

Audit of York Way cycle tracks

Camden Cycling Campaign, report on audit carried out on 24th June 2021

Overview

- Mandatory mostly 2-m wide cycle lanes with bollard protection apart from southbound from Brandon Road to the Overground railway bridge and some other gaps mentioned below. We appreciate the use of a standard main carriageway width that provides wider cycle lanes where space is available.
- Loading on the Islington side is very detrimental to the quality of the southbound track, whereas loading bays inside the northbound track work well.
- Some parts of the cycle tracks contain a lot of debris. Near Freight Lane is the worst. Camden appears to have [a machine to sweep cycle tracks](#). It should be deployed regularly.
- Improvements are needed at Market Road and Goodway junctions and several cycle/pedestrian crossings are needed to provide access to the railway lands (aka King's Cross Central).
- We discuss the bus stops, noting the rumble strips on the new bypass by North Road and suggesting improvements for others.
- The painting of yellow lines and blips isn't consistent throughout. We have noted a few aberrations.
- Signage - we would like to participate in a study of signage for this route.

Video of ride through

HD Videos taken by Steve Prowse on 22nd June 2021 here (should move to YouTube):

Southbound https://youtu.be/6OyUFKD_IFw

Northbound <https://youtu.be/5NDIK62c9KQ>

Steve said his main impression is how filthy the tracks are, particularly southbound from Freight Lane.

Scheme Drawings and report referenced

Phase 1 drawing [Phase 1 scheme drawing](#).

Phase 2 officers report [the officers report York Way \(2\)](#)

Phase 2 drawing [Phase 2 scheme drawing](#)

York Way junctions scheme drawing. [Agar Brewery](#), [Freight Lane](#), [Copenhagen-Handyside](#)

Phase 3 officers report [the officers report York Way stage 3](#)

Bus Stop F [scheme drawing](#).

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Junctions with signals

1. Junction of Agar Grove- Brewery Road - Brandon Road

We have seen the drawings for the proposed upgrade to this junction providing early release and low-level signals for cyclists on the York Way alignment. However the Phase 3 officers' report didn't respond to our suggestions for improvements. We are concerned that the following should be done:

- Provide two-stage right turns into and out of Agar Grove and Brewery Road
- Provide a KEEP CLEAR to let cyclists turn right out of Brandon Road and reach the northbound cycle lane.
- Remove all railings.

2. Freight Lane junction

We look forward to seeing the completion of the improvements. We saw the dividing kerb separating cyclists continuing southbound from those using the ASL to turn right. The signals were not yet installed.

3. Copenhagen Street – Handyside Street junction

We understand that this is to be upgraded with 5m ASL boxes, early release and low-level signals on York Way and the tracks on York Way coloured (green) as they pass the side roads.

4. Goodsway Junction

The experience riding southbound is very poor. There are two motor lanes and no cycle lane. See [Figure 1](#). The logos across the junction shown in the Phase 1 drawing are not painted on the road. Ideally, cyclists should be provided with a protected bypass lane southbound with a lane to the ASL for those wanting to turn right (as in the new Freight Lane scheme). The southbound approach is about 12.9m wide. The Phase 1 drawing shows how a pair of 2.2 m cycle lanes can be fitted in, provided that there is only one southbound motor lane. Without the central island it would be possible to fit in the Freight Lane design. The 'recent' improvements (installed in 2015) allow cyclists to turn right out of Goodsway and introduce a protected lane on the northbound approach.

Other Junctions and crossings

5. North Road junction

Visibility is good here and we like the extra Give Way lines. Is this a standard that could be used again? We like the island with the yellow bollard in front of the parked cars. [See Figure 2](#).

6. Market Road junction

This has been re-constructed as a simple priority junction instead of a roundabout; we noticed the following issues:

- Left hook risk for southbound cyclists (see example on the southbound video at 2 minutes); a coloured surface to emphasise the cycle lane across the junction could help.
- The right turn from Market Road into the northbound track on York Way is difficult because there is a need to look out for traffic in both directions and then find a gap between the bollards. Although we like the section of stepped track on the northbound side, we fear that someone may run into it. We therefore suggest placing a yellow bollard with an arrow and possibly a gap in the bollards to show the way in. See [Figure 3](#).
- The right turn from the northbound track on York Way into Market Road is even more difficult. People seem to leave the cycle track and take the lane, using the right-turn pocket for motors. Can this be improved?

