

**Comment and Recommendations from the Merton Cycling Campaign (MCC) Feb 2013**  
**Subject: The London Borough of Merton 'Policies Maps' titled 'Cycling Network' of January 2013**

The 5 Maps are titled Colliers Wood, Mitcham, Morden, Raynes Park, Wimbledon.  
Please note detailed analysis of the maps is limited to the time constraints of any voluntary organisation and may not be comprehensive.

**1. Overview**

MCC can congratulate LB Merton on including cycling maps in their Local Development Framework(LDF) and can applaud the LDF in putting Active Transport first in the Transport section, but MCC have some serious reservations.

**2. Reservations**

2.1 MCC regret that these maps appear not to have been given the same standard of research as other maps in the LDF.

2.2 These maps do not show the Strategic Cycle Network referred to in item 26.4 of the LDF.

2.3 These maps do not demonstrate a 15 year Core Planning Strategy and do not demonstrate a clear Strategy for a shift away from private vehicles promoted in item 26.6 of the LDF.

2.4 Despite Active Transport being emphasized in the Transport section there is far too little emphasis on Active Transport in the Sub-Area Policies of the LDF. The Sub Area Policy Diagrams note 'Improve pedestrian links' but improving cycling links is not highlighted.

**If the Cycling Policies Maps had Strategic Routes delineated then Sub- Area policies could have had a considerable amount to say and include about cycling in relation to the Sub-Areas.**

Furthermore for general permeability, locations can be identified where giving priority or access to cyclists, can greatly benefit cyclists, but at little inconvenience to other users. For instance the relatively new DfT sign 'No Entry Except Cycles' is a cheap and easy way of opening up one-way streets to cycling. Recommendation: MCC recommend that Sub Area Policy Diagrams include 'Improve cycling links' in coordination with Strategic Cycling Policies Maps.

**3. Titles: Cycling Network/Existing Network**

MCC are unable to accept the title of these maps as 'Cycling Network' or the category of routes as 'Existing Network'. This is not the 'comprehensive' and 'strategic' network referred to in the LDF. The maps show a mixture of roads/paths/tracks highlighted that are individually seen as useful to cyclists. Some of them may be signed but they cannot necessarily be said to be safer than anywhere else, they do not show a 'Merton' Network. At the meeting of Jan 24<sup>th</sup> between MCC and the Council, Chris Chowns explained that the blue roads were taken from the TfL cycle maps. MCC find that several key linkages are missing. These linkages are well known to Merton they facilitate Merton's pre-existing Network strategies, installed as a result of costly consultants reports and implementation programmes, these must not be neglected.

Recommendation. MCC recommend these maps be called 'Cycling Merton' as they currently do not represent a Network.

**4. Title: Policies Map**

The title 'Policies Map' is inappropriate, at present they appear to be short-term Proposal maps. MCC's primary Policy recommendation is that Merton firstly establish a principle of 'Care for Cyclists' on all roads with equal rights to personal safety for all road users.

With regard to the Maps MCC recommend that Merton take the time now to turn these maps into Policy maps, where cycling routes prioritized for safe cycling continuity can be integrated to form a Strategic Plan. Routes should be considered N,S,E,W from significant shopping and commercial centres as well as schools and colleges and linking the main Merton Cycling Hubs.

**5. Title: proposed 'Cycling Hubs'**

Colliers Wood, Morden and Wimbledon Cycling Hubs but not Mitcham which appears to be an error. However the radial route potential from Raynes Park, enlarged on in these comments, suggests that Raynes Park should also be considered as a proposed 'Cycling Hub'.

## **6. Title: Cycling Routes**

The maps show proposed 'Cycling Routes'. These are understood to designate where Merton proposes delivery of safe cycling continuity along the red marked line. MCC applaud the emphasis on continuity but find a Merton strategy lacking.

Recommendation: Safe cycling continuity is rare in the Borough so there should be a priority programme of phased strategic improvements, of which these maps would highlight the first phase.

