

Draft A414 Corridor Strategy consultation February 2019

Response from CycleHerts and St Albans Cycle Campaign

General comments by CycleHerts

We support the aims of the A414 Strategy and, on the whole, we can see that the objectives, packages and interventions will go some way to achieve these aims. However, we have two main reservations about whether the aims can be achieved with the Strategy as currently presented. First there is lack of detail on demand management and second there is a lack of proposals for comprehensive cycle networks within urban areas.

1. Lack of detail on demand management

Given that;

1. There will be more housing and more jobs along, and adjacent to, the corridor
2. Some existing road space will be reallocated to public transport, cycling and pedestrians;
3. Only limited increases in traffic capacity at some junctions are proposed,

it is difficult to see how increased congestion will be avoided unless strong measures of demand management are implemented.

Objective 8 says that demand management will be implemented but hardly any details are given in any of the packages or proposals. Re-allocation of road space is mentioned but there is no mention of demand management measures such as road user charging, congestion charging, workplace parking charges, reductions of car parking spaces, and only car-club parking spaces for new residential developments. We realise that any of these measures will be controversial but without them the whole strategy will not work.

2. Lack of proposals for comprehensive cycle networks within urban areas

As well as demand management the following measures are needed to reduce the predicted volume of traffic, avoid congestion and provide convenient travel for everyone:

- Investment in Mass Rapid Transit for inter urban journeys
- Frequent and reliable public transport within urban areas
- Good quality cycle networks within urban areas so that anyone cycling feels it is safe, convenient and direct.
- Better facilities and conditions for pedestrians in urban areas so that anyone walking feels it is safe and enjoyable to walk.

Cycle routes between urban areas, as proposed in the strategy, would, if of good quality, be welcome but will be of limited value if they do not link to cycle networks within the urban areas. The strategy is seriously deficient in that there are insufficient proposals for cycle networks in some of the urban areas in the A414 corridor. It may be argued that these are matters for more local plans but this draft A414 strategy already contains some fragmented proposals for cycle facilities within these urban areas.

We are surprised that there seems to be no mention of the Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT) which has been developed for the Department for Transport to assist in the assessment of priorities for investment in cycling facilities. Without this it is difficult to assess whether specific interventions are likely to be effective ways to get more people cycling.

The following are more detailed comments from St Albans Cycle Campaign on the proposals for cycling in the segments covering Hemel Hempstead, St Albans, and connections to St Albans. [Text copied from the strategy is in normal type and our comments are in bold type]

S1: Hemel Hempstead

Package 1 - Hemel Hempstead East-West Corridor

The overarching aim of Package 1 is:

To form an east-west, cross-town corridor which facilitates attractive and convenient journeys on foot, by bike, by bus and also by car between Hemel Hempstead railway station, the Town Centre, Jarman Park and Maylands industrial area.

[We welcome this aim]

The package includes:

- Developing the A414 into a public transport and cycling/walking corridor, improving both connectivity along and across the key route.

[We welcome this proposal]

- Core cycle network across Hemel Hempstead to tie key destinations together including the town centre, Maylands and railway stations

[We are very strongly in favour of providing a core cycle network. But the totality of the proposals in the Strategy does not provide a core network for the whole town. Nevertheless we welcome what is proposed as an initial step in developing a network for the whole town]

Two Waters-A4251 London Road crossroads simplification.

Improvements to the pedestrian and cycling facilities at the A4251/A414 crossroads in Two Waters to improve station access and discourage through trips along the A4251. £500k - £1m

[We welcome this but it is not clear how through trips on the A4251 will be discouraged]

Various cycle routes crossing A414, including at-grade crossings.

