



Wandsworth Cycling Campaign  
[www.wandsworthcyclists.org.uk](http://www.wandsworthcyclists.org.uk)

## Wandsworth Cycling Campaign Response to Clapham Junction Streetscape Proposals

Wandsworth Cycling Campaign, the local group of the London Cycling Campaign, is pleased to have the opportunity to comment on Wandsworth Council's proposals for Clapham Junction streetscape. WCC's comments are made in response to Wandsworth Council's consultation documents, together with information from discussions on 28/29 September at Battersea Library with David Tidley of Wandsworth Council, Simon Bradbury and colleague of JMP Consulting, and Annekatriin Dennemann of Urban Initiatives.

Wandsworth Cycling Campaign has a long-standing interest in making Clapham Junction more people-friendly<sup>1</sup> and supports proposals which will genuinely improve access, comfort and safety of cyclists and pedestrians. We have not seen the traffic modelling data upon which the highway engineering proposals are based, but understand that the modelling shows 1/3 of motor traffic will be routed to turn right into Falcon Lane from Lavender Hill (with a mode filter for right turns from Lavender Hill into Falcon Road).

We note that one of the Council's stated primary aims of these proposals is to make pedestrian and cycling access easier, safer and more pleasant. Whilst we can see some ways in which the proposals will achieve this for pedestrians, and strongly support such measures, we can see little benefit in what is proposed for people wishing to cycle to or through this locality. In a number of respects the Council's proposals are lacking the necessary clarity to substantiate claims made for the streetscape proposals in respect of cycling (and walking).

We have particular concerns about:

1. **Cycle parking** – The supply of racks outside the station entrance on St John's Hill already fails to meet demand, which continues to rise. As a result, people understandably make use of guardrails and other street furniture in order to secure their cycles. We applaud the proposal to remove guardrails, since this will improve access and convenience for pedestrians and safety for cyclists. However, it is essential that additional cycle racks are installed to replace the informal cycle parking currently provided by these guardrails. The location of cycle parking needs to recognise the need for cyclists to park their cycles in the town centre, close to Debenhams and all along Lavender Hill. Greatly increased numbers of cycle racks, as well as long-stay cycle parking provision, are also urgently needed for people using Clapham Junction station.

2. **Taxi rank location** – We appreciate the need for convenient access to taxis for shoppers and others visiting this town centre, as well as train travellers. It is unclear how moving the taxi rank further west along St John's Hill will facilitate access for town centre visitors. We fear that movements of taxis from the proposed location will increase the potential for collisions with passing cyclists. It is also unclear from the plans whether the intention is to remove space from pedestrians on the footway at this point. We suggest that the main taxi rank is located in

<sup>1</sup> See WCC's 2002 and 2003 reports on Clapham Junction town centre, downloadable from [www.wandsworthcyclists.org.uk/reports.shtml](http://www.wandsworthcyclists.org.uk/reports.shtml)

Prested Road, and that options for additional taxi ranks (located more conveniently for people using the station as well as shops, restaurants etc. on Lavender Hill/St John's Road) are investigated more fully.

**3. Falcon Lane right turn** – We can see that reinstating this turn will reduce congestion at the main crossroads<sup>2</sup> and as a result is likely to improve conditions for pedestrians to cross at the latter location, which we support. However, allowing a right turn into Falcon Lane, together with the associated increase in volume of motor traffic along Falcon Lane, will adversely affect pedestrians and cyclists. Unless an entry treatment is installed as part of the scheme, pedestrians are likely to find it more difficult to cross Falcon Lane at its junction with Lavender Hill. We emphasise the need for this junction to be very carefully designed in order to minimise speed of turning motor vehicle traffic into and out of Falcon Lane. A major safety concern for cyclists here is the potential for cyclists travelling eastbound (up Lavender Hill) coming into conflict with motorists turning right into Falcon Lane. This highlights the need for any cycle lane provided to be wide, in order to maximise visibility of cyclists. (It may be that a wide nearside lane would be more appropriate). It also strengthens the case for taking the opportunity provided by the current proposals to make Mossbury Road two-way for cyclists e.g. by creating a 'false one-way'. This would promote cycling in this locality by removing a detour and providing advantage for cyclists over other traffic (a stated aim of the National Cycling Strategy since 1996). We note that this form of traffic management works well in many other places, including elsewhere in this borough. One side-benefit is that it makes the environment for local residents more pleasant. We also note that the higher volumes of traffic turning right at the mini-roundabout on Falcon Road/ Falcon Lane junction will increase hazards for cyclists travelling along part of a well used cycle route (see para 5, below) and that there do not seem to be any proposals to address this.

