

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:
2025/0615/P	Foyezur Miah	11/03/2025 14:30:19	COMMNT

Response:
Dear Planning Committee,

I am writing to express my strong objection to the proposed development, which involves the removal of existing kissing gates and the introduction of ramps and steps near the entrances to the nursery and community centre. This proposal raises significant safety concerns, particularly for vulnerable pedestrians, including young children and older adults. The area behind the community centre is also known for a drug exchange point, it is out of site from main roads and has easy escape to block of flats. Removing the barriers now gives them faster escape via the ramps on bikes.

As the CEO of QCCA for over 20 years and having lived in the area for an additional 15 years, I have seen first hand the value of these kissing gates in preventing antisocial behaviour and safeguarding pedestrians. The removal of these barriers will almost certainly result in an increase in cyclists, e-scooter riders, and moped users speeding through the area, posing a serious risk to those entering and leaving the community centre and nursery. We already see frequent antisocial behaviour involving e-scooters, mopeds, and bicycles in the courtyard outside the community centre, which leads to two ramps onto Queen's Crescent. Removing the gates will only exacerbate this problem, turning a key pedestrian route into a dangerous thoroughfare for fast-moving vehicles.

There have been documented incidents where shared spaces between pedestrians and cyclists have led to accidents. For example, a child in Elephant and Castle, London, was struck head-on by a cyclist while attempting to cross a cycle lane to reach a bus stop, resulting in both the child and cyclist being knocked to the ground (The Sun). This incident highlights the potential dangers of shared spaces without proper safety measures.

The proposed changes are also alarmingly close to the entrances of both the nursery and the community centre. The Department for Transport's guidance on inclusive mobility stresses the importance of ensuring pedestrian infrastructure does not create hazards for those with mobility challenges (UK Government Guidance). Introducing ramps and steps in such close proximity to these entrances could create unnecessary obstacles and increase the risk of accidents for those entering or leaving these facilities.

This proposal also contradicts established principles of inclusive design. The Department for Transport's Local Transport Note 1/20 on cycle infrastructure design emphasises the need for safe and accessible environments for all users, including pedestrians and cyclists, without compromising safety (UK Government Guidance). The current proposal, by potentially increasing conflicts between pedestrians and faster-moving cyclists or skateboarders, fails to align with these principles.

In light of these concerns, I urge the planning committee to reject this proposal. Any development in this area must prioritise the safety and accessibility of all users, particularly the most vulnerable. A thorough reassessment of the design is necessary to ensure it complies with inclusive mobility guidelines and does not introduce new hazards to pedestrians.