New cycle routes mainly on roads which cross the A414 including: Wood Crescent/Runham Rd (incl. link to ski centre); Lower Yott/Windmill Road; Jarman Park; Bennetts End Rd, White Hart Rd, Longlands (incl. link to Adeyfield shops; Leverstock Green Road). New at-grade crossings on the A414 will be required. Provide linkages to urban centres such as Adeyfield and Bennetts End. £2.5m - £5m

[We welcome this if the cycle routes proposed are of good quality, separated from traffic and are not shared footways or cycle lanes painted on the carriageway. We welcome the use of at-grade crossings]

A4251 London Road pedestrian / cycle enhancement

Pedestrian and cycle enhancements along London Road (A4251) to enhance safety and encourage walking and cycling. Include cycle lanes and wider footways with the intention of promoting healthier methods of travel through the Two Waters area of the town. £50k - £500k

[We welcome cycle lanes but if they are just painted on the carriageway they are not satisfactory. They have to be separated from traffic.]

Magic Roundabout Cycle Flyover.

A flyover bridge, iconic in design, primarily to facilitate cycling over the Magic Roundabout.
£10m - £25m

[We welcome this but would like more detail on access points, gradients etc]

Package 2 - Maylands and East Hemel Hempstead

The overarching aim of Package 2 is:

To provide improved access to the Maylands Enviro-Tech Enterprise Zone and the wider East Hemel Hempstead Garden Community from within and Hemel Hempstead by all modes of travel.

[We welcome the aim of providing for all modes of travel]

The package consists of:

- The introduction of an East Hemel Multi-Modal Transport Interchange serving the Maylands and Enterprise Zone developments.
- Improving access to the M1 through the provision of an additional junction and enhancements to Hemel's existing junction.

[The interventions listed in the package go beyond the two bullet points above. In particular there are number of proposals for cycle facilities which we welcome. It is essential that these are retained in future developments of the Strategy]

[We have listed below the cycle facilities that are included in the package. These are all welcome but until there are specific proposals for development of the whole site it is not possible to assess whether these will provide a good, comprehensive cycle network for the whole area. However, we welcome these as a statement of intent]

A414 J8 Cycle Bridge

A bridge over the A414 Breakspear Way near M1 Junction 8, to improve cycle routes to areas north and south of the A414, linking development. Designed to be iconic in style and high quality to attract users. £10m - £50m

Pedestrian and Cyclists Crossings

New / improved pedestrian and cyclist crossing facilities at key locations to address existing severance and enhance access to the Maylands area from surrounding residential areas.
£50k - £500k

Hemel Hempstead Eastern Spine Road

A mostly single carriageway, lower speed Eastern Spine Road that connects A4147 and B487 to enhance connections and access to Maylands by car, bus and cycle from the north. Connects Green Lane to B487 and into other cycle routes in Maylands. Designed to minimise traffic rat-running. £2.5m - £5m

Nickey Line Extension

A 'branch line' of the Nickey Line cycle route through the proposed East Hemel Hempstead development linking into the A414/A4147 corridors. £50k - £500k

Conversion of country lanes through Maylands into quietways for cyclists and pedestrians
Conversion of existing 'country lanes' through the Maylands area to quietways for cyclists and pedestrians travelling from north and south Hemel Hempstead into Maylands. £2.5m - £5m

Enhance Nickey Line, Replace steps with ramp

Enhance the Nickey Line cycle path by providing additional lighting to improve perception of safety, improve signage to make navigation easier day and night. To cover both the urban section within Hemel Hempstead and the rural section to Redbourn. Replacement of current steep steps with a ramp structure suitable for cyclists and mobility impaired people. £1m - £2.5m

[These enhancements of the Nickey Line are highly desirable whatever form of development takes place in East Hemel Hempstead]

A414 Breakspear Way/Green Lane crossroads

A414 Breakspear Way/Green Lane signalised crossroads including pedestrian/cycle bridge, form part of the cycle track branch off the Nickey Line to the north, and will connect to a new off-road cycle track alongside the A4147 to St Albans. Scheme will incorporate bus/MRT priority. £5m - £10m

S2 Hemel Hempstead-St Albans-Park Street

Segment 2 Priorities (p108)

The A4147 corridor will be prioritised for more local trips between Hemel Hempstead and St Albans urban areas only, with improved provision for local bus services, walking and cycling.