**4. Cycle Lanes and ASLs** – As noted above, the width of the cycle lane proposed for Lavender Hill eastbound travel is critical. In order to benefit cyclists, it needs to be 2m wide to concur with London Cycling Design Standards. Any cycle lane installed here would, of course, provide no facility - or safety benefit - to cyclists if car parking were permitted. As is widely recognised, if narrower than 2m, the existence of cycle lanes puts cyclists at risk by inviting them into the gutter, where they are least visible to drivers, in danger from left-turning vehicles, and subject to discomfort and hazards from poor carriageway surfaces. We **oppose** the proposal to install a cycle lane on the westbound (downhill) carriageway of Lavender Hill and suggest instead the use of cycle 'roundels' on the road surface located in the centre of the nearside lane, where cyclists will generally need to be located, in accordance with the recommendations of 'Cyclecraft'<sup>3</sup> and the DfT National Standards in cycle training. We are concerned that Wandsworth Council is making proposals that, in this way, are in direct opposition to safe cycling and to the National Standards in cycle training that Wandsworth Council itself is seeking to achieve.

We are disappointed at the lack of proposals for ASLs (Advanced Stop Lines) on the northern and southern ends of St John's Road. We hope that this is an oversight and expect to see ASLs included at these locations on the more detailed plans resulting from this consultation.

**5. London Cycle Network Plus (LCN+)** – The Falcon Road/St John's Road/Northcote Road route was recently CRISPed with input from WCC volunteers. We are concerned that there is no reference to this ongoing LCN+ consultation in the streetscape consultation documents. We have asked Wandsworth Council to explain the process by which the Clapham Junction

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<sup>2</sup> Which we propose be named 'Falcon Brook Cross' -s ee para 7

<sup>3</sup> *Cyclecraft: The complete guide to safe and enjoyable cycling for adults and children*, John Franklin (The Stationery Office, 2007)

streetscape proposals will be integrated with the LCN+ proposals, in order to maximise the benefits for sustainable modes of travel and to ensure most effective use of public funds.

**6. Permeability potential** – We are disappointed that the potential for improving permeability for cyclists through this area has not been exploited in the current streetscape proposals. We wish to see two-way working for cyclists reinstated for all the side streets along Lavender Hill as well as for Mossbury Road (noted above). One-way working discourages cycling by introducing detours and speeding up motor vehicle traffic, and we feel that the current streetscape proposals provide an excellent opportunity to redress this. We also wish to see the proposed mode filter for the right turn into Falcon Road extended to include pedal cycles.

**7. Creating an identity for 'Falcon Brook Cross'** – We recognise the desirability of improving the public realm in this area, for example, by using a light feature at this location. We suggest that the Council takes the opportunity to use this feature to highlight the Falcon Brook, one of the Lost Rivers of London, which has created the local topography. We feel that the quality of the street environment here would be enhanced by the introduction of a town centre-wide 20mph speed limit. Although we agree that this would probably have little effect on motor traffic speeds, it would send out a positive message to all who use Clapham Junction town centre that our streets are for all to share. An effectively enforced 20mph speed limit can be expected to result in significant safety and cost benefits, as earlier TfL research has demonstrated.

**8. Omission of potential safety benefit to cyclists at southwestern end of scheme** – We note that the consultation document shows the street improvement scheme extending as far west as the junction of St John's Hill with Plough Road and Strath Road. Three arms of this junction currently have guardrailing, which represents a potential safety hazard for cyclists, who are vulnerable to being crushed by large motor vehicles making turning manoeuvres. We would like to see the guardrails in this locality replaced with cycle parking in the form of sheffield stands and/or bollards where appropriate.

## **Summary**

We are pleased at the prospect of improving the public realm in Clapham Junction town centre. Overall we are concerned that the current proposals have a worrying lack of reference to, and apparent awareness of, the needs of cyclists. We think that this reflects a lack of recognition of the probable future of transport in London - which must entail a reduction in use of motor vehicles, allied with a greater awareness of the social and environmental impact of an individual's choice of travel mode. It is vital that streetscapes look viable for cycling, in order to encourage more to make use of this form of sustainable travel. Provision for cycling needs to be designed into schemes such as this from the outset, rather than seen as a 'detail' which can be added at a late stage. We are ready to work with Wandsworth Council, JMP and Urban Initiatives in producing a town centre for Clapham Junction which maximises the benefits for cyclists, pedestrians and users of public transport to become a genuinely people-friendly environment.

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