## **7. Title: Routes signed for use**

The maps show 'Routes signed for use' as a blue line. 'Routes signed for use' suggests two things (1) that LB Merton has identified and declared these routes to be suitable for cyclists of all ages (2) that Merton reduces consideration for the use of bicycles on all the roads not 'Signed for use', MCC do not find this acceptable. The Highway Code for young road users, aged 7-11 years, 'Tales of the Road' tells children that any blue cycle sign is a 'Recommended Route for Cycles'. TfL may be prepared to map and recommend routes that are unsuitable, but at the meeting discussing Merton High Street on Jan 24<sup>th</sup> 2013 it was clear that Merton Officers were not prepared to risk the straight adoption of TfL criteria.

Recommendation: While Blue routes on these maps could be labelled 'A mixture of quiet and busier roads selected as useful for cycling by TfL'. MCC feel that Merton have a responsibility to identify their 'Recommended Routes for Cycles' and that these should be included on Policy Maps.

## **8. Hub Analysis and Proposed Cycling Routes**

MCC welcome the proposed cycling routes on main roads and assume that principles of cycling priority and safety will be combined to give continuity. Designing up to a standard, not down to a compromise, is the only way to significantly increase cycling levels. The London Cycling Campaign's Go Dutch principles should apply.

### **8.1 Mitcham Map**

8.1.1 MCC applaud the route from Colliers Wood through Mitcham to Beddington Lane but significant work is needed to upgrade this unpleasant and dangerous route e.g.

8.1.2 Significant work is needed on Western Road where there is almost no provision for cycling safely.

8.1.3 Major work on the roundabout at Carshalton Road- Croydon Road. The traffic light scheme that Merton commissioned as a result of a cycling fatality should perhaps be re-considered.

8.1.4 The Right turn into Beddington Lane and the road southward require severe attention.

8.1.5 The Traffic lighted roundabout of London Road/Streatham Road requires tightening down to one lane to slow motorists. (Discussed between MCC/LBM on ride May 2012)

8.1.6 Westbound on Streatham Road (to Mitcham Town Centre) MCC recommend a bus lane to extend from the Mitcham Industrial Estate Area. Precedents can be seen at Garratt Lane near Earlsfield Station and Queenstown Road. MCC recommend the removal of the camouflaged road narrowings on Streatham Road.

8.1.7 The London Road crossing Figges Marsh to Pitcairn Road should have stop/go cycle symbols for crossing. (Discussed between MCC/LBM on ride May 2012).

8.1.8 MCC welcomes the proposed 'Cycling Routes' through Mitcham Town Centre, but recommend that serious attempts to improve permeability throughout the surrounding roads to Mitcham Centre are made for pedestrians and cyclists. For instance making access through the wall between Chalkley Close and Clarendon Ground. Also a wheel friendly step-free bridge over the railway at Eastfield Station this could be accompanied by an upgrade of Sandy lane (Discussed between MCC/LBM on ride May 2012).

8.1.9 MCC also recommend the re-modelling of the triangular road layout of Lower Green West and London Road and suggest that the route south out of Mitcham down London Road should be given the red lined 'Cycling Route' priority of these maps and with Church Road extending 'Cycling Route' priority over its whole length.

## **8.2 Colliers Wood Map**

8.2.1 Colliers Wood is an example of a maze of blue routes where Merton need to identify their 'Recommended Routes' dispersing from the end of CS7.

8.2.2 The No left turn sign at Christchurch Road needs removing.

8.2.3 Merton should use Compulsary Purchase powers to widen the pavement beside Baltic Close for crossing to Colliers Wood Underground Station.

8.2.4 The Myrna Road problem is identified in the Missed Key Links (Item 9) section of these comments.

## **8.3 Morden Map**

8.3.1 'No cycling' signs need to be removed from the Greenway alongside the Tram Track between the North/South Morden Road and the Wandle Trail. A crossing of Morden Road to connect this Greenway with Dorset Road should be considered it is currently dangerous to cross at all. Both Dorset Road and Morden Road need to be made safer for cycling. Extending the bus lanes and making all 24 hour would improve Morden Road for cycling while the traffic speed in Dorset Road needs better cycle friendly reduction methods

8.3.2 MCC feel that the linkage of Morden and Mitcham is very unclear, Morden Hall Park is unlit and like all the Wandle Trail suffers from rough paths ponding when wet. MCC suggest a route along East/West Morden Road.