[Despite what is said no provision for cycling is proposed on the 50% of the A4147 corridor from the bridge over the A414 to Leverstock Green and beyond]

Package 3 (p109)

A414 Cycle track (M1 J7-8 Section of the A414)

Planned off-road cycle route alongside part of the A414 (M1 J7-8 section) and connecting to the A4147, then running off road alongside the A4147 to St Albans £500k - £1m

[Will this extend into the urban area of St Albans? Or will it stop outside the urban area at King Harry Lane /Bluehouse Hill roundabout?]

A414 Cycle track: Hemel Hempstead to Park Street, St Albans

Cycle track alongside the A414 to connect Maylands with Park Street and beyond (and A414 / A405 shared cycle tracks). £500k - £1m

[This is misleading. This A414 cycletrack will connect to the Park Street roundabout not to Park Street village. The road between the roundabout and Park Street village is hostile for cycling and there are no proposals to improve it.]

A414 Park Street Roundabout Improvements

Provision should be made for improved pedestrian and cyclist crossings. £1m - £2.5m

[If there is a cycle track on the A405 from this roundabout towards Watford as proposed, improved crossings of the arms of the roundabout are essential i.e. provision “must“ be made not “should”]

S3 Watford-Garston

S4 Bricket Wood Triangle

S5 Park Street-How Wood-Chiswell Green

The overarching aim for St Albans-Watford corridor is:

To transform the A405 into a multi-modal road by diverting strategic traffic onto the motorway net-work, freeing up space for more local journeys by bus, bike or by car.

This includes

- A downgraded A405 to better cater for pedestrians and cyclists and reconnect communities in Kingswood and Leavesden.

- Enhanced cycling facilities along the A405 linking St Albans and Leavesden.

[We welcome this]

Package 4

A405 Cycle Track (p117, 125)

Provision of off-road cycle track broadly alongside the A405 between Coningsby Bank (St Albans) and Bricket Wood (M1 J6). £1m - £2.5m

[Safe and convenient crossings would be needed at Tippendale Lane, Lye Lane, M25 slip roads, and Oakwood Road.

The report claims that “There is already an off-road cycle route alongside the A405. This intervention would represent an enhancement of this route including new signage, markings and surfacing” This is incorrect. At present there is no off-road cycle route alongside the 70mph A405 between the Park Street roundabout and the Noke roundabout.]

B4630/Watford Road through Chiswell Green

Package 5 (133)

A405/B4630 Watford Road junction reconfiguration

Conversion of the existing roundabout to a signal-controlled crossroads with more priority given to the A405 arms. Improvements would need to ensure signal priority is given to bus services (e.g. 321). £1m - £2.5m

[It is essential that people cycling can get safely and conveniently between the proposed off-road cycle track on the A405 and any (segregated?) cycle tracks on the B4630 through Chiswell Green].

Interventions to reduce through traffic on the B4630/Watford Road through Chiswell Green. It is currently the B road with highest flows in Hertfordshire.

[There is no detail given of the “interventions” which will reduce through traffic but we would like to see them.]

On-road cycle lane in each direction removing central hatched areas) and physical narrowing of the road where feasible could be introduced. £2.5m - £5m

[On-road cycle lanes are not good enough. This is a busy 30 mph road. Any provision for cycling needs to be physically separate from motor traffic. Along most of this road there is adequate space on the verges to put in segregated cycle lanes. Hertfordshire should not be building any more sub-standard cycling facilities. Ask the question: would most parents let their 12 year old children cycle on the proposed on-road cycle lane?]

Segment 5 Priorities (p132)

Focus on improving train station access (either Park Street or How Wood) for residents of Chiswell Green through active travel links along Tippendell Lane.

