

RESPONSE FROM HFCYCLISTS / LCC to WESTFIELD'S DRAFT CYCLING STRATEGY Aug 2007

[very rapidly put together over long week end,
in expectation of a meeting in the following days]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is pleasing that to see that the Strategy says that it addresses the problems of on-carriageway cyclists. It is happy to recommend cycle logos and consider ASL's, but not anything more fundamental. It still uses the faulty logic of considering roads not shown as cycle routes as not recommended for cycling.

In the tricky area around the eastern end of the Common, it leaves the responsibility for cycle routes to the Link 73 CRISP. It is possible that this strategy will appear before the CRISP is finalised, and options may have been removed by the road layout.

The strategy fails to provide facilities linking the Southern Interchange to routes to and from the West. It fails to take notice of a suggestion for the eastern end of the Common.

Where nothing else can be done, then a 20mph limit should be considered.

It is possible that the area is going to be gridlocked some of the time. This may arise from vehicles queuing to get into the complex backing up to block the Holland Park roundabout. This may happen when the car park is full, or if more vehicles are arriving at the back of the queue than are lost at the front of the queue.

No provision seems to have been taken for screening vehicles entering the car park against terrorist activity. If this was done it might slow vehicles entering site.

If blocking the HPR is likely then the consequences should be considered. A path through should be kept clear for cyclists.

I am still confused by the plan not corresponding to what is on the ground, but Westfield do not recognise a problem here.

There are some questions about cyclists using lanes marked buses only, and a suggestion for getting cyclists to a quiet spot in front of a bus turning area.

Depending on what the legal agreement is, Westfield may not be honouring it if adequate work is not done to mitigate the effects of the extra traffic upon cyclists.

THINGS TO BE PLEASED ABOUT

It is pleasing that the strategy ends [on p87] with

Therefore, to encourage and provide for new users in this particularly busy and congested area of the city, then much thought has been given to off-carriageway provision, but this is not instead of on-carriageway, it is complimentary to the new routes and facilities being proposed for the road cyclist.

The strategy is happy to recommend cycle logos and consider ASL's. This is good, but it is disappointing that it dismisses anything more fundamental in difficult places.

It is good that it is considering how to get cyclists off the road to get to the cycle parking on Wood Lane. This is a problem where ever cyclists are required to stop in the roadway and they will be a stream of cyclists coming up from behind.

THE FAULTY LOGIC

Westfield dismisses giving design consideration to aid cyclists on parts of the carriageway not shown as recommended on TfL or LBHF cycling maps, other than suggesting cycle markings on the road to give awareness, and ASL's.

The logic behind this is faulty.

1 The LBHF "Walking and Cycling" map shows LCN+ routes. It refers to these routes as "safe and convenient" for cyclists. TfL has its cycling maps. All the cycle routes on the TfL map have been ridden and recommended by cyclists. The fact that a route is not on it does not mean that cyclists cannot, or should not, use it.

Examples of the contradictions introduced in the Westfield strategy by following such a dictum

1 Tadmor st is advocated as an alternative to the Uxbridge rd. Tadmor st [a quiet backstreet] is NOT A RECOMMENDED ROUTE according to TfL or LBHF cycling maps.

2 The favoured cycle tracks lead directly into, or from, carriageway that is not recommended for cycle use - ie the cycle tracks to and from Holland Park Avenue, Holland Park Road. These roads are NOT RECOMMENDED ROUTES

3 The phrase "not a recommended cycle route according to TfL and LBHF" or its equivalent can be found in the Westfield Cycling Strategy at

3.1.1

3.1.3

3.1.16

4.1.1

4.1.5

4.1.6

4.1.13

6.3

So at 6.3 Offcarriageway routes are preferred in contentious areas where road widths are too narrow to accommodate cycle lanes, or where routes are not recommended, according to TFL and LBHF.

4 If an area used by cyclists is considered dangerous then extra design care should be given to this area.

5 If no other way can be made to make the carriageway safer then consider using use a 20mph speed limit.

London Cycling Design Standards at

http://www.tfl.gov.uk/assets/downloads/businessandpartners/lcds_chapter3.pdf

Links – Plain links without special cycle facilities

Main town centre roads

3.1.8

On congested main roads, for example in busy high streets, where no cycle lanes or tracks are feasible, 20mph speed limits with complementary changes to the streetscape are the preferred option.

