



ChiCycle

Campaigning for better walking and cycling in and around Chichester

ChiCycle Objection to Planning Application 22/01485/OUTEIA Phase-2 of the West of Chichester Development (Part 3)

ChiCycle object on grounds that the proposed uncontrolled pedestrian and cycle crossing sited between Westgate and the A259 College Roundabout, will have inadequate visibility according to [DFT Traffic Signs Manual \(TSM\)](#) and [LTN1/20](#).

DFT Traffic Signs Manual Volume 6 section 15.5 (Visibility) contains the following advice:

15.5.1. **Minimum distances** for visibility of crossings for approaching traffic are set out in Table 15-1. For more detail see 2.1.5.

Table 15-1 Recommended visibility distances for pedestrian crossings

85th percentile speed (mph)	20	25	30	35	40
Recommended Stopping Sight Distance (m)	22	31	40	51	80

DFT Traffic Signs Manual Volume 6 section 13.4 (Traffic survey) gives the following advice on recording 85th percentile speed:

13.4.3. Vehicle speeds should be recorded at peak and off-peak periods. The measured speed of vehicles in each direction, taken roughly **50 m** before the crossing site, should be recorded and **the highest 85th percentile speed used in the assessment**. The speed limit should also be noted.

There appear to be no documented traffic speed assessments that relate to the proposed uncontrolled crossing. We note the adjacent roundabout and A259 dual-carriageway are currently national speed limit zones and likely have an 85th percentile average speed exceeding 30 mph. The following pages look at the safety implications of vehicles approaching the uncontrolled crossing with limited visibility from these faster sections of road.



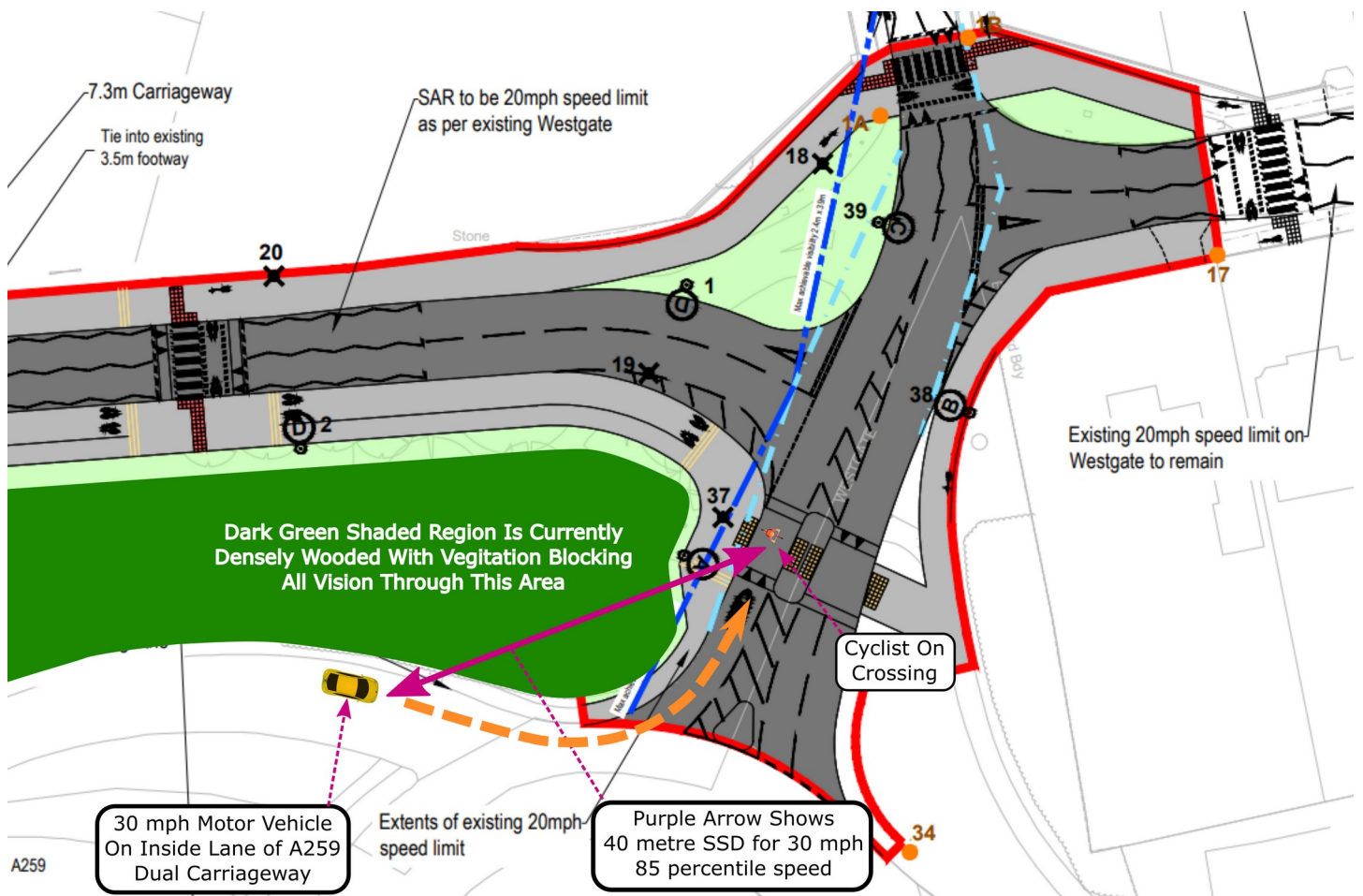
This objection has been prepared on behalf of ChiCycle by:
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 11th September 2022