[What is an “active travel link” in this context that will transform the walk of over a mile to either of the stations? A cycle track would be useful but low potential use would suggest it is not a priority]

S6 Park Street-St Albans-London Colney

S7 St Albans-London Colney-Hatfield

Package 6 (p142)

Improve the cycle track alongside the A414 between the Park Street and London Colney Roundabouts. £50k - £500k

[There is not a cycle track between these two roundabouts. The cycle track to and from the Park Street roundabout currently starts and ends at Shenley Lane. This cycle track between Park Street and the junction with Shenley Lane is fine and is low priority for improvement. But, a completely new cycle track is needed from the junction with Shenley Lane to the London Colney roundabout.]

A414 Cycle Route upgrade London Colney-Hatfield

Improve the existing footway alongside the A414 to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists between the London Colney Roundabout and Comet Way (Hatfield). Consideration will also need to be given to a grade-separated link over the A1081 north of the A414 junction (potentially to be linked with the existing or improved bridge over the A414). £500k - £1m

[This existing footway already accommodates pedestrians and cyclists. However, it needs safe crossings of Highfield Lane, Colney Heath Lane, Smallford Road and Sleafshyde Lane. The running surface of the route also needs to be improved. A safe crossing of A1081 is also needed – it does not need to be grade-separated. The existing bridge over the A414 at the Colney Heath longabout is difficult for many cyclists to use and a more convenient crossing is needed]

Package 12 (p160-1)

Address severance for pedestrians and cyclists between London Colney and St Albans with an improved, grade-separated link to promote more sustainable travel between these two urban areas.

1. London Colney A414 Cycle/Pedestrian Bridge Improvements

Improvements to the existing overpass approaches including thinning vegetation to increase security, removal of kissing gates, wayfinding and signage, etc. £50k - £500k

2. London Colney A414 Sustainable Travel Bridge

Investigate longer term options for a new, more attractive sustainable travel bridge over the A414 which will be capable at least of accommodating pedestrians and cyclists but also potentially future public transport and autonomous mass transit vehicles £2.5m - £5m

[We would welcome any improved and easier to use bridge or other crossing of the A414 between London Colney and St Albans]

Improved Pedestrian and Cycle Routes within London Colney on the High Street

[We would welcome proposals to provide good quality cycle routes on London Colney High Street.]

Improved active travel infrastructure between London Colney and St Albans, including footways, cycle routes, crossings, lighting, signage, etc., to encourage more trips to be made by active modes £1m - £2.5m

[We welcome this aspiration and as this is a key radial route to St Albans city centre would give it very high priority. New, good quality cycle routes on the London Road corridor are very much needed.]

B5378 Active Travel Corridor (*Shenley Lane, London Colney*)

Upgrade of existing footways to provide shared use pedestrian and cycle track along the entire length where feasible between the junction with St Anne's Road (London Colney) and the A414 Napsbury Junction £1m - £2.5m

[There is already an almost continuous off-road cycle route from the signalised toucan crossing of Shenley Lane via Napsbury Park and North Cottages to the B5378 bridge over the A414. It does not seem sensible to provide a duplicate sub-standard shared use track. A shared use track on one side of the road is dangerous to use in the dark when car headlights from the opposite direction are directed onto the footway into the cyclist's eyes.

This proposed intervention is for a shared footway that only goes as far as the A414 Napsbury junction. The cyclist could then transfer to the new cycle track that we have proposed above that completes the link between the Park Street and London

Colney roundabouts. This seems better than transferring onto the A414 dual carriageway.

However we think it would be far better to spend the money upgrading the existing route and dealing with the hazardous junction of Shenley Lane/North Cottages/and the existing A414 cycle route to Park Street roundabout.

There is also a need for a cycle route crossing over the A414 from this hazardous junction towards St Albans. This route is already partly in place using Herons Walk bridleway to London Road.]