7. Canal Reach junction

This junction (see [Figure 4](#) and also on [StreetView](#)) is in rather a poor state, probably due to the works nearby. There are no logos between the zebra tails across the junction (although shown on the drawing) and the north east corner has not been built out. If the zebra crossing is moved closer to Tapper Walk then a coloured cycle track with logos could be marked across the junction.

8. Tapper Walk junction

Tapper Walk is the start of a cycle and pedestrian route via Lewis Cubitt Walk to Granary Square. Signage was installed 3-4 years ago. The sign on the centre island for southbound cycles is missing. See [StreetView](#) (2018) and compare to July 2019. That view also shows the right-turn pocket for southbound cycles.

Now that there is a southbound cycle lane, it is more awkward to access the right-turn pocket. Also the zebra crossing by Canal Reach is not on the most convenient position for access to Tapper Walk. We would like this to be replaced by a Tiger crossing on the desire-line for accessing Tapper Walk.

9. Randell's Road - Beaconsfield Road junction

A pedestrian route is signed down Randell's Road, yet there is no pedestrian crossing of York Way. We suggest that a Tiger crossing should be provided to serve both pedestrians and cyclists. We understand that London Living Streets are very keen to see a crossing here.

The cycle track across the junction with Randell's Road needs logos to be painted and the corners need tightening to ease crossing for pedestrians as well as cyclists and to slow down motor vehicles entering and leaving. See [Figure 5](#).

10. The pedestrian and cycle route to Granary Square (north of the canal bridge)

The pedestrian need is served by an informal crossing over York Way with a central refuge island. See [Figure 6](#). But it is hard for southbound cyclists to turn right into this route to Granary Square. We suggest either making a cycle refuge in front of the pedestrian island (as at Tapper Walk) or considering the possibility of a Tiger crossing.

Bus Stops

11. Bus stops north of the canal bridge (both sides)

At this location there is a 'ride round' bus stop on the southbound side and a SUBB on the northbound track ([Figure 7](#)). We believe that there is room to implement bus stop bypasses on both sides of the road. The carriageway is 8m wide while:

- The footway on the southbound side is about 7m wide, leaving plenty of room to make an island. See [Figure 8](#).
- The footway on the northbound side is about 6m wide, leaving plenty of room to make an island. See [Figure 9](#) and also this [StreetView](#).

12. SUBB south of Tapper Walk (northbound side)

See [Figure 10](#). We believe that there is room here for a bus stop bypass. We also note that Camden has consulted on a bus stop bypass here (scheme drawing for bus Stop F). We encourage them to implement it!

13. Bus stop bypass near North Road (southbound side)

This bus stop bypass (built by Islington Council) is very generous in width with a 3.5m island. It has differences from those constructed in Camden, in particular the sign 'Give way to pedestrians' and the yellow rumble strips. Are the rumble strips part of a new standard intended to further encourage cyclists to slow down? If so we would be supportive as long as there is evidence that they are effective and do not cause any issues for disabled cyclists. The double yellow lines should not cross the track. See [Figure 11](#).

Track continuity south of the bus stop bypass: The outside of the cycle track should be marked with a line that meets the mandatory cycle lane where the bollards are installed. The double yellow lines should not cross the track. See [Figure 12](#). This photo also shows the track approaching the zebra by Camden Park Road whose alignment is good.

14. Other SUBBS

South of Goodsway: the road is narrow here but the cycle tracks have been fitted in and the SUBB inset neatly in the footway edge. See [Figure 7](#).

South of Agar Grove (outside the Maiden lane estate) [Figure 13a](#) and [Figure 13b](#) and *south of Market Road* [Figure 14a](#) and [Figure 14b](#).

Why do only these two SUBBs have red signs warning cyclists to give way to pedestrians?

15. Other bus stops on the Islington side

The bus stops north of Brewery Road, opposite Canal Reach and south of Bingfield Street are simple 'ride round' bus stops which are supposed to be marked with cycle logos as in [Figure 15](#) and [Figure 16](#) but *missing* in [Figure 4](#). We would prefer SUBBs but understand that Islington Council is wary of using them.