Traffic on the A259 Has Inadequate Visibility At The Proposed Uncontrolled Crossing

Experience of driving on the A259 between the Tesco Supermarket and the College Roundabout suggests approach speeds exceeding 30mph are common within 50 metres of the proposed pedestrian and cycle crossing. The proposed crossing is situated on the boundary of a 20mph speed limit zone. However the 20mph speed limit signs are only visible to approaching motorists within a few metres of the crossing.

DfT advise the highest 85th percentile speed on the approach to a crossing should be used for assessments. On the relatively fast A259 dual carriageway, the highest 85th percentile speed 50 metres from the crossing will be at least 30mph or above.

The diagram below highlights ChiCycle's safety concerns with the proposed crossing:



The purple arrow is scaled to show the 40 metre TSM minimum visibility distance for approaching traffic at 30mph (85th percentile speeds). As can be seen, visibility of the crossing is completely obscured by the densely wooded area.

From the College Roundabout Visibility of the Crossing will be Dangerously Limited

The proposed crossing has restricted visibility between pedestrians waiting to cross from the western side and vehicles approaching from the south. The following image was taken from the central reservation of the college roundabout looking northwards towards the proposed crossing. It clearly illustrates the visibility issue.

As can be seen, pedestrians and cyclists on the pavement will have difficulty seeing anything approaching from the position of the black car.



DfT Traffic Signs Manual Volume 6 paragraph 13.1.4. advises:

13.1.4. The three main objectives of any crossing should be **safety**, **convenience** and **accessibility**. A crossing that does not improve on all three to some degree is **unlikely to be satisfactory**, and consideration of these criteria will form an important part of the assessment process.

Inability of cyclists and pedestrians to see approaching traffic, will prove unsafe. Difficulty and delays in identifying safe gaps in traffic, will make the crossing inconvenient. People with limited mobility, unable to sprint/jump out of the way of traffic appearing from around the blind bend, will be unable to use the crossing at all. This will make the crossing inaccessible to people with disabilities.

DfT Traffic Signs Manual Volume 6 paragraph 13.1.4. advises:

15.5.2. Pedestrians should be able to **see** and **be seen** by **approaching traffic**. Different groups will have different requirements – for example, wheelchair users and children may be harder for a driver to see as they are lower in the landscape.

Visibility from the Crossing's Western Kerbside will be Unacceptably Poor

The pavement on the western side of the proposed crossing is shown in the image below. Pedestrians and cyclists will have poor visibility of approaching traffic when deciding whether or not to cross the road (far below DfT compliant sight distances).



An unsatisfactory existing pedestrian crossing is currently situated close by. Despite the existing crossing being positioned further away from the college roundabout, giving it a modest advantage in terms of visibility, it remains little used because most people correctly perceive it as a dangerous place to cross the road.

Indeed, a number of pedestrians prefer to walk up to the mouth of college roundabout where they can better see approaching traffic on the A259. These pedestrians then choose to cross onto the traffic island at the mouth of the roundabout instead of using the crossing provided. Pedestrians are willing to walk this additional distance to cross the road where there is improved visibility. This clearly demonstrates the proposed crossing will have (and be perceived to have) inadequate visibility if located in a similar location.

