

Earlham Street Consultation Response

This response to the consultation on the proposed Public Realm Improvements in Earlham Street is from Camden Cycling Campaign, the local borough group of London Cycling Campaign (LCC). We represent the interests of cyclists living or working in the borough of Camden. We consulted our members by email and online (using Cyclescape) on this issue and this response reflects the views of the membership.

Context

Earlham Street is currently one-way westbound. In 2014, the junction with Shaftesbury Avenue was closed to through motor traffic. This was a very successful measure and improved the area considerably for both cyclists and pedestrians.

General

We agree with the scheme in principle but are concerned that it provides limited benefits for cyclists and may result in conflict between pedestrians and cyclists in the pedestrianised area. We welcome the implication that two-way cycling will be allowed between Tower Street and Shaftesbury Avenue and ask that this be extended as far as Seven Dials.

Specific Comments

Tower Street to Shaftesbury Avenue

As long as cycling is permitted in both directions and the kerb is dropped, we do not object to this section looking like predominantly pedestrian space. But it is important that pedestrians are made aware of the likely presence of cyclists and that the area not be blocked by tables and chairs. This could be done by clearly demarcating a cycle area by use of different texture and/or colour and by using logos. A compromise might be for the footway of Shaftesbury Avenue to be continuous and extended back into Earlham Street, but for the carriageway treatment to start again some way before the junction with Tower Street. To enable cyclists to enter from Shaftesbury Avenue northbound, the existing gap in the median should be opened up (remove one section of railing).

Tower Street to Seven Dials

As part of these works we ask that two-way cycling be allowed, as Camden has done on many other lightly-trafficked streets. In fact, if cyclists are allowed to enter from Shaftesbury Avenue this would be a natural movement. This could be done in a lightweight fashion, with road markings at the Seven Dials end and a sign 960.1 to indicate to motorists that cyclists may approach from in front. To enable this, we believe that the carriageway width may need to be increased from the proposed 3m to 3.5 or 4m.

Wider Area

We would also like to ask for a more extensive experimental scheme to prevent rat-running through Seven Dials, and to reduce through traffic enough to allow two-way cycling on all the roads around Seven Dials.

This could be achieved by putting bollards across Seven Dials between the corner of Mercer St North and Earlham St East, and the corner of Mercer St South and Earlham St West (and keeping the existing one-ways for

motor vehicles, with some adjustment to priorities at Seven Dials itself).

Please would you acknowledge receipt of this response. We would be very happy to discuss any aspect of our comments; contact details are below.

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