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Lewisham Cyclists' response to Catford Town Centre Framework – specifically 'The Stations Area'

About Lewisham Cyclists

Lewisham Cyclists (LC) are the local borough group of the London Cycling Campaign (LCC) with more than 1500 supporters of whom over 700 are fully paid-up members of LCC. We speak up on behalf of everyone who cycles or wants to cycle in the London Borough of Lewisham and adjacent boroughs. We seek a greener, healthier, happier and better-connected capital.

Our comments

Reference: CatfordTownFramework2020.pdf Draft 04/9/20

Section 3.5 'The Stations Area' Pages 62-65

General views

We are very supportive of these plans to improve the public realm around Catford stations and make significant improvements in walking and cycling access to this area.

However as a general comment we feel that the proposed stations framework still prioritises motor vehicle access to the stations too much and this is constraining the plans and preventing the delivery of the highest standard of public realm improvements. The vast majority of people arrive at these stations either on foot, on bicycle or using public transport so they should be the absolute focus of the designs. The roads around Catford are constantly above capacity so people should not be encouraged to use motor vehicles to access the stations for drop-off etc.

Area between Catford Bridge and Catford stations (Adenmore Road etc.)

This area (8) is currently filtered at the west end outside Catford station and signed as being closed to motor vehicles at its north end, but this is not being properly enforced. In the new design this whole area should be much more clearly designated for pedestrians and cyclists only, with no motor vehicles allowed. Sainsburys shop servicing could be accomplished from the east end of Westdown Road with a dedicated loading bay there.

The graphic on page 65 appears to show Adenmore Road unfiltered at the Ravensbourne Park junction outside Catford station. It also talks about (p65/4) access for services and drop-off. This is currently a pedestrianised area and should stay that way. The design should not facilitate motor vehicle drop-off directly outside Catford station, except for essential disabled drop-off access.

Cycling parking for Catford station (3) is shown out on Ravensbourne Park effectively hidden for arrivals from the Waterlink Way. We believe there should be cycle parking also on the east side of Catford station in a prominent location. Putting the cycle parking in a visible

position on the arrival desire line is a proven encouragement to use this mode as a way of accessing the station, witness the success of this approach at Brockley station.

Consideration should also be given to ensuring the Waterlink Way route, which is a very busy cycling route, is not obstructed or impeded as it passes through this area and the layout is designed to minimise conflict with pedestrians.

We are supportive of the mooted plan to provide direct access (5) to the Catford Bridge station footbridge from outside the station thereby improving permeability across the railway line. Assuming a disability compliant ramp will be provided up to the platform, the disabled drop-off for Catford Bridge station west side could be at the northerly end of Adenmore Road towards the junction with Westdown Road, not far from here.

Waterlink Way route under Catford Bridge

We are very supportive of the proposal to widen the track of the Waterlink Way (15) as it passes under Catford Bridge. This should be implemented as soon as possible as the section under the bridge is currently narrow with a blind corner and very unwelcoming.

Approaches to east side of Catford Bridge station (from Doggett Road)

We believe that motor vehicular access should be removed from the forecourt (10) at the front of the station with demountable bollard(s) provided up near Doggett Road (access only for Network Rail and Emergency Services vehicles). Allowing motor vehicles in this area is unnecessary and intimidating for pedestrians. Disabled drop-off could easily be in the same area as the proposed taxi drop-off (11) up on Doggett Road.

Removing motor vehicles from the forecourt (10) will also allow the roundabout structure in front of the station entrance to be completely removed to open sightlines and allow pedestrians to follow the desire line directly to the main station entrance (a quick glance at Google Streetview will show people following this desire line!). The schematic appears to suggest this structure is going to be retained with additional planting in it - this seems ill-advised as it impedes sightlines and blocks the direct pedestrian route.

Removing the roundabout structure would release space on the forecourt to host the cycle parking, rather than it being hidden away at (3) near the Catford Bridge underpass. That location is not on the arrival desire line and being hidden away will not feel like a secure location to leave a bicycle, so will probably not be much used.

Approach to east side of Catford Bridge station from the south (underpass under Catford Bridge)

The arch(es) under Catford Bridge should be opened out to make the underpass (13) more welcoming and spacious. The design needs to accommodate the existing footway access up to the south side of Catford Bridge, but also if feasible to allow for links to the proposed Cycling Bridge (20) cantilevered to the side of the bridge.

Doggett Road

The one-way section of Doggett Road (from the Holbeach Road junction) should be made two-way for cyclists so that they can directly access the station and also the existing pedestrian underpass under Catford Bridge, accepting that cyclists would have to walk through the underpass as it stands. This change should be made asap to provide a safe route for people on bicycles to the station from the Rushey Green area. We understand that established Council policy is to generally convert one-way streets to two-way for cycling wherever possible to improve cycling 'permeability'.

Cycling Bridge cantilevered to south side of Catford Bridge

We are very supportive of this planned cycling bridge (20) as there is inadequate road space on the very hazardous A205 as it passes over Catford Bridge to make space for east-west segregated cycle lanes. The cycle route from the bridge should then continue further west through an arch on the Catford Loop line railway viaduct. And then up Catford Hill for a short way utilising some pavement space to avoid the Catford Hill/Stanstead Road signalised junction.

Bracketed references e.g. (4) refer to the map on Page 63 in the Framework document.

Tim Collingridge (Lewisham Cyclists Secretary) 8/2/2021