St Albans, London Road corridor

Package 10 (p154)

Make London Road a more attractive place for pedestrians and cyclists and improve reliability of journeys along the corridor.

The Package consists of:

- Development of new pedestrian crossing points, including at the Odyssey Cinema, potentially facilitated through a review of on-street parking.
- Junction upgrades and signal timing reconfiguration to improve conditions for pedestrians at the Peahen junction and Watsons Walk/Lattimore Road junctions.

Odyssey Cinema revised footway and crossing

Widening of the footway outside the cinema and relocation of the signal controlled crossing north-westwards to improve safety for pedestrians entering/exiting the cinema. £1m - £2.5m

[We have previously voiced our concerns about the Odyssey cinema crossing proposal. It could hinder the development of safe, segregated cycle routes along this hazardous but very direct route to the city centre.]

Parking Review

A review of on-road parking provision in consultation with local communities and businesses along the corridor to help identify where it may be feasible to make improvements to conditions for cyclists and pedestrians including enlarged footways and cycle parking. £500k- £1m

[More cycle parking here will do little to improve conditions for cyclists. We need segregated cycle routes.]

London Road/Watsons Walk/Lattimore Road junction alterations

Reconfigure the junction and remove guardrails to improve footways and provide new markings to reinforce existing off-road cycle route or mark it on the road. Widen footways where feasible especially to reduce crossing distances. £1m - £2.5m

[An “existing off-road cycle route” does not exist. Even if it did exist it difficult to see how anyone can “mark it on the road” if it’s not on the road]

Peahen junction signal timing reconfiguration

Review the signal timings at the junction. £1m - £2.5m

[Until there are safe alternative routes to the city centre, people cycling will continue to use London Road. The existing junction and approach traffic lanes are intimidating for all but experienced cyclists. The junction needs to be re-designed to make it safe and convenient for cycling]

Access to St Albans City Station

Package (p148-9)

Improve accessibility by active modes to St Albans City station, particularly through strengthened connectivity between the station and the city centre.

The Package consists of:

- Improvement of footways, crossings, and urban realm, and implementation of wayfinding along Victoria Street between the station and the town centre.
- Development of cycle route infrastructure leading to the station along Grosvenor Road/Ridgmont Road.
- Increased provision for cycle parking at the station and safeguarded location for future increases.

[This package contains only one small section of cycle route infrastructure on Grosvenor/Ridgmont. We need safe segregated, cycle routes to the city station from the city centre and all the main residential areas of the city]

Cycle Parking

Maintain or increase current and safeguard locations for future provision of cycle parking at St Albans City station and in the city centre £50k - £500k

[We welcome this]

Grosvenor Road-Ridgmont southern active travel route to the station

Improved walking/cycling infrastructure along Grosvenor Road and Ridgmont Road for access to the City station £50k - £500k

[We welcome this but this is already one of the safest approaches to the city station: it is not the busiest approach]

Hatfield Road corridor

Package 9 (p151)

Transform Hatfield Road into an attractive and inviting high street and enhance its function as an efficient public transport corridor.

[We welcome this. But, why are there no cycling proposals at all for this very well used route? Transform it also into an efficient and safe cycling corridor]

Undertake a parking study to understand parking requirements and investigate potential for rearrangement of parking along Hatfield Road £50k - £500k

[It is difficult see how parking can have any place on what is a fairly constrained carriageway width which has to accommodate bus priority infrastructure, moving traffic and safe, segregated cycle routes.]

Hatfield Road Bus Priority and Improvements

Investigate options for bus improvements, such as improved bus stops with real-time service information, and priority measures along Hatfield Road in order to improve reliability and reduce travel times on routes to Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City £500k - £1m

Hatfield Road Urban Realm Improvements

Urban realm improvements along Hatfield Road to improve conditions for pedestrians and improve amenity of the high street. £500k - £1m

[If Hatfield Road is to be an attractive and inviting high street with improved conditions for pedestrians it needs a 20 mph speed with effective enforcement.]

