

Ride Report: LLDC Park Ride

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Olawale Ajibola and Jonathan Rothwell joined officers from London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) on a ride around the Olympic Park to assess safety for cycling and walking, and identify issues with the current facilities. Also present were officers from TfL (including Michael Barratt and some others), Simon Munk (London Cycling Campaign), Lee Murrell (E20 Org community and cultural interest organisation), and Jon Little (Bespoke Transport Consulting.)

Headlines

- There are plans in the works to redesign **Westfield Avenue and Montfichet Road** around the area of the Westfield shopping centre, but there are no firm timelines or designs available yet. We remain disappointed that freshly re-opened junctions and crossings (eg at **Turing Street**) do not include interim improvements, and appear to suggest priority for loading and unloading motor vehicles over people walking and cycling. These should be fixed.
- There is some confusion about the new **North-South Highway**, with an LLDC officer on the ride stating that when it opens it will have **painted lanes on both sides** - unlike Waterden Road, which has an almost exemplar bidirectional cycleway with priority at some junctions. We were surprised that a brand new road is to open with such an inadequate provision for cycling, and believe that North-South Highway should provide a physically protected space for people cycling. We suggested wands ("light" segregation) as an interim measure.
- When North-South Highway opens (end of September?), the junction will be realigned and Clarinoco Road will close - it is unclear if it will remain open for walking and cycling or be removed completely.
- Also a surprise to us was news that **Carpenters Road will close**, later this year, **for five years** for the new Sweetwater development. Through traffic, including the buses that currently use Carpenters Road, will be diverted via Loop Road. This is concerning because Loop Road has no physical protection for cycling, has several works entrances/exits and will see more through traffic when the Monier Road bridge reopens as a general road bridge. It is unclear if, when Carpenters Road closes, it will remain open for walking and cycling or be completely impassible.
- **Quietway 6** should fix some long-standing concerns along its route, with new parallel crossings to explicitly allow people to cycle across, dropped kerbs being altered, and some traffic calming measures (narrowing of the junction) on Honour Lea Avenue/Olympic Park Avenue. We remain concerned about the volume of traffic on this corridor and note the majority of drivers appear to be using it as a shortcut. We also need to chase timelines for delivery.
- LLDC officers seemed to have trouble understanding the concept of **modal filtering, induced demand** or **rat running**. They also seemed not to be aware of recent pushes for **all-abilities inclusive infrastructure ("eight to eighty-eight")**, at one point suggesting to Jon Little that his daughter could ride to school on the pavement while he rode in the carriageway. We should advocate for more modern, more inclusive design standards that understand the importance of managing through traffic, and providing safe and comfortable infrastructure to everyone to fulfil the Olympic and Paralympic legacy.

Where We Went

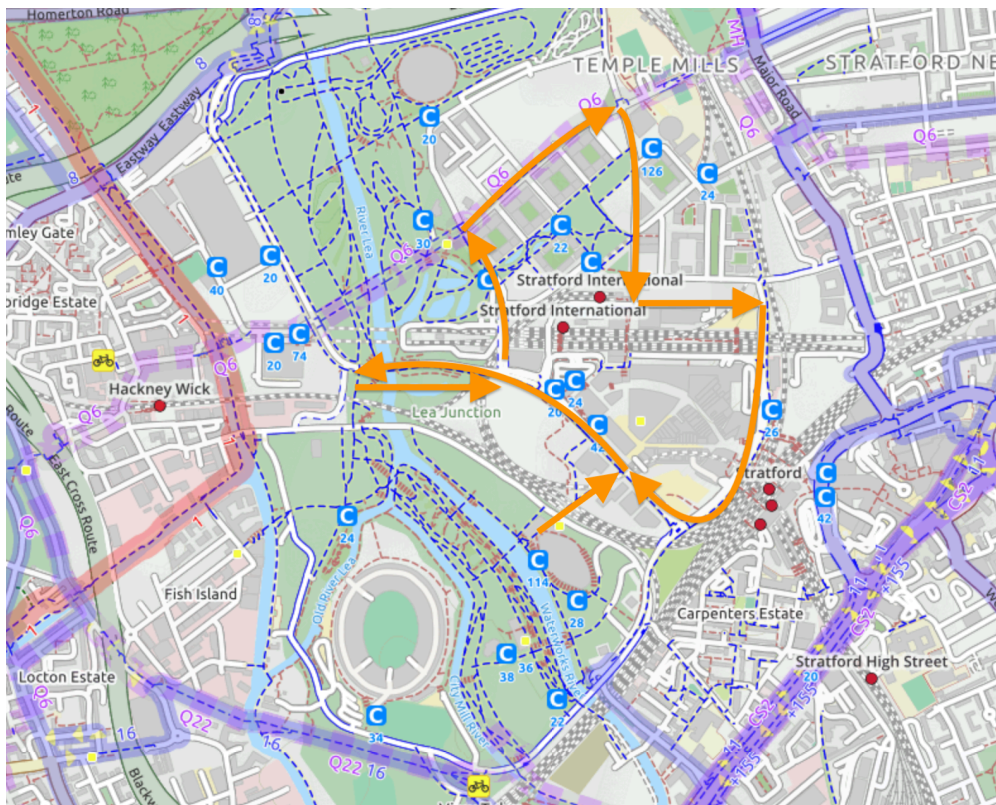
We completed two circular routes, both beginning and ending at the London Aquatics Centre.

