

London Cycling Campaign response to Islington Cycleway between Finsbury Park and Highbury Fields

8 July 2019

<https://www.islington.gov.uk/consultations/highbury-cycleway-consultation>

About the London Cycling Campaign

London Cycling Campaign (LCC) is a charity with more than 20,000 supporters of whom over 11,000 are fully paid-up members. We speak up on behalf of everyone who cycles or wants to cycle in Greater London; and we speak up for a greener, healthier, happier and better-connected capital.

This response was developed with input from LCC's borough groups.

General comments on this scheme:

- This scheme is supported, but with some caveats.
- The scheme will enable more people to cycle safely in this area and along this alignment, but it will not feel sufficiently safe to fully enable all ages and abilities of people to cycle, particularly in its northern sections. Further removal of through motor traffic is the likely key to unlock the potential for this route to really deliver.
- The scheme is an extremely encouraging sign that Islington council is beginning to take serious steps towards enabling more people to walk and cycle more and drive less. We look forward to more, even bolder and even better "Active Travel" schemes advancing rapidly in the future.

Specific points about this scheme:

- The route alignment of this Cycleway avoids many of the amenities on the main roads in this area, will necessarily be compromised by the huge crowds of pedestrians on Arsenal matchdays and is in some places not direct. The aim to fulfil the desire line from those riding from north and east of the area to south and west will be catered to by this scheme, but it misses the opportunity to improve main roads nearby and to enable more people to cycle locally to key amenities.
- The current trial of a one-way point closure on Gillespie Road is welcome, but fails to fundamentally deal with the through motor traffic in the area this scheme covers, bounded by Blackstock Road, Gillespie Park/the train tracks, Holloway Road, St Paul's Road and Highbury Fields/Highbury Grove. The risk then is that through motor traffic will continue to not only mean a barrier to cycling here and require the scheme to put in a higher level of intervention, but also continue to blight this community of residents. A full "low traffic neighbourhood" treatment for this area is recommended, starting with trialling turning the Gillespie Road point no-entry into a

full two-way filter.

- The most noticeable issues of too much through traffic interacting with this scheme are along Drayton Park, Gillespie Road, Avenell and Ambler Roads themselves. However, there is also too much motor traffic using Horsell Road and Fieldway Crescent too – likely due to changes being made to Highbury Corner. Motor traffic on these kinds of streets (where those cycling are not physically separated from motor traffic) should be well below 2,000 PCUs daily, or 200 motor vehicles in the peak hour.
- Without such a treatment, further physical speed reduction measures on Ambler Road and Gillespie Road are likely to be required (sinusoidal, full-width speed humps).
- A parallel crossing near the Aubert Park junction should be considered to enable those cycling to easily join and leave the main corridor.
- The cycle tracks on Drayton Park are supported. However if a northbound cycle track between Aubert Park and Martineau Road is required, then a southbound one surely will be too. Again, it is likely the lack of filtering in the neighbourhood is why a cycle track would be required at all. Either way, extending the tracks so they are coherent will likely be essential to delivering a scheme which enables a far wider range of people to cycle here in comfort and safety.
- The cycle tracks should likely be stepped tracks, with a “forgiving” kerb between pavement and track. This will maximise the limited space available to cycle. At a minimum, tracks should be LCDS compliant, and 2m wide.
- There is also a concern the cycle track will be used as extra pavement on matchdays. The tracks should be designed to discourage this behaviour by using a consistent asphalt colour and regular cycle logos.
- More could be done to design for those cycling across Drayton Park – for instance making the crossing near Bryantwood and Arvon Roads a parallel crossing and ideally moving it closer to the junctions.
- The roundabout at Benwell Road is only likely required due to motor traffic levels turning into and out of Benwell Road. Filtering Benwell Road (or otherwise reducing its capacity as a through route for motor traffic) would enable this junction to either become a simple T junction or be completely removed.
- Given the low traffic volumes on Whistler Street, the entrances to it should be at minimum raised, and more likely, there should be “continuous” footways across both as well as cycle tracks. The same approach should be considered for other low traffic roads in the area including St Thomas Road, Stadium Mews, Elfort Road, Bryantwood Road, Arvon Road, Horsell Road etc. as well as the numerous other vehicle accesses that line the route. Wherever possible, cycling and walking priority

should be reinforced for drivers and continuous, level surfaces for cycling and walking should be maintained.

- Banning the right turn from Horsell to Drayton Park and vice versa is supported, however there is a risk that drivers will improperly use the cycle gap – so either a bollard or other mechanism for excluding cars should be considered for this space, with gaps between barriers at 1.5m.

General points about infrastructure schemes:

- The Mayor's Transport Strategy relies on a growth in cycle trips to keep London moving. This means infrastructure schemes must be designed to accommodate growth in cycling. Providing space for cycling is a more efficient use of road space than providing space for driving private motor vehicles, particularly for journeys of 5km or less. In terms of providing maximum efficiency for space and energy use, walking, cycling, then public transport are key.
- As demonstrated by the success of recent Cycle Superhighways and mini-Holland projects etc., people cycle when they feel safe. For cycling to become mainstream, a network of high-quality, direct routes separate from high volumes and/or speeds of motor vehicle traffic is required to/from all key destinations and residential areas in an area. Schemes should be planned, designed and implemented to maximise potential to increase journeys – with links to nearby amenities, residential centres, transport hubs considered from the outset.
- Spending money on cycling infrastructure has been shown to dramatically boost health outcomes in an area. Spending on cycling schemes outranks all other transport modes for return on investment according to a DfT study. Schemes which promote cycling meet TfL's "Healthy Streets" checklist. A healthy street is one where people choose to cycle.
- All schemes should be designed to enable people of all ages and abilities to cycle, including disabled people.
- Evidence from TfL and from many schemes in London, the UK and worldwide shows the economic benefits, including to businesses, to be found from enabling a wider range of people to cycle more. Further evidence shows how cycling schemes also benefit air quality and reduce climate changing emissions, as well as improving resident health outcomes and reducing inactivity, as mentioned above.
- LCC wants, as a condition of funding, all highway development designed to London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS), with a Cycling Level of Service (CLoS) rating of 70 or above, with all "critical issues" eliminated. Above 2,000 Passenger Car Unit (PCUs) motor vehicle movements per day, or 20mph motor traffic speeds, cycling should be physically separated from motor traffic.