The Proposed Crossing will have Inadequate Visibility For Cyclists

At a crossing, a cyclist's visibility sight-lines begin further back from the kerb than a pedestrian's. A cyclist's front wheels and handlebars are ahead of them that cannot be pushed out into the road until it is safe for the cyclist to proceed forwards onto the carriageway. Recumbent cycles and mopeds will have sight-lines starting even further back from the kerb than those of standard bicycles.

DfT Cycle infrastructure design ([LTN 1/20](#)) guidelines advise that visibility splays for cycle crossings should comply with national highways guidance in the same way as other highway junctions. LTN1/20 section 5.8 (Visibility splays) advises:

5.8.1 **Visibility splays** should be provided **for motor traffic** on the **main route approaching a crossing** used by **cycle traffic**. Manual for Streets provides advice on calculating **y-distances** approach to the design speed.

5.8.3 The **x distance** is measured from the **give way or stop line**, back along the centre line of the minor arm. The **y distance** is measured on the highway **from the centre of the minor arm**.

5.8.4 The **x distances for cyclists** equate to the eye positions for one or two cycle design vehicles. The desirable minimum x distance allows two users to observe the full y distance and both accept the gap in traffic. **Designers should seek to improve visibility along the y distance before reducing the x distance**.

5.8.5 For y distances, the major arm being joined may be a carriageway with adjacent footways, a bridleway or footpath, or another cycle track. ... Where the **major arm is a highway**, the y distance is that identified in the Manual for Streets (based on SSD for motor vehicle speeds)...

Table 5-6: x Distances for cycle traffic

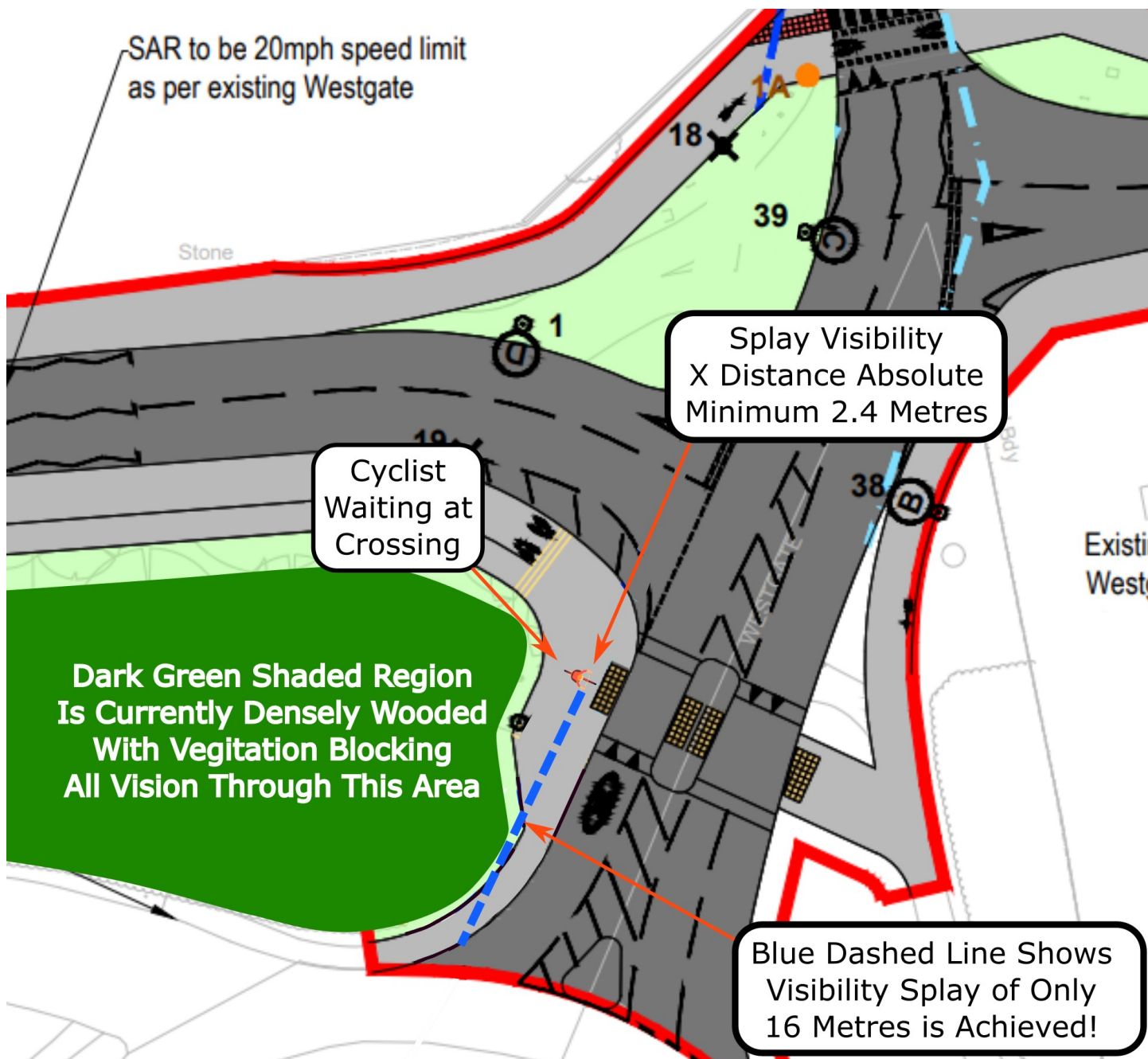
Desirable minimum (m)	Absolute minimum (m)
4.5	2.4

