

Meeting with Manchester City Council regarding Great Ancoats Street – 15 July 2019, 2pm

Richard Elliott – Head of Policy Partnerships and Research, MCC

Mandie Shilton Godwin – Active Travel lead, MCC

Angeliki Stogia – Executive for Environment, Planning and Transport, MCC

Nick Hubble

Andrew Fisher

Giselle du Toit

Nick: introduction explaining that many people have expressed dissatisfaction with the proposal and how the proposals interact with clean air / climate emergency / encouraging active travel / reducing motorised traffic. Why not improve the road when the opportunity arises, rather than lock in the status quo now? Nick presented an alternative plan which proposes cycle lanes as well.

Andrew: Agree with Nick's comments, and flag that the people using the road aren't all local. Noted there are alternative routes available for motorised through traffic.

Nick: Noted that the road is billed both as a thoroughfare and as a 'destination' – the current plans don't cater for that. This plan doesn't cater for cycle deliveries, which TFGM is championing. Noted that the parallel cycle routes are proposed but that they don't cover the needs of people who need a direct through cycle route, nor the delivery / courier cycles.

Andrew: Given the wide pavements and width of the road, there is enough space to reallocate space appropriately.

Nick: Returned to the revised plan drawn up by a (non-MCC) highways engineer to show that it is possible to include a bi-directional cycle lane on the south side while maintaining traffic flows. Noted that previous plans did have a cycle lane, but were discarded. Why were those discarded?

Angeliki: The lead time to this project has been lengthy, so main design has been proposed before the climate emergency. A more comprehensive plan for the city centre cycling may need to be established city-wide rather than examining individual road plans. City centre transport strategy to be consulted on soon. Bee Network is oversubscribed.

Andy: Agree, but cycling on GAS is required because it is direct.

Nick: Manchester has signed up to Chris Boardman's Made to Move which requires walking and cycling to be at the heart of all road plans. This is older than the climate emergency. It would be useful if a proportion of MCC's budget for roads was allocated to walking / cycling to facilitate moving people more efficiently.

General agreement that the Bee Network money being oversubscribed is a positive.

Angeliki: What to do with funds/projects which are already allocated but where walking/cycling not integrated? Deadlines to spend money otherwise the money is lost. Project is still valid because it connects Islington to the city centre. Project is mainly crossing enablement.

Nick: Yes, but people need to move in all directions, not just across GAS – some crossings will take longer than before. Nick to email Angeliki Bryn's analysis. It ignores that people will need to move *along* the road as well as across it.

Andy: We did see cycling along the route when we did the protest ride, but levels are low, given the hostility of the road.

Nick: There's nothing in the proposals to reduce speed, there is lots of damaged street furniture indicating this is an issue. The proposals give a bit of improvement to pedestrians but not sufficient to make this a "place".

Angeliki: Original plan to link city centre and the new neighbourhoods to the north. Need to reduce rat running in the city centre and reduce car numbers in the centre. However this can't happen immediately as it takes time to mode shift. This intends to encourage drivers to use the ring roads instead of rat running through the NQ and Ancoats. Then to make a hub of Piccadilly / HS2. Focus on last mile / 2 miles within city centre via walking & cycling. There is requirement for loading etc to continue. MCC answer in short / medium term to mode shift is keep capacity for motorised travel but prepare for modal shift.

Nick: Yes, but this is high street with homes, shops, etc.

Andy: Through traffic should be using wider ring road not inner ring road.

Nick: "Parallel" cycling routes are not direct and require more time / distance. This doesn't encourage people to modal shift.

Giselle: Agree that parallel routes aren't likely to encourage people to take up cycling as an alternative to travel via car. They are not direct and will take longer both in time and in distance.

Angeliki: Why would GAS on its own be useful? Need to think about movements / trips and cater for those within the city centre.

Richard: No additional traffic capacity, has been funded on grounds of pedestrian crossing improvement. Bus route is also important here. Traffic in future will be moved further out from the city centre.

Andy: make cycling part of the spend.

Nick: Traffic levels are declining; but the road is built to maintain the traffic flows. Bike hire scheme is being rolled out next spring.

Giselle: £9m investment, but removal of cycle lanes – what would additional cost be to include cycle lanes? Why not include cycle lanes in the £9m?

Andy: Cars park on the pavement already – need to ensure segregation.

Angeliki: Which routes would be needed for cycling?

Richard: This is the inner ring road and has only been completed 5-7 years, but now it does cut the city from the new northern areas. Longer term traffic deflection is possible. Extra people, rail, jobs, residential areas.

Andy: Even if traffic flows need to be maintained, it is possible with a redesign.

Nick: Is active travel only considered by MCC as an 'add on' if someone else is paying, or is it part of the design?

Angeliki: This project dates from before Made to Move. Active travel is at the heart of projects, but only if it is possible. Hyde Road funded, but additional active travel capacity is being funded from MCC and/or applying for Bee Network funding.

Giselle: How do we find out about similar projects? Consultation is poor.

Angeliki: Contractor near appointing so unlikely anything can change. CCRG was apparently involved.

Discussion about CCRG and which parties are involved and how often it meets. Mandie not currently a member. Giselle happy to attend as GMCC delegate in future.

Nick to email Bryn's plan to Angeliki, as well as evidence of double parking.

Nick: 440 space surface level parking application has just been made for the former retail park on GAS. Angeliki not yet aware but will investigate. Noted that the junction that this takes place on has no pedestrian facilities, yet all those drivers will need to walk away from cars and to their destination.

Richard: Parking will be reduced in the city centre over the next few years.

Meeting ended 3.15pm.