

To consultations@tfl.gov.uk

### **North-South Cycle Superhighway (extension to Kings Cross) response**

This response to the consultation on the proposed Improvements on North-South Cycle Superhighway (extension to Kings Cross), is from Camden Cycling Campaign, the local borough group of London Cycling Campaign (LCC). We have over 500 members and represent the interests of cyclists living or working in the borough of Camden. We consulted members and others by email, on our website and on CycleScape about this issue.

We strongly support the proposal to continue the North-South Cycle Superhighway (CS6) to Kings Cross. But the quality of the southbound route on Farringdon Road needs many improvements to bring it up to the necessary standards. In our detailed response below, we emphasise the positive and negative aspects of the detailed design and make recommendations as to how they should be improved.

**Key:** → recommendation; +++ positive comment; --- negative comment

### **Proposals for Farringdon Road**

The drawings show two-stage right turns at several junctions (e.g. at Clerkenwell Road).

→We assume that these will be supported by low-level signals so that people on bikes know when they can move off in the second stage.

→A consistent treatment should be used where the cycle track crosses signalised junctions. For example, at the Charterhouse Street and Farringdon Street junction the southbound crossing is blue but not the northbound one. At Clerkenwell Road, the crossings are shown as 'Elephants Footprints'. We would prefer blue because it is now well known as an indication that cycles are crossing a junction.

---We object to the motorcycle and taxi parking inside the southbound stepped track on Farringdon Street, opposite Stonecutter Street.

### **Snow Hill/West Smithfield and Farringdon Street junction**

This junction links CS6 to the proposed GRID route on West Smithfield.

--- We are very concerned about the safety of cyclists and the difficult manoeuvres at this non-signalised junction.

Southbound cyclists on Farringdon Street are protected only by blue paint as they pass the junction, while they are sandwiched between left and right turning motor vehicles:

- cyclists are at risk of left hook from southbound motor vehicles turning into West Smithfield.
- and if the southbound motors wait to allow northbound motor vehicles to turn right, the latter may collide with southbound cycles that have continued across the junction.

For cyclists entering from Snow Hill and heading north, there are two 'uncontrolled' carriageway crossings.

We are not happy to rely on the traffic lights at the Charterhouse / Farringdon junction to provide natural breaks in the traffic flow, offering cycles time to cross. The northbound motor traffic also needs to be crossed and the Stonecutter Street junction is further away.

→ A cycle-only stage in the signals for cycles on Farringdon Road and cycles emerging from Snow Hill would overcome these issues.

→ It is essential to have 'Keep Clear' signs on both the northbound and southbound carriageways at the five points where cycles cross motors.

### **Charterhouse Street and Farringdon Street junction**

+++ Northbound cycles on Farringdon Street are protected by TfL's filtered version of 'hold the left turn'.

--- Southbound cycles have no effective protection from left hooks. Early release is insufficient. We understand that this part of Farringdon Street is not wide enough to hold the necessary signal island for 'hold the left', in which case, the left turn should be banned. This may result in a few more left turns into West Smithfield but these should be dealt with along with the others at that junction.

→ The cycle track through bus stop bypass south of this junction is very narrow. We can see no reason that the bus island can't be further out; traffic can pass buses if safe, and wait if not.

### **Greville Street junction**

This is where northbound cyclists leave Farringdon Road, heading via Greville Street into Saffron Hill.

Greville Street will be closed to motor vehicles while cycles ride one way westbound on the left of the carriageway.

→ Two-way cycling should be provided to enable southbound cycles on Hatton Garden to rejoin the route and to improve permeability in the area.

A new Toucan crossing is provided for cycles and pedestrians to cross over Farringdon Road between Cowcross Street and Greville Street.

→ The cycle crossing needs to be aligned in such a way that it links with the cycle track on Greville Street and helps northbound cycles on Farringdon Road to use it to cross into Cowcross Street.

We understand that TfL decided to split the route because they can't find room to provide good infrastructure for two-way cycling on the northern part of Farringdon Road. We also understand that the Greville Street junction may provide the best opportunity for branching off.

→ However, at this junction there looks to be room to provide support for northbound cycles instead of providing a bus lane for the small number of buses that use Farringdon Road. The provision for northbound cycling on Farringdon Road at least as far as Clerkenwell Road is essential.

--- At the bus stop north of Cowcross Street and another near to Clerkenwell Road, we strongly object to the proposal that cyclists should move out to overtake the bus at the stop.

