

Dear sir or madam

Bell Green Development – Planning Consultation

With apologies for our late submission Lewisham Cyclists would like to formally object to the above proposal on the grounds of additional traffic that we consider is likely to be generated as a result and the wholly inadequate access routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposed development is likely to add further traffic to and from the new retail development that will add to the already overcrowded and traffic dominated roads that make up the gyratory system that surrounds the existing Bell Green retail site.

Also in our view, which is informed by comments of our members, and of a recent site visit, the entire island site is extremely inaccessible to both cyclists and pedestrians, and any additional traffic is likely to exacerbate this problem.

However, if the proposal is taken forward, we would ask the planning committee to consider adding the following measures to mitigate the lack of access, and encourage more sustainable journeys by bicycle and/or on foot in line with the London Mayor's 'Healthy Streets for London' Walking and Cycling Strategy and the Lewisham Mayor's Lewisham Cycling Strategy (currently under collaborative development by LBL Officers, Project Centre and Lewisham Cyclists). This would reduce congestion and pollution, as well as improving the health and local economy of the surrounding area.

1. Secure parking facilities for bicycles should be installed at various locations around the site including any new supermarket. They need to be close to store entrances, within visual and CCTV surveillance, and ideally, covered. The current small rack to the side of Sainsbury's is both too small, and wrongly located, and therefore hardly used. Whereas the store frontage, dominated as it is by large car parks and trolley parking, would be a more effective location. Ideally we would expect to see 20 – 30 racks close to the store entrance, and similar appropriate provision at the other large retail outlets on the campus.

2. Pedestrians are constrained in accessing the site by guard railing which is designed to restrain cars. There are few if any continuous footways and/or pavements entering and leaving the site which means in practice that more confident pedestrians climb over railings and cut across (potentially) dangerous car parks. This was observed frequently on our site visits. Pedestrian access to the site should be reviewed to include the provision of properly designed footways within and to the boundary of the campus, and then to enable safe and convenient crossing points to the far side of the gyratory system and surrounding roads. In our view this is one of the worst aspects of the design of the site which acts to deter pedestrian footfall from the "far" side of this island site, which effectively cuts off access from anything but motorised traffic.

3. For example, pedestrians can currently only cross at traffic lights, which is inconvenient at Kangley Bridge junction which has a four phase crossing; there is no toucan across the Southend Lane/Waterlink Way (NCN21) junction which is heavily used by pedestrians and cyclists; there is no toucan across the middle of Bell Green on the "desire line".

There is also no properly designed pedestrian/cyclist route from Waterlink Way into the Champion/Sports Direct cul-de-sac.

In our view these improvements to active travel access arrangements could be designed to synchronise with traffic flows and have an overall traffic neutral effect, whilst enabling modal shift to walking and cycling.

4. Currently traffic cuts through Sainsbury car park, which should be access only, with parking cars leaving by the same exit. This would improve site safety and reduce the risk of rat running traffic.

5. The approaches and junctions in and around the gyratory are not cycling friendly, and research shows that lack of provision for cyclists at busy junctions is the main reason more people don't cycle. Currently, there is no cycle lane along Perry Hill, Perry Rise, Alan Pegg Place, Stanton Way and Bell Green. Segregated cycle lanes are crucial to allow for safer cycling. There are four lanes of traffic exiting Sydenham High Street but no cycle lane.

6. This setting is dominated by heavy traffic, and the gyratory system. There are no cycle lanes, and very few convenient crossing points for pedestrians. This development brings an opportunity to assess these issues and review designs to increase active travel to and from the site to benefit local people. A design review would look at giving pedestrians safer and more convenient access. Cyclists would be protected at junctions with "hold the left" phases, and would have segregated cycle lanes which would increase their use and enjoyment of this facility.

Lewisham Cyclists would be pleased to work with the developer and/or Council representatives to facilitate such a design review, and look forward to hearing from you. If you have any further queries please contact us by e-mail or through Brian Turpin 07541 316961