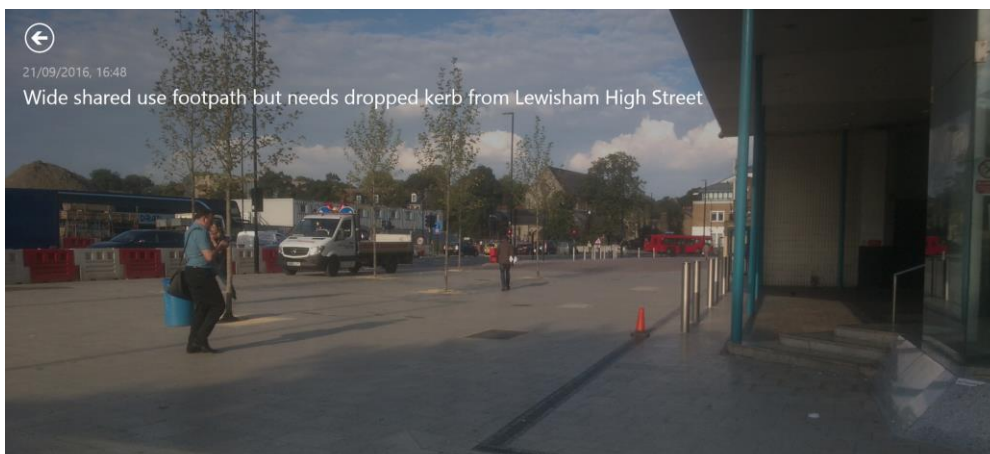


'Lewisham "H" Junction – review by Lewisham Cyclists 28th September, 2016 (version 2)

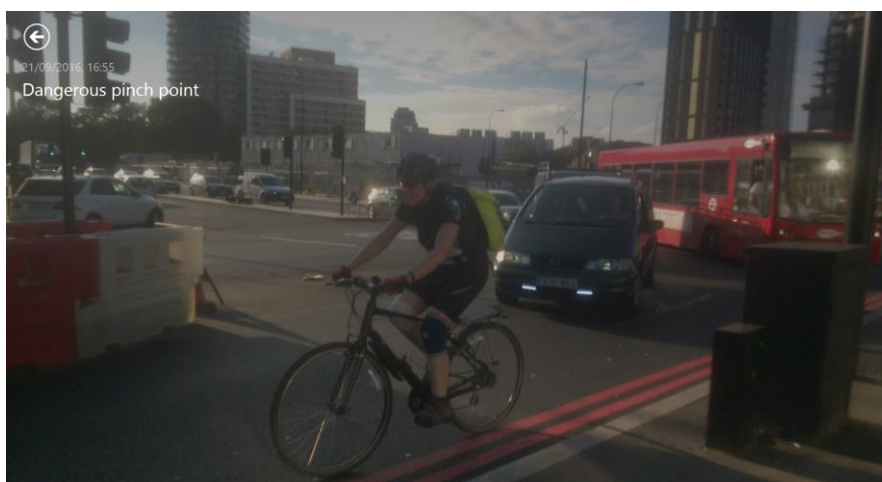
Summary:

The following comments are made in the interests of improving safety for cyclists at this recently changed junction at the heart of the Lewisham Gateway development. In our view the junction is inherently unsafe for cyclists and should be re-worked to meet modern safe junction standards. There are however some highly dangerous aspects which unless addressed may lead to potential conflicts and accidents:

1. Overall, there are currently no safe facilities for cyclists; the probability of left hook collisions is high. This is a particular problem on the left turn from Lewisham High Street onto Rennell Street. It would be sensible here to provide a dropped kerb to allow cyclists to safely access the shared use (wide) footpath that runs along the south of Rennell Street.



2. There is a dangerous pinch point on the east side of the H, where Rennell Street turns south into the High Street, into the single south bound lane.



Because other traffic is frequently in the wrong lane here for heading SE along the A20, there are often two lanes of traffic queueing to turn right into the one lane entered via

(unfinished) traffic island where we have seen cyclists nearly crushed by HGVs and coaches. It would be sensible here to consider a segregated bike lane along the (wide) footpath in front of the police station accessed by the existing drop kerb on the junction exit. Plans indicate this is intended to be shared use footpath and there is some signage in place to indicate this, although no evidence of any markings or tangible infrastructure.