Route 1 covered the area surrounding Westfield, the East Village (the former Olympic Athletes' Village), Stratford International station, and the new Stratford City bus station. The route was:

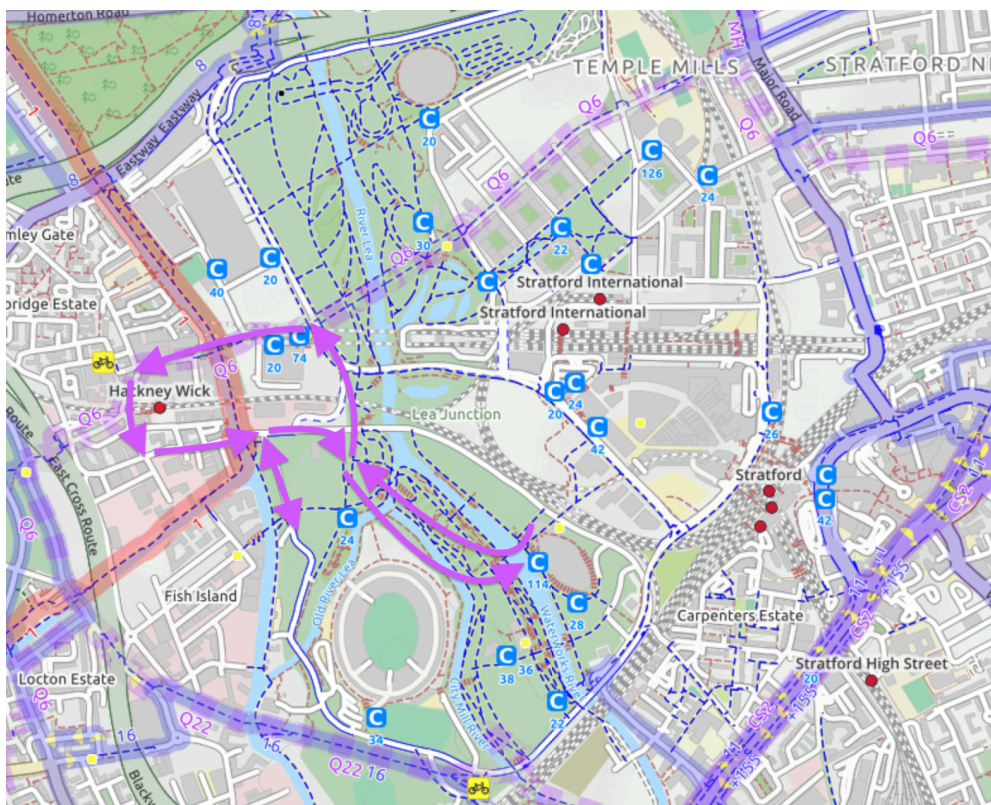
1. Westfield Avenue
2. Waterden Road j/w Clarinoco Lane and new North/South Highway
3. Westfield Avenue j/w Olympic Park Avenue bridge
4. Olympic Park Avenue j/w Honour Lea Avenue (future Quietway 6)
5. Honour Lea Avenue j/w Celebration Avenue
6. International Way
7. Montfichet Road
8. Return via Westfield Ave

Route 2 covered Hackney Wick and the environs of the new Sweetwater development:

1. 2012 Walk
2. Waterden Road/Copper Street (future Quietway 6)
3. Wallis Road
4. White Post Lane
5. Carpenters Road
6. Loop Road
7. return via Carpenters Road/2012 Walk



Route 1 via Westfield, East Village, Stratford International/Stratford City



Route 2 via Wallis Rd bridge, Hackney Wick, Carpenters Road, (future) Sweetwater

What We Saw and Found Out

This table shows places we visited on the two rides, observations we made, and what we suggested, or *will* suggest, to improve it.