8.3.3 A cycle Route along Epsom Road south to North Cheam is suggested.

8.3.4 Morden Park connections are not exploiting proposals that LB Merton has already surveyed, documented and promoted; firstly to the South East: Morden Park to Epsom Road crossing to Rutland Drive, Rustington Walk into Sutton Common Recreation Ground. Then to the North West: Morden Park thru Car Park entrance into Hillcross Avenue, Monkleigh Road, Leamington Avenue to Cherrywood Lane and the Recreation Grounds. Then from the end of Whatley Avenue to a much needed crossing of Bushey Road to Prince Georges Avenue.

## **8.4 Raynes Park Map**

8.4.1 MCC hope that the proposed 'Cycling Route' work to the railside path Raynes Park to Lower Downs Road is to introduce the important lighting and to remedy faults in the surfacing the length of the railside path.

8.4.2 MCC applaud the proposed link from West Barnes Lane, Raynes Park under the A3 towards Kingston, using the Raynes Park Recreation Ground.

8.4.3 The Martin Way and Bushey Road proposals are applauded, but what happens to the West end of the Bushey Road proposal at Grand Drive? What is the intention for meeting continuity criteria?

8.4.4 MCC recommend the removal of restrictions to cycling from Bushey Mead across Grand Drive to Raynes Park Sports Ground.

8.4.5 Routes from Raynes Park North are limited. LCC recommend the route that LB Merton has already surveyed, documented and promoted from Coombe Lane to Cottenham Park Road, Cottenham Drive, Ernle Road, Woodhayes Road to Westside Common. This could perhaps be linked to an East/West route along the Ridgway which would then serve the number of schools in the area.

## **8.5 Wimbledon Map**

8.5.1 MCC applaud the extension of the Railside Path from Raynes Park up to the crossing over to the forecourt of Wimbledon Station.

8.5.2 The highlighted 'Steps' off the Railside Path are assumed to be a reminder that something must be done about them, on the pedestrian railway bridge and up towards Wimbledon Station.

8.5.3 If the Railside Path has an effective crossing of Lower Downs Road, while being generally lit, well surfaced and undergrowth trimmed, it would encourage cyclists who normally use Worple Road; if this cannot be achieved then serious consideration of upgrading Worple Road to be a parallel recommended route for cycling should be considered.

8.5.4 Parkside to, and including, Wimbledon Hill Road is a route of some importance and should perhaps be raised to the category of Proposed 'Cycling Route'.

8.5.5 Another North South route suitable as a 'Cycling Route' proposal would link Wimbledon Park with the Kingston Road and High Path East West Route, taking in Strathearn Road, Gap Road, Ashcombe, Trinity and Montague Roads to Kingston Road and Brisbane Avenue.

8.5.6 It is worth noting that between Dorset Road to Melbourne Road and then High Path there are 14 barriers which make it hostile to cycling and impossible with a cargo bike. This route allows cycling but does not enable or encourage it.

8.5.7 On the High Path route itself there is a lot of rat running conflicting dangerously with cycling at two points (i.e. cars turning across the cycle route). MCC recommend that Merton should take measures to stop the rat running through this area.

8.5.8 Stanley Road and Kings Road, going North out of the Broadway, MCC recommend should be made 2-way for cycling

**9. Missed key links (Probably not a complete list).**

Between Devonshire Road and Myrna Close

Between Garfield Road and North Road

The skew arch Raynes Park

Between Coppice Close and Fairway

Between Wilton Grove and Kingston Road

Between Kingswood Road and Dundonald Road

**10. Pre-existing Merton Routes misrepresented on the maps (Probably not a complete list) .**

Carshalton Road is a Strategic Route

Cycle infrastructure round Vestry Hall-Cricket Green is strategically important.

Durnsford Road, Haydons Road is a Strategic Cycle Route and Durnsford Road railway bridge requires action.

Bridge Road, Merton Road, Morden Road up to Tramlink is a Strategic Cycle Route

Morden Road to Lombard Road to Wandle Trail is a Strategic Cycle Route

Morden Hall Road is a Strategic Cycle Route

The Wandle Trail is missing between Merantun Way and Phipps Bridge Road

Mansel Road, Raymond Road plus that section at the east end of Worple Road are Strategic Cycle Routes.

Coombe lane is shown as a Greenway rather than 'Separate on Road'

Across Shannon Corner to Burlington Road is a Merton Strategic Proposal.

These notes submitted by MCC to Merton Council Feb 26<sup>th</sup> 2013