The bus stop between Brandon Road and the Overground bridge in [Figure 17](#) is in a very narrow section of road where there is no room for a cycle lane and hence no SUBB - not even the idea of 'riding round'.

Zebra crossings

16. Raised zebra outside Brecknock Primary School

The alignment of the kerb from North Road is strange in that cycles have to move out on approach to the build out for the zebra crossing. [See Figure 18](#). The Phase 2 drawing shows a footway build out which appears to be missing. The ramp up to the zebra should be marked with a triangle (the photo shows that triangles have been burnt off).

17. Short tails followed immediately by bollards are a good practice

We like zebra crossings to have short tails followed immediately by bollards as for example, the zebra close to Market Road [Figure 19](#) and the zebra close to Bingfield Street [Figure 20](#) and we would like this to become general practice.

Southbound track heading south

18. Hungerford Road to North Road

This section has not yet been built due to work on The Bridge school.

19. South of the zebra outside Brecknock Primary School

The width of the cycle track and the buffer between the track and the parked cars is good but the road surface is poor. See [Figure 21](#).

20. South from Market Road junction

See the southbound video from 2:08 - 2:16. Here we have a long stretch of advisory cycle lane almost as far as Brewery Road. We strongly object to this section of advisory cycle lane and propose that it should be replaced by a mandatory lane with bollards. We have consulted the Phase 2 officers report Section 2.9 and note that loading space for a self-storage company is being provided. But we think this should be removed when the use changes to residential and, in any case, we question the need for such a long break in the protected cycle lane. The sign is inappropriate in that it says No Parking from 9:30am - 4:30 pm. See [Figure 22](#).

21. Agar Grove to the Overground railway bridge - no protection and worse

See the southbound video from 3:25 - 3:50. This section has no southbound cycle lane (due to lack of road width).

- The Phase 2 drawing shows cycle logos but these have not been painted on the road.
- Loading is allowed between Brandon Road and Tileyard Road (10 am to 4pm [Figure 17](#)) specifically for Kings X motors but can be used by anyone (according to the Phase 2 officers report Section 2.8).

This section is the 'weakest link' in the entire route. People cycling on this alignment have no feasible alternative so all efforts should be made to keep the kerbside clear.

22. Filthy cycle tracks: Under the railway bridges and elsewhere

This section of road suffers from the spillage from lorries leaving the Freight Lane ready-made concrete works. It looks as though the road is swept regularly but not the cycle track. Could the concrete company be persuaded to organise cycle lane cleaning?. See [Figure 23](#).

23. Many big black bollards on the footway

These first appear south of Copenhagen Street and re-appear by the canal bridge and again between King's Place and Wharfdale Road. They were probably put there to stop people parking on the footway, for which they are no longer relevant. We would prefer to have them removed. See [Figure 24](#).

24. Last section to Wharfdale Road Junction

The cycle tracks here are good, mostly above 2m in width. See [Figure 25](#). While we were here, we had a chat with a resident of Wharfdale Road who mentions the need for two-way cycling on that road. Please ask Islington officers about this. Whenever that is achieved, then the junction with York Way will need a big upgrade!

Northbound track heading north

25. From Wharfdale Road to the Goodsway junction

The road is narrow here but the cycle tracks have been fitted in and the SUBB inset neatly into the footway edge (see [Figure 7](#)).

26. The inset parking bays

We inspected the disabled and motorcycle parking bays near Handyside Street as well as another disabled bay near Beaconsfield Street. See [Figure 26](#). This inset parking is set well back from the cycle track and seems not to cause any problems.

27. Copenhagen Street - Randells Road

[Figure 27](#) shows the northbound track after Handyside Street. It is well above 2m in width until it narrows opposite the ride round bus stop south of Bingfield Street. The next section of track is very narrow (1.5m) on both sides of the road while the motor lanes have 6.5m.

28. Railway Bridges and Freight Lane

Another very dirty stretch of cycle track. See [Figure 28](#).

29. Overground railway bridge to Agar Grove

The northbound track is shown in [Figure 29](#). This is the narrow section of York Way where there is no southbound track.

30. North of Agar Grove junction.

[Figure 30](#) shows single yellow lines and single blips inside the cycle track whereas they are normally double.

Some extraneous double yellow lines need to be repainted on the approach to the stepped track opposite Market Road. See [Figure 19](#).

