

CycleKirklees



Batley Blueprint consultation: submission to Kirklees Council

Introduction

1. Cycle Kirklees (the Kirklees Cycling Campaign) supports changes to our infrastructure that improve the walking and cycling networks and routes throughout Kirklees. We support changes to the layout of streets that assist in promoting active travel and help to improve road safety.
2. Members of Cycle Kirklees attended the live events at Batley Library to view the displays and talk with Kirklees officers about the proposed changes. This was followed up with a walk around the town centre.

Background

3. Batley town centre is a busy shopping area with cafes, takeaways and links to Tesco supermarket. The level of traffic creates unpleasant air quality and antisocial parking often takes up space on the footways.
4. We see the Batley Blueprint as a welcome change to the built environment that as well as setting out to improve the visual attractiveness of Batley town centre would increase the amount of time people spend there, whilst reducing the negative impacts of motor vehicles.

Response to Plans

5. Cycle Kirklees is in favour of most of the changes promoted with the recent concept drawings. Reallocation of space to prioritise active modes of travel has proven benefits to the local economy, increasing both the amount of time and money spent in town centres that facilitate walking and cycling.
6. Phase one shows limited changes to the streetscape with 2-way through traffic remaining in the town centre and shadows of the old parking bays in the planting.
7. As all parking is to be removed, we see little sense in still allowing private vehicles to drive through the main high street in Batley. Instead, we would support the introduction of bus gates installed at Wards Hill and Market Square.
8. We particularly approve of phase two of Commercial Street, which removes all motor traffic and replaces it with a welcoming and attractive space for people to shop and stay - and introduces play facilities.

9. Removal of traffic here could be done before wholesale changes are made to the built environment with the use of Experimental Traffic Orders and the placing of large planters.
10. Removing all private vehicles from Commercial Street will improve the air quality, make the road easier to cross and reduce the need for crossing facilities. The road would then be safer for people on cycles and they would no longer need to use space shared with pedestrians where conflict between the two modes will arise even at slow speed.
11. If private motor traffic is to be maintained on Commercial Street, pedestrian crossing must be prioritised with either zebra crossing or, if Puffin crossings are used, having an immediate red for motor traffic.

Design Issues

12. Short stay cycle parking (Sheffield stands) should be placed frequently along Commercial Street, as opposed to being only at either end, so that visitors' bikes can be easily seen from their destination as this gives a better feeling of security.
13. Care should be taken where cycles are to be mixed with pedestrians. If at any time cycles are expected to use a shared area as part of a through-route, some separation is provided. Conversely, if it is a slow route as part of a destination then shared space would suffice if adequately signed.

Crossings required

14. The junction of Hick Lane with Bradford Road currently has no crossing facilities and is a significant barrier to people traveling between the town centre and the Batley Railway Station.
15. We would like to see crossing facilities for cycles and pedestrians at Hick Lane/Bradford Road prioritised.