MfS Table 7.1 Derived SSDs for streets (figures rounded).

Speed	Kilometres per hour	16	20	24	25	30	32	40	45	48	50	60
	Miles per hour	10	12	15	16	19	20	25	28	30	31	37
SSD (metres)		9	12	15	16	20	22	31	36	40	43	56
SSD adjusted for bonnet length. See 7.6.4		11	14	17	18	23	25	33	39	43	45	59

Visibility at the Cycle Crossing is Only 37% of LTN1/20 Minimum 43 Metre Sight Distance

National speed limit restrictions apply to the A259 and College Roundabout adjacent to the proposed crossing. Even if these areas are converted to 30mph speed limits, it is doubtful the Manual for Streets minimum 43 metre splay visibility distance is adequate. Arguably, a better guide for visibility at a crossing on the arm of a busy “A” road roundabout is DMRB volume CD 109 Table 2.10. It advises a desired minimum SSD of 90 metres if this was a 30 mph speed limit roundabout. In either case, a crossing with a clearly inadequate 16 meter visibility splay represents an unacceptable danger to road safety. It is also a significant departure from national standards for safe highway design.



Conclusion

Westgate is the key walking and cycle route on the western side of Chichester. There are no safe alternative routes for cyclists or pedestrians leaving or arriving at the western side of the city. The route is particularly used by pedestrians and cyclists to access, Centurion Way (NC88), the Tesco Supermarket, Salterns Way, South Coast National Cycle Route (NC2), Fishbourne village and Bishop Luffa school.

The existing sections of Westgate between Bishop Luffa school and Sherborne Rd currently form a safe quiet-street/school-street where low traffic volumes allow safe inclusive cycling in the carriageway. This allows pedestrians (particularly vulnerable pedestrians) to safely use the busy pavements without experiencing conflict/collisions with cyclists.

Current national guidelines for walking and cycling ([Gear Change](#) page 17 & 18) advise reallocation of road-space to improve opportunities for walking and cycling. National policy seeks to increase the number of “school streets” and convert side streets such as Westgate into “Low-traffic neighbourhoods”.

Instead, planning application 22/01485/OUTEIA seeks to do the exact opposite by reallocating road space currently supporting safe cycling towards use exclusively by motor vehicles to access the West of Chichester housing development. Cyclists will be forced to use an inadequate and dangerous crossings leading onto unsuitable and inadequate shared use pavements.

Application 22/01485/OUTEIA will relocate the majority of cyclists onto a path running south of the existing Westgate carriageway. Cyclists (and pedestrians) will be expected to risk negotiating the dangerous uncontrolled crossing. At this location intense motor traffic approaches the A259 college roundabout from a fast dual carriageway before rapidly arriving around a blind corner onto the crossing.

These proposals represent a severe reduction in safety, convenience and directness for anyone who walks and cycles. Although the existing mini roundabout at Sherborne-Rd is far from ideal, at least the existing arrangement allows cyclists to see approaching motor vehicles before they cycle onto the junction.

ChiCycle predict few people will remain prepared to cycle along Westgate once this unappealing access road scheme has been delivered. If it does go ahead, for the sake of safety we recommend the route is declassified as a designated cycle route and all signage encouraging cycling is removed.