3.1.9

Wide nearside lanes of 4.0-4.5m width may be appropriate instead of cycle lanes, particularly where there is kerbside activity, such as loading.

THE UXBRIDGE ROAD CRISP

At 4.2 the Westfield Cycling Strategy refers to The Uxbridge Road CRISP [Link 73] 2008

“Such a study is anticipated to provide solutions to the well-known problems along Uxbridge Road, especially parallel to the Common

This CRISP does not look like it will resolve the problems in the region between Rockley rd / Caxton rd and the Southern Interchange before the Westfield Cycling Strategy is finalised.

We did not have access to maps that corresponded to reality. There is also the problem that connections on the Common are subject to the architect’s plans for the Common.

Dumping the responsibility of sorting out cycling connections in this most sensitive area onto this CRISP is not satisfactory. Westfield may well be ruling out preferred options by confirming road layouts before the CRISP is finalised.

THE STRATEGY DOES NOT DEAL SATISFACTORILY WITH THE AREA AT THE EAST END OF THE COMMON / ROUTE TO APEX OF COMMON

In Steve Murrell’s Memo to SF [22 August 2007], SM says has not heard of any suggestion for a cycle track on the difficult eastern end of the Common

... whilst no track provision has been proposed (by any parties) to serve this part of the Common.

This has been suggested, and it would be useful if Westfield took this on board.

a] John Griffiths in the hfcyclists response to Westfield on the document WhiteCityResponse.doc, sent to Jono Bourdillon on 6 August 2007, in the APPENDIX 7 / COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS p17/17

[One of the few statements made in **bold**]

NEW ROUTE TO AVOID THIS DIFFICULT AREA

Cyclists could go from the Toucan to the apex of Common if there was a route across the cut through, and a cycle route on the Common connecting to other cycle routes on the common.

b] John Griffiths to Cathy Swan [OPUS] / Alan Logan [LCN+] post CRIM 14 August 2007

I suggest this route, and say I prefer a route on the south side of the common. see APPENDIX 1

c] Alan Logan to Cathy Swan

Alan also suggests a cycle route on the Common to Apex see APPENDIX 2

IS THE PLAN WE ARE WORKING FROM CORRECT?

In Steve Murrell's Memo to JG [22 August 2007], p7

We do not show anything changing west of the toucan crossing on Shepherds Bush rd [should be Green], as far as we are aware.

I have received a response to my queries about footway widths from Cllr Nick Botterill.

see APPENDIX 3

REALITY is that the kerblines to the west and east of the W12 centre lie on the same straight line.

Your drawings show the footway narrower to the WEST of the W12 centre.

The response from Cllr Nick Botterill indicates that the footway to the WEST of the W12 centre will remain unchanged, and to the EAST of the W12 Centre the footway may be narrowed.

Something is wrong somewhere.

CONGESTION

I am pleased that TfL have audited your traffic modelling and are satisfied with your predicted congestion predictions. [Steve Murrell's Memo to JG [22 August 2007], p7].

I have concerns about congestion leading to gridlock that I hope have been fully taken into account.

If the HPR is to be blocked frequently then this should be considered in the design process

1 HOW OFTEN WILL THE CAR PARK BE FULL?

Bluewater is the largest shopping centre in Europe.
140K sqm, it has 350 shops, has 13000 car parking spaces, 27 million visitors /year

Brent Cross
81,800 sqm, 115 units. 6,500 car parking spaces.

WhiteCity London
a total of 110,773 sqm,. It has 4,500 car parking spaces.
flagship branches of Marks&Spencer, Debenhams, Waitrose and Next, as well as 265 smaller shops. It will include a "luxury mall" over three floors dedicated exclusively to top designer brands.