Not all of these issues were raised on the ride itself as time was very limited. They will be raised in a report which we believe LLDC will compile at a later date.

Where We Were	What We Saw	What We Suggested (or will suggest) To Fix It
Route 1		
Westfield Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Junction with Turing Street (access road): cycleway cedes priority, raised junction treatment does not extend to cycleway, junction radius too wide. Redesign of Westfield Ave in the works (down to one lane each direction for motors, with-flow cycle tracks) - no plans yet. New loading bay outside International Quarter - countdown crossings when crossing the entrance and exit to a tiny loading bay, with v. poor waiting times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cycleways should retain priority at minor side roads Redesign of Westfield Avenue should current conflict with pedestrians at bus stops and crossings, and reduce clutter Countdown crossings/traffic lights should be removed at loading bay. Drivers entering and leaving should be expected to give way to people walking and cycling.

Where We Were	What We Saw	What We Suggested (or will suggest) To Fix It
Westfield Avenue j/w Middlesex Way & new North-South Highway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hoardings up for new North-South Highway connection, due for completion in second half of September when Clarinoco Lane will be closed. (Unclear if Clarinoco Lane will remain open for walking/cycling or be completely impassible.) • LLDC officer stated North-South Highway will have painted cycle lanes on both sides. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads designed to carry through traffic (particularly large volumes) must have physical protection for people cycling. JR suggested 'light' segregation (wands) as an interim measure. • We were all surprised at 'painted lanes' as we had believed there would be a bidirectional cycleway as on Westfield Ave, which would be more satisfactory - we don't know if this is a misunderstanding or not. • Still concerns about whether a new 'highway' through the Park is a good idea.
Waterden Road j/w Olympic Park Avenue (bridge)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No obvious connection between Waterden Road cycleway and Olympic Park Avenue. People cycling end up crossing the junction against moving traffic (MB demonstrated to great effect) or riding on the pavement. • We remain concerned that the Olympic Park Avenue bridge has painted cycle lanes which are unacceptably narrow and invite close passes by encouraging people to cycle very close to the kerb 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be more signage to indicate you can cross in two stages using the toucans as an interim fix. • Longer-term junction needs more work - Waterden Road cycleway is mostly good but let down by poor connectivity. • As an interim fix for the bridge, remove the painted cycle lanes - maybe consider re-designating the pavements as shared tracks • In the longer term - redesign the bridge. Maybe one half can be for walking/cycling and one for motor traffic

Where We Were	What We Saw	What We Suggested (or will suggest) To Fix It
Olympic Park Avenue j/w Honour Lea Avenue (Future Quietway 6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No dropped kerbs connecting Honour Lea Avenue cycleway to the Park. Zebra crossing for pedestrians gives no explicit priority or permission for cyclists to cross here. Many people cycle in the carriageway as difficult to access the cycleway. Junction radius is much too wide and encourages drivers to turn in and out at speed. Parallel zebra/cycle crossing & dropped kerbs coming with Quietway 6, which will also reduce the turning radius of the junction to slow drivers down. Unclear as yet whether people on the Quietway will be routed via the cycle track or the carriageway. "No cycling" sign just before entrance to the Park, making it technically illegal to ride into the Park from Olympic Park Ave; "CYCLISTS DISMOUNT" sign on a post on a dropped kerb leading to nowhere. Majority of motorists using Honour Lea Ave are not residents or visitors, but using it as a shortcut ("rat running.") LLDC officers seemed confused by questions about whether this is the intended function of Honour Lea Avenue (as a shortcut through the Park, is it a strategic road, etc). Speed limit 30mph. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quietway should be delivered soon Raised table needs more work - in the 'raised' section the carriageway should be level with the pavement Quick win: "No cycling" and "cyclists dismount" sign should be removed ASAP - illogical and no reason for them to be there. Speed limit should be 20mph Further thought should be given as to whether this should be a through route for drivers at all - a 'fietsstraat'/'cycle street' treatment making it access only for cars could be considered
Celebration Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently one-way northbound due to nearby building works - no contraflow for cycling Lots of drivers using side streets (Cheering Lane, etc) around Chobham Academy as shortcuts - this was where Hackney Cyclist filmed a school run driver speeding along the pavement Speeds are too high Painted cycle lanes too narrow Works van parked on double yellows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close side streets to through traffic - access only Investigate a School Street timed closure outside Chobham Academy Collect data during current closure of Celebration Avenue northbound - how does this affect local network? Investigate potential contraflow for cycling during works