Alban Way

Segment 7 Priorities (p169)

An enhanced Alban Way cycle route will cater for inter-urban, traffic-free cycle journeys for commuting and leisure with improved connectivity to St Albans' two railway stations, University of Hertfordshire and Hatfield business park, and Hatfield railway station

[Improved connectivity is needed not only to the two St Albans railway stations but also to the city centre and to the shopping and residential areas near the Alban Way]

Package 7 (p145-6)

Enhance the Alban Way and promote it as a safe, convenient and attractive option for trips between St Albans and Hatfield

[We welcome this]

Physical improvements including surface, crossings, general maintenance, etc. Maintain a crossing over the Abbey Line as a priority, and incorporate it into any improvement scheme. Investigate sensor lighting. Manage vegetation along the route, and clear leaf mould regularly from the relatively new surface to avoid mud building up. Investigate widening and lighting the path as it passes through Hatfield, especially to the east of the Galleria, or consider alternative busier routes as part of the Hatfield regeneration plans. £500k - £1m

[1. Any discussion of improvements to the Alban Way needs to add a pedestrian and cycle connection from the Cottonmill end of the Alban Way to the Abbey station and onward to Westminster Lodge and Verulamium Park. Network Rail proposed this as an alternative to the bridge over the railway: this indicates that this is a feasible proposal.

2. Safe crossings are needed at Sutton Road, Hill End Lane and Ellenbrook Lane.

3. Improved access to the Alban Way is needed at various points particularly to and from the industrial and retail areas bordering Hatfield Road]

St Albans-Hatfield Alban Way Enhancements

Alban Way Cycle Signage Provide additional cycle signage along the Alban Way route including signs which provide information regarding the surrounding area £50k - £500k

[We welcome this]

Abbey Line Ped/Cycle bridge

Investigate a new high quality bridge over the Abbey Line for pedestrians and cyclists broadly in the vicinity of the existing level crossing. £5m - £10m

[We understand and are pleased that this has recently been ruled out by Network Rail]

Alban Way Lighting

Implement lighting along Alban Way, either 'always on' or sensor activated £1m - £2.5m

[We welcome this]

Alban Way Wayfinding

Introduce new wayfinding to the Alban Way within St Albans and Hatfield. Extend Alban Way branding/signage/wayfinding beyond the extents of the actual cycle route to provide easier wayfinding to it £50k - £500k

[We welcome this.]

Alban Way Marketing and Promotion

Marketing and promotion of Alban Way as an attractive sustainable transport connection alongside Hatfield regeneration plans £50k - £500k

[We welcome this]

Coopers Green Lane

Package 13 (p178)

The overarching aim of Package 13 is: To enhance local transport between St Albans and Hatfield and facilitate growth along the Sandpit Lane-Coopers Green Lane corridor.

[Facilitating growth along the Sandpit Lane and Coopers Green Lane corridor will create more traffic on already congested roads. Whilst we welcome the development of an active travel corridor which will make a small contribution to reducing some of the extra traffic we are surprised that there are no proposals for public transport in

this corridor. Without this it seems that facilitating growth will undermine many of the aims of the A414 Strategy and the Council's Local Transport Plan 4.]

The Package consists of: **(p178)**

Development of an active transport corridor along Coopers Green Lane with a link to Hatfield Business Park, including cycling and footway infrastructure supported by a reduction in the speed limit.

[Very much needed]

Coopers Green Lane Active Travel Infrastructure SW of Hatfield Avenue (towards St Albans). **(p176)**

Provide new cycling and footway infrastructure along Coopers Green Lane £2.5m - £5m

[Very much needed]

Coopers Green Lane Speed Limit Reduction **(p177)**

Reduced speed limit along Coopers Green Lane to support active transport infrastructure and reflect a more urbanised environment along the route due to nearby development £50k - £500k

[We welcome this]

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