→ We propose, ideally, a floating bus stop, but if this cannot fit in, a Royal College Street style bus stop with cyclists inside the stop and motor vehicles waiting behind the bus until it starts.

## **Clerkenwell Road junction**

This is where the planned GRID route we call 'Clerkenwell Boulevard' will cross Farringdon Road.

+++ The proposals for this junction look promising (with one exception):

- WB on Clerkenwell Road already has No Left for motor vehicles. It should be made clear that cycles can turn left.
- EB on Clerkenwell Road. A new No Left for motor vehicles is proposed (with a slip for cycles).
- SB on Farringdon Road. No Left turn for motors.
- --- NB on Farringdon Road. Risk of left hook (only protection is 'early release' )
- Early release on all arms– although not an adequate solution to left hook risk, should be a benefit on the other arms.
- two stage right turns provide all possible right turn movements.

--- The bus stop on the south side is too close to the junction. See the note above about our objection to cycles having to move out to pass stepped buses.

## **Ray Street and Farringdon Road junction**

At this junction the following measures are proposed:

- southbound cycles exiting from Ray Street move onto a stepped track on the east side of Farringdon Road
- Ray Street will become one-way westbound for motors; there will be a contraflow cycle lane.
- Cycles emerging from Ray Street and from Ray Street bridge will have a separate signal stage.

→ It is essential that the traffic signals should allow sufficient time in the rush hours to allow each batch of cycles to exit Ray Street in one go.

- Southbound cycles on Farringdon Road are at risk of left hooks as motor vehicles turn left into Ray Street bridge. In addition, northbound cycles on Farringdon Road are at risk of left hooks as motor vehicles turn left into Ray Street.

→ Blue paint markings across the junction should help to clarify that some cycles will cross.

## **Farringdon Road north of Ray Street Junction**

For people heading north east it would be convenient to be able to follow a route along Farringdon Road and Rosebery Avenue.

→ Therefore all efforts need to be made to make this route safe.

## **Camden Section of the route CS6**

→ Wherever cycles pass parking spaces, particularly on narrow streets (e.g. Saffron Hill) there must be cycle icons painted on the road as these tend to encourage 'taking the lane' and also discourage aggressive tailgating and/or dangerous overtaking. Some streets show these but others do not.

We assume that the roads will be resurfaced. There are currently some unpleasant surfaces, particularly in Saffron Hill.

### **Northbound via Saffron Hill and Herbal Hill.**

+++ We approve of the following measures:

- Motor traffic to be reduced on Saffron Hill by making Kirby Street one way northbound.
- Junction priorities changed at Saffron Hill with St Cross Street giving priority to northbound cyclists.

But we are concerned about a potential rat run by northbound motors along Saffron Hill - Herbal Hill – Warner Street – Phoenix Place that may be used as a shortcut to avoid congestion on Farringdon Road (entering via St Cross Street and exiting Calthorpe Street into King's Cross Road).

→ We suggest that this could be remedied by making St Cross Street no 'Entry Except Cycles' at Farringdon Road.

There is a potential conflict between eastbound motor vehicles and northbound cycles at the Greville Street and Saffron Hill junction.

→ There should be a 'Give Way' for the eastbound vehicles.

+++ We approve the following measures:

- Herbal Hill to be raised to footway level throughout to balance space for pedestrians and cyclists
- Carriageway to be a uniform width of 2.5m and footways provided in a contrasting colour and material

But we are concerned about the increased risk of conflict between cycles and pedestrians on this downhill road.

→ We suggest signage to indicate 'shared space'.

The consultation is not specific about the 'increased waiting and loading restrictions' on Herbal Hill.

→ It is essential that the hours should be strictly limited to avoid the problem that arises when motor vehicles block Herbal Hill at least at peak periods..

### **Saffron Hill–Herbal Hill and Clerkenwell Road junction**

+++ Junction raised to footway level to provide level surface for pedestrians and reduce vehicle speeds.

New signals are proposed. These are very close to the signals at Farringdon Road and we wondered whether it makes sense to delay the cycles on the heavily used E-W route ('Clerkenwell Boulevard'). Could this be alleviated by providing sensors for the northbound cycles? Ideally we would like the junction to provide the following order of priorities: 1) northbound cyclists, 2) east and westbound cyclists, 3) all movements of motor vehicles.

### **Herbal Hill, Ray Street and Warner Street junction**

This is where the northbound cycles on Herbal Hill join the southbound cycles on Warner Street.