Where We Were	What We Saw	What We Suggested (or will suggest) To Fix It
International Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No off-carriageway cycling provision - only painted lanes and ASLs (rarely respected) People cycling in contention with coaches Celebration Ave/Int'l Way junction poor for pedestrians, particularly people changing between DLR & National Rail and walking to/from Westfield. Speeds also too high outside station (bollards destroyed.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider physical separation for cyclists here. Consider redesigning the T-junction to improve amenity for people walking between International NR/Westfield and International DLR/East Village - current waiting times not acceptable.
Montfichet Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confusing, patchwork cycling facility, often shared and in contention with coach/bus users Unclear signage - you're never sure if you're supposed to be in a cycle track, on the pavement, in the carriageway Junction with Westfield Avenue inconvenient - crossing between bidirectional cycle paths requires crossing in three stages using toucan crossings Montfichet Road to be redesigned - but no plans yet Speeds extremely high - looks like a Formula 1 track! Poor cycle parking facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans should design out conflict between people cycling and buses/passengers Westfield Ave junction must be significantly more convenient for people to cross - we hope this will be considered in the redesign Speeds must come down on Montfichet Road.
Route 2		
Waterden Road j/w Copper Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current one-way closure of Copper Street is confusing - LLDC officer dismounted and walked, following sign; others rode around it in the carriageway. Quietway will turn the zebra crossing into a parallel crossing, but motor speeds are concerning here anyway LLDC officers stated a traffic safety audit showed that a large number of cyclists emerged and crossed Waterden Road without looking, leading to near misses. We've seen no evidence of this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "CYCLISTS DISMOUNT" sign should be replaced with "CYCLISTS REJOIN CARRIAGEWAY." Cycle routes must never involve dismounting as this is exclusionary for disabled riders who cannot easily dismount. Copper Street needs more work - the design with a shared footway/cycle path level with the carriageway is confusing. Parents often drive and park on the pavement at school run times. Consider a School Street closure and enforcing parking rules.

Where We Were	What We Saw	What We Suggested (or will suggest) To Fix It
Wallis Road Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lift is unreliable and regularly breaks down. Also too small to fit in some larger types of cycle. • Wheel channel only available on one side of the stairs - and no good for wheelchair users, tricycle users, parents with prams etc. • Cladding on the wall next to the wheel channel is sharp - you can cut your hand on it • Signage with a diversion route has been added - but (a) is on the wrong sides; (b) shows "how do I get to the park?" rather than "how do I get to the other side of this staircase?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the medium term this bridge should be upgraded with a ramp which will always work, unlike the lift. • Adding a second wheel channel (meaning one on both sides) would be a good interim improvement • Diversionary signage needs considerable improvement - larger, on the correct side, with instructions on how to reach the opposite side of the bridge
White Post Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High volume of through traffic • Unclear provision for people cycling onto NCN 1 • Painted cycle icons in the carriageway too close to the kerb 	
Carpenters Road/ Clarinoco Lane/ Loop Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surprising news to us: LLDC said that Carpenters Road will close later this year for five years for Sweetwater. Traffic will be diverted via Loop Road. • Heavy vehicle reversed out of a work site on Loop Road with no banksman - MB had words with the person operating the gate • No physical protection for cycling on Loop Road - potentially dangerous given volumes of traffic will increase • On recent event days (particularly Foo Fighters concerts) minicabs and cars were driving all over the pavements on Carpenters Road to pick up fares and people leaving the concerts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If possible Carpenters Road should remain open for walking/cycling during closure. • Measures should be investigated to stop cars driving on the pavement on Carpenters Road and Loop Road - wands or bollards might discourage it (and also provide a semi-protected cycle lane) • Consider providing marshalled pick up/drop off points for taxis/minicabs/Uber and improving public transport provision • Consider urgent improvements to make it easier for kids attending new school on Loop Road(?) to cycle there - riding on the pavement likely to be unacceptable