Delivering routes across the Whiteknights campus that encourage safe and enjoyable walking and cycling.

The key routes on the Whiteknights campus are used by both pedestrians and cyclists. Travel surveys have regularly highlighted a perception of conflict between these two types of users. The University of Reading is proposing improvements to create safe walking and cycling on the campus.

WHY ARE THESE IMPROVEMENTS BEING PROPOSED?

These improvements are being proposed to address several key issues which affect these areas.

VEHICLE SPEEDS

The gateways within the University of Reading are currently designed in an outdated manner which prioritises vehicular movement over people walking and cycling. This approach tends to discourage cycling and leads to a harsh ‘engineered’ environment. The strategy considers how to improve the road environment by reducing vehicle speeds and enhance the sense of place on the roads within the campus.

ACKNOWLEDGE DESIRE LINES

Off road paths are currently used by both pedestrians and cyclists. Desire lines are likely to be the same for those walking and cycling within the University campus. A path designed for one group, if it follows desire lines, will inevitably be used by both groups. The barrier type approach traditionally employed by the University to control cycling and protect the pedestrians tends to be unsuccessful and runs counter to any ambition to encourage more cycling.

SPACE FOR EVERYONE

In some locations, there is insufficient space for the numbers of pedestrians and cyclists. The strategy considers the best ways to accommodate larger groups of people walking and cycling and the movement of ‘people traffic’ across the campus.

WHAT IS BEING PROPOSED?

The Route Strategy proposes design solutions to address these issues for four different respective areas:

1. ON ROAD ROUTES
2. OFF ROAD ROUTES
3. KEY SPACES (OUTSIDE THE QUADS)
4. CAMPUS GATEWAYS

PROPOSED CAMPUS ROUTES

1. ON ROAD ROUTES

A core aspiration of the Campus Routes Strategy is to reduce the dominance of motor vehicles. The road environment needs to be inclusive and accommodate people walking and cycling. The Campus Route Strategy proposes that the design of key vehicular routes will be modified to:

- provide continuous footways at side roads
- tighten kerb radii at junctions
- create more pedestrian crossings, both formal and informal, whose width can vary from 2-20m
- reduce unnecessary clutter including railings, bollards and redundant signage
- reduce the number of car park entrances and exits to a minimum

2. OFF ROAD ROUTES

Lack of space is an issue when large numbers of students and staff emerge at similar times. Wider routes have greater capacity and allow room for cyclists and pedestrians to move comfortably together. We recommend based on recent research that paths are not demarcated with separate space for cyclists but that a generous width of shared path is provided for people walking and cycling. 3m is the minimum width of route proposed. In areas where flows of people can be high, paths of 3-6m width are proposed. These enhancements will be accompanied by improvements to lighting and signage.

3. KEY SPACES (OUTSIDE THE QUADS)

The Campus Route Strategy identifies modifications to four key spaces across the campus. These spaces play a key role in strategic cycle and pedestrian routes across campus. Importantly the role of these locations goes beyond their movement function. These spaces are important in the creation of a high quality public realm and form key entry points to the core campuses quads. All four areas are currently designed to suit the needs of vehicular traffic. The Route Strategy proposes the redesign of these areas to calm vehicular speeds, enhance environmental quality and prioritise pedestrian movement.

4. CAMPUS GATEWAYS

The gateways to the Whiteknights campus represent a key location, a point for the University to express its identity and differentiates itself from the surrounding road network. The strategy proposes that the three main entrance points (Queen’s Drive, Pepper Lane and Earley Gate) are redesigned to calm traffic speeds and prioritise pedestrian movement.

rdg.ac/quads-and-routes