

# THE WALWORTH PROJECT

## Report to the Project Board by Southwark Cyclists

### Introduction

This is a report on two rides carried out by Southwark Cyclists during the weekend of 7/8 February 2004. One ride was on the Saturday morning and the other on the Sunday morning, thus giving an opportunity to see the different levels and types of street activity on those two days. The purpose was to feed comments and recommendations into the conception and design process for the project. 12 people participated in the rides. Several of them are also regular weekday cyclists along the Walworth Road and thus brought a weekday perspective to the discussions. The conclusions, set out in this report, were agreed by the monthly meeting of the Southwark Cyclists on Wednesday 11 February. This meeting is open to all of the 580-strong Southwark Cyclists. The report was then circulated to the Southwark Cyclists email list of 170 members and again agreed by those members. The process is thus democratically robust -- the report accurately represents the views of these 580 local people.

The rides were between the junction of Camberwell Road and Albany Street in the south and, in the north, the point where Walworth Road meets the Elephant and Castle southern roundabout.

There were frequent stops and discussions during the rides, and careful notes were taken, so the conclusions represent considered views.

Many of the recommendations in this report would benefit other users of Walworth Road, including local residents, pedestrians, bus users and shoppers.

### Recommendations

**Generally** – covering the whole area

1. a 20mph zone throughout in order to calm traffic and reduce casualties and intimidation.
2. raised speed tables at every significant junction to calm traffic and help pedestrians and cyclists.
3. speed cameras covering the whole area to contribute to making the proposed 20 mph zone self enforcing. (The Department for Transport should be asked to vary the Safety Camera Partnership Guidelines for this location.)
4. much better enforcement of all traffic regulations

5. there should be no more than one lane in each direction for cars, lorries and coaches.
6. bus lanes should be continuous throughout, with no gaps at all, including across junctions.
7. bus lanes should operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They would thus not only help buses at all times, but also provide cycle benefits at all times.
8. where road widths allow, bus lanes should be 4 metres wide to enable buses to overtake cyclists within the bus lanes.
9. bus lane carriageways should have regular bicycle symbols painted on them every 100 metres.
10. marked cycle lanes on bus lanes are, on balance, undesirable.
11. where there is inadequate carriageway width for bus lanes there should be 2 metre wide cycle lanes. These should also be continuous, including across junctions.
12. the positioning of bus stops should be reviewed (see 34 below).
13. where side roads meet Walworth Road, there should be entry treatments (with the carriageway surface brought up to footway level) to slow vehicles and help pedestrians crossing; and vehicle stop lines on the side roads should be a metre back from the junction.
14. at such side junctions, radii should be tightened to (or nearly) right angles to slow vehicles turning.
15. loading bay times should be marked on the carriageway. (Loading is not allowed from 7-10am or 4-7pm but the notices on poles stating this are not prominent and the present carriageway marking: "Loading only" is taken to imply that loading can take place at any time).
16. all junctions should have Advanced Stop Lines on every arm, with selective use of cycle filter lanes, depending mainly on carriageway width.
17. all junctions should be yellow boxed.
18. all footway guard railings should be removed. With the extra safety benefits of a well enforced 20 mph regime, removal of guardrails can be recommended. Removal of guard railings not only civilises the environment and creates more footway space, but also reduces the hazard of cyclists being squeezed against the railings.
19. there should be a zero-based presumption towards street furniture. Unplanned accumulations block precious footway space.

- 20 road-name signs should be on buildings, not on posts on the footways.
21. more seating and trees should be provided in places where footways would not be obstructed. Trees help slow traffic and soften the environment.
22. where there is space, trees should be planted down the middle of the carriageway (see also 5 above) and cycle parking placed there, as in Kensington High Street.
23. much more cycle parking is needed.
24. building frontage indentations and other suitable voids should be used for cycle parking, angled to fit if need be. (A short standard form of legal agreement should be drawn up to regularise the use of any privately owned space.)
25. all construction materials used in the Walworth Project should be cycle friendly.
26. well thought out use of colour, surfaces, design and art should be used to give Walworth Road its own identity to ensure that those entering the zone realise that it is somewhere different, special and where particular consideration should be shown. A sense of place.
27. a Walworth Road Manager, or similar, should be appointed to coordinate treatments, enforcement, improvement and feel. The Manager should spend much time on the road, rather than in an office; on a bicycle.

### **Recommendations for particular locations**

28. at the Heygate Street junction, on-demand traffic-light signals for cyclists should allow eastbound to turn right southwards and make it safe for westbound cyclists crossing or joining Walworth Road.
29. footways narrow drastically on both sides of Walworth Road north of Liverpool Grove. Street furniture, and railings especially, make matters worse so that in places two people can barely pass each other. Reallocation of space to the footway from the carriageway allocated to cars, lorries and coaches should be considered.
30. East Street market stalls should not be allowed past the entry arch to avoid people being forced to walk on the Walworth Road carriageway.
31. the newish 40 metre wall immediately north of Amelia Street and The Tankard, and opposite the Cuming Museum, presents pedestrians and others with a blank, anonymous and windowless façade that unnecessarily brutalises the street here just as the shops run out. The occupiers, the Metropolitan Police's Department of Technology, should be encouraged to soften that aspect by planting creepers, murals or otherwise

32. the huge traffic light control box on the southwest corner of the Urlwin Street/Camberwell Road junction is a fine example of thoughtlessly placed street furniture. It blocks half of a narrow footway on a bend by a pedestrian crossing. It could very easily have been placed off the footway in an adjacent small carpark.

33. at the junction of Carter Place and Walworth Road there is a disused garden to the redundant police station at the rear. The garden is about 10 metres wide by 30 metres deep. It should either be purchased and turned into a public space with outdoor café, seating, children's play space and covered cycle parking; or, if this is not possible because of financial constraints or UDP use-type designation, planning conditions for any development should restrict the use of the site. For instance, a requirement to set any development back and use the front part of the site for seating, cycle parking and footway widening should be considered. The Council should urgently enter into discussions with the owners (or their architects). It is understood that they intend to submit a planning application shortly.

34. the bus stop outside the Nationwide is badly placed as the footway is very narrow there and the queues of people for the buses and for the cash machine collide. The footway is very congested there.

35. southbound traffic should not be allowed to turn right into Penrose Street.

36. consideration should be given to extending East Street Market across Walworth Road into Penrose Street, and to the possibility of re-routing the buses using Penrose Street. This would give a greater identity to the area. It would also slow traffic and encourage pedestrians to 'wander' around (and into the road). This recommendation is based on the example of practice in Holland. The other end of East Street market exhibits a similar effect.

Southwark Cyclists 13 February 2004