Illustrations

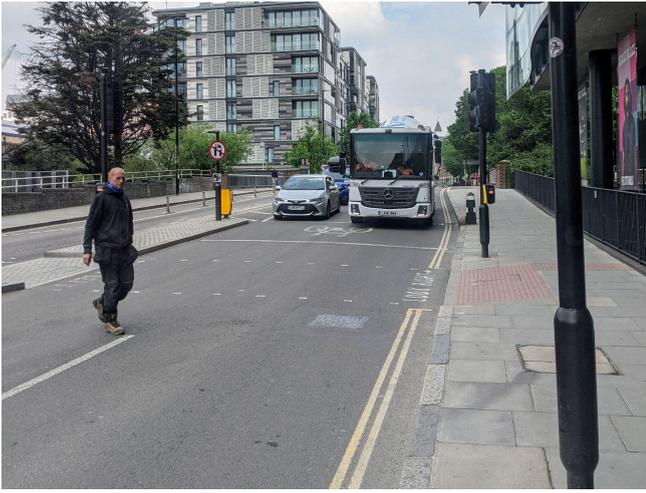


Figure 1. Goodsway junction looking north up the southbound side. There is no space for southbound cycling through this junction. Not even as shown on the Stage 1 scheme drawing.



Figure 2: North Road junction showing extra Give Way line.



Figure 3. Right turn out of Market Road showing the stepped track and the need to find a gap between the bollards.



Figure 4. Opposite Canal Reach.
The works accessed via Canal Reach have prevented this junction from being treated.

Bus stop opposite Canal Reach. This 'ride round' bus stop should have logos marked.



Figure 5: Randell's Road junction



Figure 6. The way to Granary Square is on the far side. The pedestrian crossing and refuge are in the foreground.



Figure 7. SUBB south of Goodsway. Note that the SUBB is inset a little into the footway to compensate for lack of road width.



Figure 8. Bus stop north of canal bridge.



Figure 9. SUBB north of canal bridge.



Figure 10. SUBB south of Tapper Walk



Figure 11. Bus stop bypass on southbound side north of Market Road.
Note the “Give Way to pedestrians” and the ‘rumble strips’. The double yellow lines should stop before the island and not cross the cycle lane.



Figure 12. Track continuity south of Bus Stop bypass. As the track cycle continues south it should be marked and supplied with bollards. The double yellow lines across the cyclists’ path should be erased.



Figure 13a. Maiden Lane SUBB.



Figure 13b. Maiden Lane SUBB with "Cyclists Give Way to Pedestrians" sign.



Figure 14a. Brewery Road SUBB



Figure 14b. Brewery Road SUBB with "Cyclists Give Way to Pedestrians" sign.



Figure 15. Bus stop north of Brewery Road. See the logos indicating that cyclists can ride round if a bus is in the cage.



Figure 16. Ride round bus stop south of Bingfield Street



Figure 17. The very narrow stretch of road between Brandon Road and the south side of the railway bridge. The bus stop necessarily has no 'ride round' markings. But it is unforgivable that loading is allowed in this section. Without loading cycles can generally use the kerbside gap to undertake the motor vehicles..



Figure 18. Raised zebra with chicane outside Brecknock Primary School.



Figure 19: Poorly positioned double yellow lines on approach to the stepped track opposite Market Road.
But the zebra here is good: short tails followed immediately by bollards.



Figure 20: The zebra crossing south of Bingfield has short tails. We like this.



Figure 21. South of Brecknock School



Figure 22. Advisory Lane south of Market Road. The prohibited hours when parking is prohibited seem wrong!



Figure 23: This section of road suffers from the spillage from lorries going to the Freight Lane ready-made concrete works. It looks as though the road is swept regularly but not the cycle track.



Figure 24. Black bollards



Figure 25. Looking south from Kings Place towards the Wharfedale Road junction.



Figure 26. The photo on the left shows inset disabled parking south of Copenhagen Street. The adjacent motorcycle parking is shown below. There is another disabled bay near Beaconsfield Street.



Figure 27. The northbound track north of Handyside Street



Figure 28. The northbound route continues under the railway bridge. This is another very dusty stretch.



Figure 29. The northbound track passes Vale Royal



Figure 30. Cycle track north of Agar Grove

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