Cycles on Herbal Hill will give way and then make a simple left turn to follow the route. There appears to be no likelihood of conflict with southbound cycles that will head east on Ray Street.

### **Warner Street and Phoenix Place**

We approve of the new flat-topped tables and of the change in priority at the junction with Mount Pleasant to give priority to the North-South route for cyclists

### **Calthorpe Street- Pakenham Street- Wren Street- Phoenix Place junction**

+++ We are in favour of the proposals:

- to close Pakenham Street at Calthorpe Street to motor vehicles, forcing the few southbound motor vehicles to use Wren Street.
- for separate alignments for the two cycle routes through the triangle, allowing LCN route 0 (SSL) to access Pakenham Street before it becomes too narrow for the infrastructure needed with the current flow of motor vehicles

→ But the priority of the junction should be changed so as to give priority to the CS 6 route across Calthorpe Street between Pakenham Street and Phoenix Place.

→ As traffic currently backs up westbound due to the width restriction and may do so eastbound for the zebra a 'Keep Clear' should be installed across the road at the top of Warner Street.

### **Change of priority Cubitt Street and Pakenham Street**

+++ We approve of this long-overdue measure.

### **Cycle path between Cubitt Street and Ampton Street**

→ This is already narrow for its current use, so it needs to be widened.

### **Sidmouth Street- Street-Ampton Street to Grays Inn Road junction**

+++ We approve the proposal to widen the two-way cycle only track at the western end of Ampton Street. The central bollard should be retained to prevent motor vehicles from using it.

→ The widening should be generous (LCDS 2 Section 4.4 recommends 3m for medium flow and 4m+ for high flow – above 2000 per day).

Currently, westbound cycles emerging from Ampton Street have their own separate signal, whereas eastbound cycles are at risk of left hook.

Ideally east and westbound cycles should run in parallel in a separate signal but we are aware that with Sidmouth Street's width of about 7.75m this is unlikely to be feasible.

We approve of the proposal for elephants footprints across the junction and for an early release and hope this is sufficient to alleviate the risk of left hooks. We have not yet seen eastbound motor vehicle flow figures since the Tavistock Place trial was installed but with low flows, this should be acceptable.

## **Sidmouth Street**

+++ We like the width restriction east of Regents Square in which motor vehicles have to alternate in their use of a narrowed carriageway with cycle bypasses. But we wonder whether any benefit can be gained from making the table on the west side so long.

→ The design is suitable for a street with low motor traffic flows, therefore it may be necessary to reduce these flows, for example to one-way westbound.

→ All guard rails should be removed, not just by the width restriction. For example, there are some near the church between Regent's Square and Wakefield Street.

Regarding the new informal crossing west of Regents Square: we understand that it may be more convenient for pedestrians if it were to be placed at the location where it is proposed to remove the refuge islands.

## **Tavistock Place- Judd Street-Hunter Street junction**

It would be better (than offering early release) to eliminate hook risks by running the westbound movements in the same signal stage as eastbound cyclists heading east and turning north/south.

The signals currently have four stages:

1. Vehicles emerging from Judd Street and Hunter Street;
2. Vehicles emerging from Tavistock Place west of junction;
3. Vehicles emerging from Tavistock Place east of junction;
4. Pedestrian all green stage.

The only westbound movement for motors in (Stage 3) is to turn left into Hunter Street. As westbound motors and cycles are forced to use the narrow lane in turn, there are no conflicts in this direction.

→ We have an alternative proposal for stages 2 and 3:

2. Motor vehicles emerging from Tavistock Place west of junction;
3. Cycles emerging from Tavistock Place west of junction together with vehicles emerging from Tavistock Place east of junction;

Most cycles on the Tavistock Place alignment will be going east- and westbound. Any eastbound cycles turning right into Hunter Street will need to merge with the left turning westbound motors.

Northbound cycles on CS6 will need to turn right into Judd Street in stage 3. They will have to give way to eastbound cycles emerging from Tavistock Place. A right turning pocket may be appropriate.

The narrowing on Tavistock Place east of this junction is effective in ensuring that all vehicles proceed in single file, but it is too narrow. The island could be narrowed.

## **Judd Street**

+++ The motor traffic flows on this street need to be reduced to make it suitable for shared use. For that reason we are strongly in favour of:

- a closure at Euston Road as proposed in the Midland Road consultation
- the closure of Lansdowne Terrace as proposed in the Brunswick Square consultation

We approve of the raised junctions and control of parking/loading near to junctions.

Jean Dollimore, Camden Cycling Campaign Committee