[the above data gleaned from internet]

Bluewater has 93 car spaces per 1000 sqm retail space
Brent Cross has 79 car spaces per 1000 sqm retail space
WhiteCity has 41 car spaces per 1000 sqm retail space

Whitecity has very good public transport links. This will encourage many people to come by public transport. People with cars may drive to a convenient station and then come by tube or train.

However many people with cars do not like using public transport. As the centre will include a luxury mall over three floors it is possible that people will continue to use their cars, and not switch to public transport. The complex does not attract a congestion charge for people living in the zone, or arriving from outside and not passing through the zone.

As the ratio of car spaces / retail space is much lower than other shopping malls it is possible that the parking may be full some of the time.

NUMBER OF CARS EXPECTED / DAY

Assume WhiteCity has 20M visitors /year, [Bluewater has 27 million visitors /year]

Nearly 60% coming by public transport or on foot. [Westfield Cycling Strategy] leaves 40+% coming by car / cycle.

ie 8M/year coming by car , ie 22k visitors per day by car on average.
Now perhaps 2 people per car, gives 11k cars day.

Now some days will be busier than others, some times busier than others.
At busy times car park likely to be full.
[the above calculations just to give a rough idea]

COMPARING THE RATE OF ARRIVAL AT THE COMPLEX TO THE RATE OF ENTRY

Five lanes of traffic arrive from various directions, 2 from the north via H-junction, 2 from the south via H-junction and one from Wood lane. These get merged and channelled into a two lane entry into the car park.

As a rough guide a lane of traffic can carry 1000 vehicles per hour. You have the potential of 5,000 / hr vehicles arriving at the complex, but only 2000 / hr getting in.

FACTORS CONTROLLING RATE OF ENTRY

The approach to the entry to the car park is 2 lanes wide.

Presumably this will fan out to more lanes inside so that tickets can be given to the drivers.

However this flagship Shopping Mall is likely to be a prestige terrorist target.

a) Other shopping malls have been targets in the past.

b) The complex is built over the car park.

Will there be any search of vans arriving at the complex, of estate cars with blankets covering material in the back? If so, this will slow the rate at which cars can get into the complex.

There does not appear to be any space to pull such vehicles over before entry to the car park. If vehicles are searched at some point this may decrease the rate of entry into the car park.

Note the City of London installed the "ring of steel" AFTER the St Mary Axe bomb in 1992 and the Bishopsgate bomb in 1993.

QUEUING BACK TO HPR

Queuing space between Holland Park roundabout and the entrance to the car park.

The distance involved is about 600m. This is 2 lanes wide for the most part. Allowing 4m for a queuing car gives $2 \times 600 / 4 = 300$ cars can queue in this space.

When the car park is full and 300 cars are queuing from the HPR, you will have the start of gridlock in the area.

BUSES ONLY, OR BUSES PLUS CYCLISTS

Can bus turning lanes be used by cyclists, as suggested by Steve Murrell's Memo to SF [22 August 2007]. The signs on the road say buses only.

SUGGEST east bound Uxbridge rd, at the entrance to the Southern Interchange, the divider separating the bus lane from the rest of the traffic could be extended forward upto close to the swept path of turning buses. Cyclists could use this space as a refuge before continuing. There may be an official problem with positioning of lights.

LEGAL ISSUES

Have not had a chance to look at this properly.

APPENDIX 1

Email John Griffiths to Cathy Swan [OPUS] / Alan Logan [LCN+] post CRIM
14 August 2007

I would like to add the following comments to this very thorough discussion

1 We should be insisting that the roadway is made more convenient for cyclists. Cyclists should not be encouraged to use areas where there may be pedestrian conflict just to avoid a congested carriageway. This applies particularly to the westbound Uxbridge rd adjacent to SBG. The lane widths / parking etc should be facilitated for cyclists on the roadway. Cyclists have probably faced coming along Wood lane or the Uxbridge rd to get to this point. The carriageway alongside the green is not much more difficult to handle than these roads.

2 The footway on the north side of Uxbridge rd between Caxton rd and the central line station is very busy and not suitable for a cycle route. There are also indications from the Southern Interchange planning application that the footway may be narrowed, though I would have thought that politically unacceptable.

