the situation but a significant number of near miss incidents prevailed as vehicles and cyclists alike failed to stop at the red light of the temporary crossing. Following complaints by the parents a number of improvements were implemented: the traffic lights were switched to continuous operation rather than manually operated; the traffic light was manned by a Skanska warden during school drop-off and pick-up times; solid white lines were drawn in front of traffic lights; additional traffic lights were installed on the central island of the crossing; and the digital sign at Girton Corner for Huntingdon Rd city bound traffic now alerts road users of the temporary pedestrian crossing (Figure 24).

This temporary solution has greatly improved the pedestrian safety but it has not fully resolved the problems of motorists and cyclists alike not stopping at the lights (Figure 25). There are still regular incidents when cyclists ignore the lights or vehicles block the crossing.

Based on the large number of reported near miss incidents the police was present at the site on 19th, 20th October and again on 2nd November to reiterate the presence of the temporary crossing to motorists.

**Road Safety Meeting**

On 19th October 2015 a meeting took place at UCPS chaired by Stuart Wilson, Client Representative, Infrastructure and Public Realm of NWCD where we shared our concerns regarding the present solution, but in particular also regarding the permanent plans for the junction and crossings. The following were present at the meeting: James Biddulph (UCPS headteacher), Councillor Lynda Harford (South Cambridgeshire District Council), Councillor Douglas De Lacey (Cambridge City Council), Amanda Mays (Road Safety Manager at Cambridgeshire County Council), Jason Gostling (Project Director at Skanska), John Gant (Girton College), Biky Wan (PR Manager, NWCD).
Figure 23: Temporary pedestrian and cycle access routes to the school circled by the school on 30th September 2015.

The map shows the suggested routes to the school. Please note that there are organised routes. Huntington Road is a public highway, controlled by Cambridgeshire County Council. The Highway Code applies and individuals feed the University of Cambridge or the University of Cambridge Primary School are responsible for their own actions on public highway. If you have concerns about Huntington Road more generally, please direct them to the County Council.

Eddington Avenue

Crossing Huntingdon Road on foot

There is an uncontrolled crossing to the west of Thornton Road, 2 minutes’ walk from Eddington Avenue. Currently, we have installed traffic lights with a button to press which controls a ‘green man’ and stops the traffic. The traffic management contractor wearing a high visibility jacket will be at the crossing every day 8am-9am and 2.45pm-3.45pm to push the crossing button, helping you cross the road.

Current Pedestrian and Cycle Access Routes to the School

Turning right into Eddington Avenue on your bike

Turning right into Eddington Avenue in the morning rush hour may be intimidating as oncoming traffic may not choose to stop and some Cambridge-bound vehicles may try to undercut you. We hope that additional signage will help this situation.

Those wanting to turn right should stop opposite Eddington Avenue and then move into Eddington Avenue when there is a suitable pause in the west-bound traffic. We would suggest that those with small children and/or those who lack confidence when cycling in heavy traffic should follow the routes for walking.

Crossing Huntington Road by bike

1. Huntington Road is very busy and so the school suggests the safest way to access the school is to walk from your bicycles before the junction and use the temporary crossing near Thornton Road or the crossing at Lawrence Weaver Road.

2. Then, walk with your bikes along the footpath to Eddington Avenue. This footpath gets very busy at school times and so we are asking parents to refrain from cycling with their children on this pavement. The Highway Code states that adults are not allowed to cycle on pavements unless it’s a designated cycle path.

Key

- Suggested cycle route
- Suggested pedestrian route
- Pedestrian route – closed
- HGV's don't overtake cyclists sign
- Cyclists merge with traffic sign
- School information sign
- School children crossing sign

Eddington Avenue

Thornton Road

Pedestrian crossing

Cyclists merge with traffic

Footpath closed

Combination footway/cycleway

Information sign for School

HGV's don't overtake cyclists

Whitehouse Lane

Lawrence Weaver Road

Pedestrian crossing

Crossing Huntington

Road on foot

A pedestrian crossing is to the west of Lawrence Weaver Road, 2 minutes’ walk from Eddington Avenue.

This map is not to scale.
Figure 24: Temporary pedestrian crossing on Huntingdon Road between the junction with Thornton Rd and the BP garage (17th October 2015).

Figure 25: Motorist and cyclists ignoring the red light (17th October 2015).