

CYCLOPEDIA

Questions answered, subjects explained – Cyclopedia is your bimonthly cycling reference guide



Right: George Wormald

Legal

Dangerous bollard

Q
&
A

Q My cycling companion's pannier hit the medium-height brown bollard (pictured) in the centre of Route 7 cycleway on the descent from the Drumochter Pass. It is located prior to an access track for parking. He and his bike were thrown to the bottom of the slope. Fortunately, he suffered only minor injuries. Other bollards before bridges on this route have been removed. Why are they there, in the centre of the cycleway, and is there a standard for height and colour?
George Wormald

A There are two relevant publications, both of which are easily accessible on the internet: Cycling by Design is published by the Scottish Government; Cycling Infrastructure Design is published by the Department for Transport (LTN 1/20, dated July 2020).

Each sets out appropriate widths for off-carriageway shared-use cycle facilities, and covers the use of bollards as access control measures. Both generally counsel against the erection of any kind of sign within the running width of the facility unless absolutely unavoidable.

The image provided portrays a shared-use facility that appears to be right on the overall minimum width requirement, and the presence of a bollard (which fulfils no useful purpose whatsoever) effectively reduces the width still further. Such poor highway design is actively

Your Experts



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discouraged by the published works.

The problem is that the guidance carries no statutory authority so highway authorities, even if they are aware of its existence, can effectively turn a blind eye, because their liability will be determined by the common law concept of "reasonably foreseeable dangerousness". As cycle speeds in the 10 to 20mph range are likely on this facility, a rider making contact could easily be thrown into the traffic. So this bollard (and any similar) needs to go before that happens.

Highway authorities and their insurers have very deep pockets, so claims arising from negligent design will be robustly defended – which isn't to say that they cannot be pursued successfully. But you are correct: that bollard ought not to be there. Bollards are really only to be used as access control measures at the commencement of a cycle facility.

Paul Darlington

Technical

Finding my bearings

Q I have an old (2009) Specialized Crossroads Elite hybrid. It has done 53,500 miles and is very reliable but the headset bearing has worn out. It uses 3mm diameter ball bearings in a caged ring that fits a 1 1/8" fork steerer. I have tried looking for replacements at local bike shops with no luck, although the shops have plenty of caged 5/32" diameter bearings. Do you know where I could source replacements?
Phil Newstead

Phil Newstead



Left & top right: Alamy