

**KEF on mini-Holland Portsmouth Road proposals, February 2015**

*We have submitted an on-line response to the consultation, but some of the questions were not suited to responding as a group, and others did not have space to explain or elaborate on our comments, so we are sending this as well.*

**Support for scheme as a whole?** Moderate support, as the cycle path needs to be properly segregated all the way along to make all cyclists, however inexperienced or nervous, feel safe. Generally the scheme is disappointingly unambitious and seems to be a very watered-down version of the original proposals.

**Likelihood of using the route more for walking or cycling?** As proposed, this route seems unlikely to make much difference to experienced cyclists or to walkers, or to encourage children, ex-cyclists and novices to take up cycling.

**Agreement with particular sections of the improvements?** We like the fully segregated sections, though they should be in both directions. Armadillos and white lines are unlikely to encourage new cyclists or to keep cars, lorries etc out of cycle lanes. We think more space could be taken from the pavements to create segregated cycle lanes in both directions, as Portsmouth Road pavements are little used or unnecessary on the river side of the road where pedestrians can, and would probably prefer to, walk closer to the river along Queens Promenade.

We think the segregated cycle route should not stop at Brighton Road but should continue to the Kingston boundary, so that it could cater for Kingston University students and perhaps encourage Elmbridge Council to follow Kingston's example.

New access and zebra crossing to Queens Promenade seem fine, though the pavement illustrated in the proposals seems unnecessarily wide. An "improved gateway" to Kingston should include cycle paths continuing in both directions to and from Kingston Market Place where they could join up with other existing and proposed cycle routes.

**Further comments**As local residents, environmentalists and cyclists, Kingston Environment Forum (KEF) members were delighted when the Council won funding for the mini-Holland scheme, and remain very supportive of its aim of encouraging many more people to take up cycling by making it safer and pleasanter. But we find ourselves somewhat underwhelmed by these proposals for the first phase, and concerned that they will not achieve these aims and could set an unsatisfactory pattern for the rest of the scheme. The lack of continuity and proper segregation from other traffic means that this proposed route on a very busy road is unlikely to make children or timid or novice cyclists feel safe or take up cycling as a regular form of transport.

**KEF** is the consortium of local environmental organisations that works with Kingston Council to promote environmental sustainability in Kingston upon Thames. KEF includes representatives from a range of local groups with an interest in environmental issues and activities in the Borough. We meet regularly to share information, concerns and expertise with relevant Council officers, and KEF representatives also attend Kingston Strategic Partnership meetings.

As local stakeholders and members of Kingston Strategic Partnership we request updates and information on the scheme as it progresses. Within our group there is considerable local knowledge and experience of cycling in the Borough and we believe that we can make valuable contributions to shaping these proposals, which, if they had greater community involvement and buy-in, would be more likely to achieve their aims. However the mini-Holland scheme develops, its infrastructure is likely to be with us for a long while so it is important to get it right and spend the funding in ways that will improve and increase cycling substantially - and in doing so would improve air quality, community health and fitness, and reduce car traffic and demands on public transport.

Our previous, more general, comments on cycling in Kingston and the mini-Holland scheme in July 2014 (and request to be informed and consulted) can be read at <http://e-voice.org.uk/kef/about/view/KEF_statement_on_cycling_in_Kingston_2014.pdf>

*Marilyn Mason  
Chair, Kingston Environment Forum, 13/2/15*