

Waltham Forest Walthamstow Town Centre Transport and Bus Service Improvements

16 July 2018

<https://walthamforest.gov.uk/content/walthamstow-town-centre-transport-and-bus-service-improvements> and https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/buses/walthamstow-qratory/consult_view/

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 and is in support of the response from the local group Waltham Forest Cycling Campaign.

General comments:

This scheme is opposed. The improved provision for bus users gained by ensuring the 97 and 357 do not need to detour through the bus station, avoiding journey time delays to these routes, is welcome. But the scheme overall fails to deliver appropriate benefits for those walking and cycling through the area and to and from Walthamstow Central station.

This is unacceptable given the high numbers of those walking in the area, and given the station's location as the focus of much of the Enjoy Waltham Forest/ "mini-Holland" schemes the council has been moving forward. If this scheme moves forward as is, it will ensure that Hoe Street and Selborne Road around the station remain significant barriers to those walking and cycling, including to and from the station, for many years.

Given this, this design must be taken back and reworked to improve the level of walking and cycling facilities proposed.

Specific points about the scheme:

- According to DfT traffic counts, nearly 17,000 motor vehicles daily use this stretch of Hoe Street – including over 1,000 buses (and coaches). Conditions for cycling are very hostile – hence less than 300 cycling journeys are made here daily.
- The Waltham Forest mini-Holland programme explicitly references Hoe Street as being one of the key north-south cycling routes (<https://www.enjoywalthamforest.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/mini-holland-tender-13-dec.pdf>) for the future. Schemes on Hoe Street have already been completed around Grove Road and consulted on at "The Bell corner".
- Hoe Street is clearly dangerous for those cyclists who use it currently – with numerous collisions with those cycling, including serious ones, along its length, including at or near the Selborne Road junction within the last five years.
- TfL's Strategic Cycling Analysis shows Hoe Street, as well as the length of Selborne Road to the junction with Hoe Street, as sites of planned cycling schemes. And the Strategic Cycling Analysis also shows the residential areas directly around the junction as being zones of both

the highest current demand for cycling, and potential to grow cycling too.

- Dutch town planning, on which the mini-Holland schemes are clearly based, is to provide walking and cycling routes to suburban transport interchanges as a priority – so people walk and cycle from home to their train station, then commute into the city. This model clearly applies for Walthamstow Central station.
- Not only, then, is Walthamstow Central a walking and cycling strategic destination, but also links east-west (Selborne Road, crossing to St Mary's Road), and north-south (Hoe Street) past it are clearly strategically important for journeys through the area too.
- Any cycling provision on Hoe Street and Selborne Road must be fully separated from motor vehicle traffic and from pedestrians due to high volumes of both in the area (and a high proportion of large buses on Selborne Road particularly). There is some evidence bus journeys are also improved when cycle flows are separated from bus flows.
- The proposed scheme, based on the limited drawings provided (with no detail), fails to provide for cycling east-west (or vice versa) across the junction. Not only does it not provide a crossing from St Mary's Road to Selborne Road, it also fails to link any cycling provision to the existing cycle tracks on Selborne Road west of the station entrance.
- On Hoe Street itself, there appears to be a bidirectional track on the eastern arm of the gyratory. But there again appears to be no attempt to link this provision with the existing "with flow" provision further south on Hoe Street or to extend the tracks north. Therefore the tracks will be high-on useless in this context and are unlikely to be heavily used. This is because the lack of links to other schemes and areas means they will not enable more people to cycle who currently don't feel safe cycling in this area, and simultaneously will provide enough disadvantages to those who do (who will face crossing and recrossing Hoe Street northbound etc.), that they will avoid using them. It is clear scheme designers themselves recognise this, as they have provided Advanced Stop Lines (ASLs) in the scheme as well, assuming many riders will remain in the road.
- In terms of walking provision, all arms of the junction appear to be "staggered" and the crossing to the north over Hoe Street is far removed from the "desire line" linking to St Mary's Road, while there is no provision to the south side of Selborne Road. This junction should be considered for a "scramble" style or diagonal crossing pedestrian crossing to ensure those walking can easily access the station from all directions.
- Without signal timings, it is impossible to assess what priority is given to pedestrians in terms of wait/cycle time and crossing time, but given how poorly this scheme treats pedestrians on what is visible, this also will be a major concern – pedestrians (and those cycling in tracks) should not be made to wait excessively, nor hurried across crossings – which often affects the most vulnerable negatively.

General points about cycling schemes:

- LCC requires schemes to 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 mode 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.
- 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.