

## Response to consultation on Gospel Oak

This response to the consultation on improvements to the Gospel Oak area is from Camden Cycling Campaign, the local borough group of London Cycling Campaign (LCC). We have approximately 500 members and represent the interests of cyclists living or working in the borough of Camden.

The area is bounded by a number of heavily-trafficked roads and ought to provide quiet routes for cyclists who wish to avoid these roads. Mansfield Road to the north, Southampton Road/Malden Road to the west, and Prince of Wales Road at the southern boundary are all roads which are bus routes as well as carrying a heavy volume of motor traffic and have minimal protection for cyclists (e.g. some ASLs on Mansfield Road and Southampton Road/Malden Road; only advisory cycle lanes in places, often within car door zones), and Grafton Road on the east side is the only boundary road which has part-time traffic-calming measures in place. We would like routes which enable cyclists to avoid these main roads because they are intimidating to cyclists and will deter less confident cyclists.

These notes should be read in conjunction with the map here:

<https://goo.gl/h6BjUz>

References to this map will be shown in italic font.

### 1. **Permeability:**

It would be helpful for cyclists to be able to cross east → west through the Gospel Oak area, to have a direct, quiet route between Haverstock Hill and Kentish Town Road. A good route from South End Green/Royal Free Hospital would be useful. Grafton Road (*LCN Route 6a*) provides a useful north – south route, but a western alternative is required.

We agree with the suggestions in the consultation document, to provide routes between Hampstead and Kentish Town and between Chalk Farm and Gospel Oak Station/Highgate. All the routes outlined in your consultation document, both existing and potential, would be helpful to facilitate local cycling.

We should like to see the following improvements to improve permeability for cyclists:

- 1.1 East/West route (*E-W informal route 1*): along Queen's Crescent from Haverstock Hill, across Malden Road, to Grafton Road: an alternative parallel route (*E-W informal route 2*): is needed when Queen's Crescent is closed during market hours to through traffic. Re-opening the passage between Arctic Street and Regis Road would give access to Kentish Town and further east via Leighton Road. This would be extremely beneficial. See *Extension of E-W informal route 1*.
- 1.2 E-W informal route 2: The routes along Marsden Street → Wilkin Street or Rhyl Street → Athlone Street → Holmes Road → Kentish Town Road are useful. The gate in Wilkin Street should be replaced with bollards, for ease of passage.
- 1.3 Access to Gospel Oak from Mansfield Road: this junction has been the site of some collisions with cyclists. We should like to see the east end of Oak Village closed to motor traffic with access solely for cyclists, while the western end of Oak Village at the junction with Mansfield Road would be open for motor traffic. The eastern end has a sharp and blind corner and cyclists heading north to Mansfield Road often encounter cars in the middle of the road with little room to pass.

### 2. **Cycle routes:**

- 2.1 Grafton Road (*LCN Route 6a*): this is traffic-calmed using a tidal flow at the north end, which seems effective in reducing the volume of traffic. It would be improved by further reducing traffic speed. We would prefer full-width sinusoidal traffic humps, as the cushions encourage motorists to adopt unsafe positions in the road, in the centre of the road as they try to straddle the cushions.

On the approach to Mansfield Road, motor traffic should use the western branch of Oak Village while the eastern branch of Oak Village should be closed to through motor traffic, providing a quieter route for cycles and a safer junction at Mansfield Road. (*Road closure proposed.*)

- 2.2 Malden Road (*Potential QW*): we propose the reduction of the volume of motor traffic on Malden Road with a similar tidal flow that permits buses to pass at all times. This would reduce motor traffic on this road considerably. The advisory cycle lanes on Malden Road are unsatisfactory as they takes cyclists into the door-zones of parked cars. The junction of Malden Road with Prince of Wales Road is unsatisfactory and dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists; it was included in our Space for Cycling 'ask' for this ward: we would like to see it transformed into a normal cross-roads with a single motor lane and cycle lane on each arm. A narrower junction will discourage speeding and enable pedestrians to cross easily.
- 2.3 The entrance from Estelle Road to Elaine Grove is useful and could be better signed, giving access to/from South End Green and Hampstead via Savernake Road. (*Route parallel to Mansfield Road*) The path behind the flats parallel to Mansfield Road should be improved to provide a useful cycle route for pupils heading to the secondary schools on Highgate Road or to Gospel Oak and Fleet Primary Schools; the surface of this path is very poor and the overhang from the flats is dangerous for cyclists. Cycle access to Lismore Circus could be improved by an additional dropped kerb.
- 2.4 ***Gospel oak spinal route*** A north-south spinal route through Gospel Oak would be helpful to link the various estates and give access to Hampstead Heath via Lismore Circus and Elaine Grove. This route, along Wellesley Road to Allcroft Road, has good links west to Malden Road and east to Grafton Road.

### 3. **Removing rat-runs:**

We have observed rat-runs on Weedington Road at the junction with Queen's Crescent. On non-market days, Queen's Crescent is also too-heavily trafficked; closing Queen's Crescent at the junction with Malden Road would prevent this.

Queen's Crescent should be closed to through traffic permanently, but using bollards rather than gates at the junction with Malden Road, so that even when the market is not in operation, it is easily passable by cyclists.

### 4. **General improvements:**

The cycle routes need to be better signed so that they are more obvious. Lismore Circus should be more welcoming, for example, a clear route round the circus should be indicated (e.g. by reinstating the footway symbols) as well as links to places accessible from it. More cycle parking may be needed. Many minor improvements are required – dropped kerbs, removal of obstructions – to make the whole area easily cycled; this will also make it easier for people with prams and on disabled scooters.