3. The provision of split lane Advance Stop Lanes (ASLs) is problematic as these inevitably lead to some cyclists coming into conflict with traffic turning in another direction.



Some traffic lanes are bi-directional for turning, and we have seen some near misses with traffic crossing the desire line of cyclists on the few occasions we have observed the site. From a safety perspective, traffic should only be able to travel in the same direction as the cyclist (hopefully positioned in the ASL at the head of the queue). We would like to understand the logic of the half lane ASLs, and to discuss with the design team whether there is a safer configuration. We would also like to discuss the partial use of bike feeder lanes into ASLs – currently these are in use at some junctions and could be dangerous for cyclists altering direction in heavy traffic.

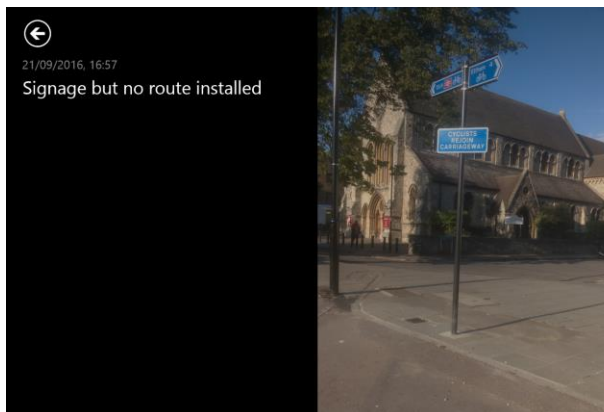
4. The car park only lane (from Molesworth Street) is abused for queue jumping and leads to a very wide access point into the car park which is dangerous for both cyclists (on shared use footpath) and pedestrians. The car park access should be adapted to become a slower and safer crossing point of the shared footpath e.g. by significant narrowing and/or installing a raised table.

Also at this location the Northbound advisory cycle lane in Molesworth St needs more bicycle symbols painted in it as cars are using it as a traffic lane...

Furthermore we would like reassurance that promised off-carriageway routes are going to be developed as a safer alternative means of getting across Lewisham but avoiding the dangerous pinch points. Signage is already in place which indicates off-carriageway routes, which could be encouraging, if a properly marked off-road route is installed before final completion of the scheme in November. Here are some further points surrounding these routes:

- There should be a contraflow bike lane access to Lewisham Station which could be accommodated if the bus stand to the west of the DLR station was moved elsewhere. This would enable station bound cyclists to avoid the H completely.

- With Phase 2 of the Lewisham Gateway development still at the planning stage it is likely that overall completion is still some years away. Can we still have the original reassurance that the central site, when completed, will still allow for shared use space for cyclists and pedestrians?
- The staggered 2-phase crossing to the station from Glass Mill is frequently overcrowded and it's difficult to even wheel a bike across; this should be a direct, wide single phase toucan, preferably relocated to its previous position nearer the station. We generally prefer direct single phase crossings as these are easier for both cyclists and pedestrians and toucans are better for cyclists offering alternative crossing spaces.
- The poor quality off-road cycle track in Molesworth Street (on the wrong side of the footway) has not been upgraded, but potentially offers a safe alternative route for cyclists. We have already provided a very detailed description of an improved design for Molesworth Street cycle route, and have attended site meetings and were led to believe improvements to it were imminent last year, but as yet, nothing has happened to improve this popular route.
- No cycle lanes / tracks have yet been provided on the east side of the H or in the centre of Gateway itself, even if temporary. These should be provided asap and cyclists encouraged to gain access to these routes through dropped kerbs and signage
- On the west side of the H the whole of the pavement is shown as Shared Use but the dropped kerb giving access to it is blocked by temporary barriers.
- The quieter pedestrian / cycle route via the church on the East side of the H is not finished & not well signed despite a Rejoin the Carriageway new sign being installed.



Conclusion:

All these defects can be resolved – and should be before ‘completion’ (Nov’16).

We urgently seek a meeting with TfL and other parties to help resolve these issues. Despite our concerns that the junction has been installed with an out of date design, it is still possible and practicable to make improvements to mitigate some of the danger.

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