

**Strategic Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SDF SPD) January 2020:
response by Guildford Bicycle User Group (G-BUG), submitted 20 February 2020**

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Overall, G-BUG welcomes the SDF SPD. The document recognises the importance of modal shift to sustainable forms of transport, including active travel modes such as cycling, to combat climate change and pollution, and generally improve quality of life. It requires that the new developments include safe cycling routes and facilities (eg C4 p46). The key challenge will be to ensure that these are not used by developers as 'greenwashing' in early stage planning, only to be dropped subsequently as a cost saving measure. Also, as the document acknowledges, these new developments must serve as a spur to bring the established suburbs of the Borough to the same high standard of cycling infrastructure and connectivity.

Whilst, obviously, we focus on the needs of cyclists, we strongly believe that well-designed cycling infrastructure will also benefit pedestrians and the disabled.

General observations:

- The introduction of a standard – the London Cycling Design Standards – is welcomed (C3 p45), and this should be emphasised by adding it to the list of additional resources in para 2.1.15.
- The SMC is clearly, by design, crucial to ensure cycling connectivity between the new developments and the rest of the Borough: it is vital that this meets a high standard of safety and convenience. (The document refers to the 'SMC SPD': we don't think we have seen this, and would like to do so.)
- The developments include several new schools, and/or will impact schools in adjacent neighbourhoods: we suggest that provision of safe cycling routes to schools be emphasised. Schools should develop and adhere to active travel plans, and 20mph limits should be imposed in their vicinity (if not across the whole of each development).
- Tertiary streets (3.3.27) should include 'play streets'.
- It should be recognised that the range of bicycle types in common use is expanding : electric, cargo, child trailers, tandems, bikes adapted for the disabled. In particular this emphasises that barriers such as chicanes, steps and narrow passageways should be avoided.
- Whilst there is passing reference to 'hire bikes', the document should note that GBC has advanced plans to introduce a 'bike share' scheme, along with an improved cycle network, and developers must work with GBC to accommodate and deliver this (eg docking stations).

Comments upon each development site follow. G-BUG is pleased to note that most of the suggestions we made in the workshops have been included, and most of our remarks amplify on the proposals. For convenience, we reference the relevant Active Travel Framework figure. Implied developer financial contributions must be incorporated in the appropriate documentation, eg the Policy Appendices (A26 for Blackwell Farm etc).

Section 4. Slyfield (aka Weyside Urban Village) (Active Travel Framework Fig 19)

- 4.4.6 states "*Current cycle connections along the River Wey Navigation are more suited to recreational use, and an alternative is needed to avoid conflict between leisurely pedestrian movement and functional active travel.*": We believe this misses an opportunity to improve the surface of the towpath to provide a secondary 'green corridor' for cyclists to connect with the town centre. (The towpath has already been improved from the town centre up to

the A320 bridge.) This route would also link to the proposed Guildford Godalming Greenway.

- The map shows, and we support, a better connection to National Cycle Route 223 (Stoke Park > Spectrum > A3 subway > Stoke Lake > Burpham), the surface of which might be improved, thus enabling Slyfield residents a more direct and pleasant connection to the Spectrum, Stoke Park and Burpham (for Sainsbury and Aldi supermarkets), and the Riverside Park.
- To facilitate the above connections, a good crossing of the Wey Navigation is required. Currently, the only nearby crossing is a narrow path down to and across Stoke Lock: this crossing should be improved, and/or a new cycle/pedestrian bridge could be provided at an appropriate location.
- The above routes could be linked to the proposed Guildford Godalming Greenway, thus providing a Greenway all the way from Burpham to Godalming.
- The possible new cycle path shown from the Spectrum to Burpham alongside the Eastern side of the A3 is also strongly endorsed.
- It is important that the new crossings at Stoke Crossroads favour cyclists, since this will be a key junction for cyclists travelling to/from the development.

Section 5 Gosden Hill Farm (Active Travel Framework Fig 30)

- Making part of Merrow Lane a walking and cycling route and thus presumably closing the road as a rat run is welcome.
- Introducing a new cycle/pedestrian path along New Inn Lane is welcome, provided it applies throughout the length of the road from the railway bridge to the 'Aldi' roundabout. (Could this path be developed as another branch of the SMC?)
- The existing cycle track alongside the London bound carriageway of the A3, which leads to Ripley and beyond, should be added to the map. A good connection should be provided to this.
- Generous secure cycle storage should be provided at the new Guildford East station.

Section 6 Blackwell Farm (Active Travel Framework Fig 41)

- At the new Guildford West Rail Station, it must be made easy for cyclists to cross from one platform to the other, and the opportunity should be taken to build on this to ensure a crossing (subway? bridge?) over the railway for cyclists, to improve connection to Park Barn.
- Generous secure cycle storage should be provided at the new Guildford West station.
- Including the Active Travel route to Manor Way using the existing foot bridge over the A3 is welcome. The existing bridge is 'cyclists dismount', and this should be changed to allow cycling. This connection also provides an alternative route to reach the main station via relatively quiet backroads of Onslow Village. Also, it might be indicated on the map that it is possible to reach the 'Active Travel Route along the Hogs Back' via a small passageway at the western end of High View Road. (NB Although these routes are hilly, the advent of electric bikes makes this less of a barrier to their use.)
- The 'Active Travel Route along the Hogs Back' should also be labelled as 'National Cycle Network Route 22', which provides a relatively quiet connecting route to Farnham
- The 'Christmas Pie Trail' coming into Applegarth Avenue should be added to the map. As shown on the map, there is an existing connection to the Trail from Blackwell Farm via a path using a subway under the railway, making a useful green route through to Normandy

and Ash. Developer money should be sought from this development and the Ash development to improve the Christmas Pie Trail.

- We understand Surrey Research Park is a private estate. Thus 24x7 access must be negotiated for any cycle routes crossing this estate.
- The Active Travel Network is shown extending up to the new access from the 'improved junction' with the A31/A3. Details of this have yet to be specified, but the opportunity must be taken to facilitate safe passage for cyclists to reach the southern side (eg NCN22 down to Compton and onward to Farnham).

Section 7 Ash and Tongham (Active Travel Framework Fig 52)

- As noted for Blackwell Farm, the Christmas Pie Trail should be improved as the basis for a safe cycle route to Guildford (and also West to Farnham). A financial contribution should be mandated on the developer.

Section 8 Wisley Airfield (Active Travel Framework Fig 62)

- We note (Policy A35) "An off site cycle network to key destinations including Effingham Junction railway station, Horsley railway station/Station Parade, Ripley and Byfleet to be provided with improvements to a level that would be attractive and safe for the average cyclist"
- The Active Travel Routes to Horsley and Effingham are shown along roads which carry fast traffic at all times, and are especially busy rat runs at peak times, and could not be classed as safe without substantial changes and investment.
- The document does not seem to identify the significant 'cycle super highway' development proposed alongside the A3 between the Ockham and Cobham roundabouts as part of the Highways England M25 Junction 10 development scheme. The Wisley development must link seamlessly with this cycleway, and the developers could also be asked to contribute money to extend the scheme beyond its current limits, eg from the Ockham roundabout into Ripley, or from the Cobham Roundabout to Cobham town centre.
- With regard to the cyclists' connection to Byfleet, we observe that Muddy Lane footpath, providing a link under the M25 from Wisley Lane to Byfleet, has recently been redesignated as a bridleway, hence, with improvement, could provide part of the required connection.