



Professor Sir David J.C. MacKay
Department of Engineering
Trumpington Street
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19 January 2016

Dear Professor Sir David MacKay,

The University received the petition "Safer Cycling and Walking to and from North West Cambridge" on 3 November and has subsequently considered it at both the West and North West Cambridge Estates Syndicate (21 December 2015) and the Estates Strategy Committee (11 January 2016). As the Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Chair of the Estates Strategy Committee, I am writing to you to communicate the University's response to the petition.

The University is committed to delivering a quality place at the North West Cambridge Development, and has worked extensively with the local authorities and public over the past several years to develop the proposals that will enable a long-lasting and sustainable place to evolve on the site. The early delivery of the primary school in September of last year was the first of several community facilities that will be provided in the first phase of development, and the Eddington Avenue junction was opened in a temporary form to facilitate access to the primary school.

Works to the permanent form of the junction were completed in December 2015 following extensive discussions with Cambridgeshire County Council, which is the highway authority, and later this month the junction will be fully operational when the traffic signals are turned on (subject to BT works). The petition has been considered in light of the measures the University is currently seeking to implement along Huntingdon Road, and also acknowledging that the County Council as the Highway Authority will need to approve any works proposed on Huntingdon Road and Girton Road.

The Huntingdon Road/Eddington Avenue Junction

In respect of the Huntingdon Road/Eddington Avenue junction, the University will not at this stage consider further alterations to the junction design. This junction was designed following extensive dialogue with the County Council, and crossings of Huntingdon Road at the junction were previously proposed by the University and not permitted by the County Council for several reasons including road design issues, network capacity and alternative provision. This junction has been subject to two road safety audits and will be subject to a third when the junction is fully operational. The current designs are approved by the County Council and set out in a Section 278 legal agreement with the County Council.

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Therefore we do not believe it would be appropriate to continue to pursue this option, especially as the County Council has indicated that they would not be willing to consider such further amendments.

With regard to the Whitehouse Lane strategic cycleway crossing of Huntingdon Road, the University supports the development of a strategic cycleway network for Cambridge and the County Council has identified that the Whitehouse Lane crossing is the best location to link to this network. Therefore the University will continue to promote use of the new toucan crossing of Huntingdon Road in this location. In the fullness of time, when the northern part of the route is delivered, it would provide a clear, mostly off-road link between the primary school and the Thornton Road area via the Darwin Green development.

Huntingdon Road/Thornton Road

The petition promotes a signal-controlled crossing of Huntingdon Road near Thornton Road (where there is already an uncontrolled crossing). There is no County Council requirement for a crossing at this location and the assessments undertaken as part of the outline planning permission do not identify the need for such a crossing. It is not yet clear whether, if the University were to pursue delivery of a crossing in this location, the County Council would subsequently permit it. The University has instructed its traffic engineers to pursue this matter with the County Council to clarify its position: Huntingdon Road is a County Council-controlled, strategic highway route and if the County Council will not permit a crossing (for whatever reason) the University cannot implement one. The traffic engineers will, with the County Council, consider the likelihood of permission for either a toucan (pedestrian and cycle) or puffin (pedestrian) crossing.

As you are aware, the only way a toucan crossing could be implemented is if the southern footway is widened, which would involve land acquisition from five freeholders. The County Council has clearly stated that it would be unlikely to support a strategic case for compulsory purchase of land to serve this purpose, and therefore any land acquisition would fall to the University. The University has instructed its agents to investigate whether this is an option that could be pursued.

Therefore, for the University to consider whether it would implement a signal-controlled crossing to support residents in the Thornton Road area, further information is required and the University will take a decision on the way forward when this information is available.

Girton Corner

The University is keen to encourage links between the new development and surrounding communities, and the Ridgeway cycle network is one of the means of establishing these connections. The plans for the Ridgeway, as agreed with stakeholders through the outline planning permission, is to link the development to Huntingdon Road at Bunker's Hill, and make use of the existing crossing of Huntingdon Road to facilitate links to Girton.

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Professor Duncan Maskell FMedSci
Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor

With the changing context of Girton College's emerging expansion plans, the University will now consider further engagement with the College and the County Council to see whether an improved crossing of Girton Road near Huntingdon Road can be established.

I trust that this will provide you and other petitioners with feedback as to the University's response. We will update you further as and when further information is available.

Yours sincerely,

Duncan Maskell

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