3 I would suggest a link on the south side of the Common between the Apex of the Common and the Rockley rd junction. This would be used by west bound cyclists from the Holland Park roundabout and the Southern interchange. Ideally that would be a link from the cut-through to the toucan crossing [W12 centre to Central line station], and turning buses would have a stop sign or signal at this point.

4 Alan Logan suggested a modification to the crossings at Rockley rd that would reduce the problem of the distance between the pedestrian and cycle crossings. Meanwhile Nick Boyle has already done a safety audit on a different design for this crossing. Perhaps there should be collaboration on what happens, and bear in mind how the common might be altered.

5 There is more likely to be greater cyclist / pedestrian conflict on the north side of the Common, as both pedestrian and cyclist numbers would increase in that area. This can be reduced by keeping cyclists to the west

and southern sides of the common, which is possibly adequate for their needs. It is faster to go on a clear route through the common than one that has a lot of pedestrians wandering onto / crossing it.

john griffiths

APPENDIX 2

From email Alan Logan [LCN+] to Cathy Swan [Opus]

Below from the notes for discussion, in black from the organising consultants, Opus International [10 August 2007], and in magenta parts added by Alan Logan, LCN+, [13 August 2007]. Some parts have been omitted that do not seem relevant to this discussion.

Problems & Barriers for Cyclists:

- Heavy traffic volumes and gyratory creates limited width traffic lanes for cyclists to bypass queuing traffic, also fewer gaps in traffic and a longer distance to travel especially for westbound cyclists.
- Many pedestrians are using the new cycling track at the northern end of Shepherd's Bush Common alongside Uxbridge Road. Low hanging trees obscure the signs advising that it is a cycling track.
- Cycle track ends halfway along Shepherd's Bush Common. There is no more signage and the paving becomes uneven.
- Cycle track facility required between Rockley Rd and new cycle track on northside to segregate cyclists and pedestrians during peak periods.
- No crossing facilities for eastbound cyclists to rejoin the carriageway.
- No facilities for westbound cyclists from the northside of Shepherds Bush to join the off carriageway facilities on Shepherds Bush Green.
- Need to provide cycle access to and from the White City development either through the bus station or off carriageway.
- Eastbound on carriageway cyclists will be in conflict with left turning buses at new entrance to bus interchange station.

Opportunities:

- New toucan crossing across Uxbridge Road outside Central Line underground station planned as part of White City Development, along with a two lane cycle track towards Holland Park Roundabout. Also provide access for cyclists to enter rejoin carriageway or join the central bus lane for westbound onto Shepherds Bush Green.
- Upgrade the pelican to a toucan crossing for eastbound cyclists to be able to rejoin the carriageway at the eastern extent of the new Shepherds Bush Green northside cycle track.
- Provide access to and from the White City development for cyclists either through the bus station or with cycle track off carriageway.

Improvements to Rockley Road/Shepherd's Bush Green junction to improve connection for westbound cyclists to join more direct off carriageway facilities across Shepherds Bush Green (scheme currently been developed by LB H&F).

Comments:

- Cycle lane improvements are planned for the Common and Uxbridge Road as part of the White City Development.

APPENDIX 3 email from Cllr Nick Botterill to John Griffiths [17 August 2007]

John

I have received a response from officers about the 3 concerns you noted to do with SBG which is as follows:

- 1) There are no plans to reverse the footway widening and crossing improvements on the west and south sides which we have undertaken in the last few years.
- 2) However, the area around the southern interchange is extremely constrained and has to handle large amounts of movements of pedestrians, cyclists, buses and general traffic. The plans are still being finalised but there may have to be a small amount of footway narrowing at pinch points near the interchange and on the south side to the east of the W12 shopping centre.
- 3) At the beginning of August, there was a CRIM (Cycle Route stakeholder inspection meeting) on Uxbridge Road, at which John Griffiths was present and which looked at the issues he raised in relation to access to and from the Holland Park roundabout. Minutes of that meeting are at present being finalised, following which a post inspection meeting will be held, to which John Griffiths will be invited, to develop options and solutions.

Can I assure you John that any final plans will have to be agreed by the senior officers and myself. All the best.

Nick Botterill
