



# **Appendix 1: sample survey of elements of cycling infrastructure around Blackburn with Darwen**

Rev 2

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Blackburn with Darwen (BwD) seem prepared to be creative and innovate to address difficulties for cyclists moving around the urban area. One example is the carriageway-facing 'push button' facility at a signalled junction of Church Street/Ainsworth Street. This enables cyclists to register their presence at the junction in the absence of motor vehicles to trigger the buried loop detectors. Nevertheless, it would have been preferable to have designed automatic cycle detection into this junction, not least as a number of cyclists are unaware of the user-activated facility.



Another innovation, following negotiation with cycle users, is the central carriageway cycle lane at the Toucan crossing on Montague Street, in the vicinity of Blackburn College. This enables cyclists to leave the crossing in the middle of the road, and proceed along the short section of advisory cycle lane, to position themselves in the correct location for a right turn into a side road, which is the continuation of a signed cycle route (NCN 6).



Something of a potential mixed message here. While the surface markings indicate that both buses and cycles are permitted to enter this street, the adjacent signage makes no 'overt' mention of a way through for people using bikes. The no motor vehicle ('flying motorbike') sign is often misinterpreted as applying to all traffic, including cycles.



The bus in this illustration is stationary, waiting for the lights to change, and is occupying an advanced stop line. While the introduction of ASLs at a number of signalled junctions across the Borough is to be warmly welcomed, clearly there is some scope for education among road users on how they work, possibly backed up by enforcement. The bus is owned by 'Eclipse Advanced Training'!



There should be a general move toward the removal of all 'Cyclists Dismount' signs, which undermine cycling as a quick, safe and comfortable transport option. Thoughtful and innovative design, in consultation with users should yield an acceptable alternative design solution.



Similarly, discontinuing cycle routes at difficult locations does not instil confidence in, nor advance the attractiveness of, this mode. At this location, with two lanes of one-way traffic, many (potential) cyclists will wish to be in the right turning lane, yet the current arrangement puts them in a vulnerable position from which to commence this manoeuvre.



Here, the principle of enabling cyclists to legally avoid a no-entry sign is to be commended. However, a few refinements to the design of the facility could make it rather more user-friendly, such as running the advisory cycle lane along the obvious desire line, i.e. through the loading bay, rather than outside it which requires an awkward manoeuvre for riders.



Here, the detailed layout (indicated by the surface markings) appears to cater for cyclists moving either parallel to the carriageway, or at right angles to this across the Toucan and into Blackburn College to the left of the picture. The arrangement does not readily lend itself to combining the two, at least if the surface markings are to be adhered to.



In locations, consideration has been given to cyclists both on and off the carriageway along parallel routes, so called 'dual provision'. This principle is to be endorsed, and applied more widely in the BwD area. That said, the on-road cycle lane in the picture is of sub-standard width and could be made wider without detriment to other road users.



An advanced Stop Line at the junction of Montague Street with Whalley Banks. The central filter lane enables right-turning cyclists to access and gain a good position within the ASL, avoiding conflict with left turning vehicles. The red surfacing appears to discourage motorists from encroaching within cyclists' space, but is prone to erosion, and will need to be maintained if it is continue to remain effective.



The solution on a side-road approach to Bank Top takes cyclists off the carriageway and requires them to 'become pedestrians' to cross the main road. Bank Top is not particularly busy for much of the day, and most cyclists tend to remain on the carriageway to avoid the time penalty of the 'pedestrian route'. The lack of dropped kerbs at the access point illustrated further reduces the user-friendliness of this arrangement.



This Toucan crossing on the Preston Old Road (A674) in the vicinity of an access point to Witton Park offers advantages to more cautious cyclists, but disadvantages more confident riders. The former are likely to accept the time penalty and detour associated with using the facility to avoid travelling on the A674. However, cyclists who value the expedience of remaining on carriageway are compromised at the relatively long road narrowing in the vicinity of the Toucan.





This bridge over a railway line is actually on a cycle route, but you wouldn't really know it from the signing.



In some locations where signing has been provided, vandalism and defacement have compromised its usefulness. There is also scope in places, as in this illustration, to rationalise the volume of signs (e.g. by putting more than one destination on each 'finger'), to reduce street clutter as well as installation and maintenance costs.



In contrast to the above this attractive new sign is on the canal tow path, one of several installed at key points linking the canal to the town centre. They tell a bit more than which way to go but also how far, what's en route, shops etc. This, along with recent surfacing of the tow path should encourage use of this facility. *(photo: Nick Riley, Groundwork)*



An example of a junction layout that is not at all cycle-friendly, here at the junction of Hamilton Street and Albert Street. The wide junction mouth and sweeping bend enable (particularly left turning) motorists to negotiate it at speed, endangering 'straight-on' cycle movement. The junction geometry needs to be significantly tightened up.



Another location, here at the junction of Hamilton Street and Bolton Road, where off-carriageway provision for cyclists require them to make very awkward manoeuvres. Where cycle users are required to position themselves also inconveniences pedestrians, which will not help the image of cycling in the area. It should be born in mind that riders who prefer off- to on-road facilities are likely to be more inexperienced in bike-handling skills, making tricky manoeuvres all the more challenging.



The arrangement above leads cyclists (and pedestrians) to this uncontrolled crossing of the A666. At no point do the signals stop traffic from all directions, while the expanse of carriageway to cross, and the inability to see the lights on the majority of signal heads from the vantage point of NMUs crossing, further adds to the challenge.



This shared-use facility along Shadsworth Road, is relatively wide and enables more cautious and inexperienced cyclists to avoid the parallel carriageway, on which traffic can, at times, seem quite fast or heavy. Nevertheless, the treatment at this access point could leave cyclists vulnerable. The drop kerbs are welcome, but the lack of clarity over priorities (cyclists and pedestrians on the path could be given priority over turning traffic), together with the wide visibility spays have not been designed with the best interest of NMUs in mind.



Road closures can be an effective way of reducing the speed and volume of traffic from specific areas, such as residential neighbourhoods. Employing this technique can create safer and more attractive conditions for NMUs. There should, therefore, be a presumption in favour of exempting cyclists and pedestrians from measures to restrict the movement of motor traffic. It would be relatively simple to open up the road closure in this illustration to cycle users.



The colour surfacing and logos at this mini-roundabout are clearly intended to raise drivers' awareness of the likely presence of cyclists. However, the red lane markings encourage riders to adopt the most vulnerable line through the junction, and those near ninety-degree turns require some pretty advanced bike handling skills.