

COMMUNITY SAFETY, ENVIRONMENT & RESIDENTS SERVICES POLICY
& ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE - 3 FEBRUARY 2015

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CYCLING IN THE BOROUGH

HAMMERSMITH BRIDGE

One of the five headline subjects the July 2014 PAC recommended to be assessed and reported back to the Committee is

- Safety improvements for cyclists on Hammersmith Bridge

At 4.2 iii} this report states

We are currently working on several improvements in the Hammersmith Bridge area, including a contra-flow cycle lane on Bridge Avenue and a 20mph speed limit on the bridge.

It is very good that this report is considering a 20mph speed limit on Hammersmith Bridge. However it does not mention any other consideration to improve the feeling of security for cyclists, or any measure that would encourage cyclists who at present are far too intimidated to venture onto the roadway of the bridge.

I suggest that the double yellow lines are returned to their original position next to the kerb. We do not mind vehicles overtaking cyclists where there is room, and at present the double yellow lines are only on the short spans, not on the long central span. Some cyclists found them useful as a guide as to how far out from the kerb the next pinch point would be, and there could be a dotted white line indicating this all the way across the bridge.

At the July 2014 PAC meeting I submitted a discussion on our survey of the bridge, and recommendations that signs indicating "Narrow lanes, do not overtake cyclists" or road markings indicating "Cyclist Priority" be installed on the bridge. It appears that no notice has been taken of this at all.



The responsibility must not be put upon cyclists to be courageous and merge with faster moving traffic. Drivers must be told that cyclists have priority at the pinch points.

The latest Draft London Cycling Design Standards, Appendix – Cyclists at Roadworks, gives at Page iii

If a 4m lane width cannot be achieved then, according to advice given in [TAL 15/99 Cyclists at Roadworks](#) (1999), a 'narrow' lane width of up to 3.25m to 3.50m will enable car drivers to overtake comfortably and will generally deter drivers of larger vehicles from trying to pass at all. If even 3.25m cannot be provided, then a 'narrow' lane width of up to 3.25m and a speed limit of 20mph should be considered with signs stating 'narrow lane(s): do not overtake cyclists'.

At the pinch points on the bridge the lane is only 3.0m wide, and this occurs four times as you cross the bridge. Although the advice above is in a roadworks section of the LCDS, the geometry of the bridge is as if there were roadworks, and it is a terrible section of roadway for cyclists.

CYCLE RIDE WITH COUNCILLORS

We wish to invite Councillors interested in the bridge to a ride across it. We hope this can be arranged during the coming consultation period on the bridge. Anyone who is able to cycle down a backstreet ought to be able to cycle on the bridge. And we hope you might bring your family too.

Should you find this disturbing, then please do something about the bridge.

HAMMERSMITH GYRATORY

Another of the five headline subjects the July 2014 PAC recommended to be assessed and reported back to the Committee is

- Cycle safety on the Hammersmith gyratory

This report states at 4.3

Transport for London are leading on work to improve safety for cyclists, and other road users, on the Hammersmith gyratory. Technical studies have started, and the indicative timescale is for consultation to take place in the Autumn of 2015 and construction to start in the summer of 2016. Options include "peninsularisation", where one leg of the gyratory could be pedestrian and cyclist only. The effects of this would be studied with or without the flyover being replaced by a tunnel .

This is great if the design is going to be prioritised for the safety and convenience of cyclists. In our experience, however, maintaining motorised traffic flows is always the primary concern of traffic planners.

The Council's Draft Cycling Strategy does not appear to be too committed to the idea of an East – West route through the gyratory for cyclists.

At 5.2.1, when discussing the Gyratory, it includes

Provide a cycling route from Hammersmith Road to King Street and improve the "sense of arrival" for cyclists on Broadway. **An alternative east/west route will be provided if an acceptable solution cannot be found**

The design of the gyratory must provide safe routes for cyclists from all origins and to all destinations. It must be a gyratory that cyclists feel confident to use, not just the most confident. This Better Junction review is not just a patch.

HOLLAND PARK ROUNDABOUT/ SHEPHERDS BUSH GREEN GYRATORY

This report states at 4.4

TfL are also studying options for one of the other major barriers to cycling in the borough, Holland Park Roundabout / Shepherds Bush gyratory. One option would be a "cycling hamburger", with a pedestrian/cycle route through the middle of the roundabout.

Again the design must be prioritised for the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. There are indications from the White City Opportunity area that they intend to squeeze in another northbound lane at the Uxbridge rd / Wood Lane junction. There would be two lanes northbound at the entrance to Wood Lane and the cycle lane would be removed.

With Old Oak Common on the horizon a last ditch stand must be made for non polluting modes and for human breathing life over the dominance of polluting motor traffic.

POLLUTION LEVELS

The level found for 2013 at the Hammersmith Broadway NO₂ diffusion tube site was 89.5 microgram / cubic metre. Levels above 60µg/m³ could lead to a potential exceedence of the NO₂ hourly mean Air Quality Strategy objective.

This is an important consideration that traffic planners must take into account when deciding whether to give space to pedestrians and cyclists or to motor traffic.

OUR POLLUTION TESTS

Our group, hfcyclists, in collaboration with Andrea Lee of Client Earth, are going to place NO₂ diffusion tubes at sites around Hammersmith gyratory and Shepherds Bush Green starting on 4 February 2015. About 30 tubes will be used in February, and they will be replaced by a further 30 tubes in March. Several tubes will be used at each site, so there are not 30 separate sites. We are looking at places where there are a lot of people crowded together with a lot of traffic. The local geometry and prevailing winds can concentrate the pollution in certain areas.

Because of the potential for interference when tubes are placed at a lower height LBHF only place tubes at a height of 3m. Pollution levels lower down and closer to the source are expected to be higher, but we do not know by how much. We will be measuring at two heights, 3.5m and 2.5m at the same location. We hope that by extrapolating, this will give us an indication of the NO₂ levels at 1.5m, approximately breathing height.

At a couple of places where we do not expect any interference to the tubes we will be measuring at heights of 3.5m, 2.5m, 1.5m and 0.5m. This may give us an indication as to whether children in pushchairs are exposed to greater levels of pollution, and by how much.

It should be pointed out that NO₂ diffusion tubes are not considered a very exact method, and measuring for only two months out of a year will not lead to very robust results, and they may be described as “indicative”.

We will use statistics on our results to see how much reliance can be placed upon them. However we do hope to extract useful information from these tests that may be used to inform people making traffic [and health] decisions.

Elizabeth Fonseca and Davene Chatter-Singh, LBHF/RBKC, have both been very helpful and constructive in our project.

DRAFT LOCAL PLAN

BOROUGH-WIDE POLICY CC9 / AIR QUALITY

This should also include reassignment of road space in favour of non-polluting modes such as walking and cycling. The Borough should be pressing to be included in the Ultra-Low Emission Zone.

BOROUGH-WIDE POLICY T1 / TRANSPORT

This should also include reassignment of road space in favour of non-polluting modes such as walking and cycling. It should advocate removing the obstacles for cyclists at the two super gyratories, at Hammersmith and at Shepherds Bush Green / Holland Park roundabout.