

Comments on the Proposed Central London Cycling Grid

To grid@tfl.gov.uk and Camden Council (John Futcher, Simi Shah, Sam Longman and Cllr. Phil Jones)

We restrict ourselves to comments on the proposed routes in Camden, the Regents Park Outer Circle and the links over the borders into neighbouring boroughs. Our response is under the following sections:

- Our feedback on each of the routes on the CLCG map
- Routes that should be completed by the end of 2014-15
- The difficult barriers to be overcome
- Regents Park Outer Circle
- Gaps in the network

Our feedback on each of the routes on the CLCG map

The east- west routes from north-south (our own labels):

EW 1 - Jamestown Rd - Hawley Crescent

This links Arlington Road to Kentish Town Road. The implementation of two-way cycling in Hawley Crescent is urgently needed to provide continuity in the former LCN+ 6a route and as part of the canal alternative route.

EW 2 - Delancey - Pratt

Roads: Outer Circle (north side), Delancey Street, Pratt Street

This is important because it is a main east-west desire line across Camden Town as well as being part of the canal alternative route. In addition it has become specially important because of the barriers to implementing contraflow cycling along Crowndale Road between Cobden junction and Bayham Street.

The Outer Circle could become a quietway if the campaign to remove rat-running from the Outer Circle is successful. <http://www.trafficfreeregentspark.org.uk/>.

The main barriers to EW 2 are the junctions at:

Parkway/Delancey/Oval Road/Albany/Prince Albert/Gloucester Gate

Camden High Street/Delancey/Pratt

and Bayham Street/Pratt Street

EW 3

Roads: Oakley Square - Crowndale Road - Pancras Road - Goodsway

This is important because it provides another east-west link across Camden Town.

The road under the CTRL bridge is an essential link north of Euston Road and urgently requires an upgrade. We are pleased to have been consulted on the design studies.

EW 4 - western extension of EW 3

Roads: Phoenix Road - Brill Place - Goodsway

A route parallel to Euston Road is needed. Midland Road north of Brill Place is two-way for cycling. All that we need to do is to get a bridge over Euston Station to Robert Street. This is promised as a by product of HS2 at Euston Station, but we object strongly to HS2. See our response at www.cyclescape.org/issues/980

EW 5 - SSL - LCN 0

Roads: Howland Street, Torrington Place, Tavistock Place, Ampton Street

From the proposal:

'Cycle streets' closed or restricted to through-traffic

Most of the Quietways are on streets where there is little or relatively little traffic. But we are suggesting some of the busier secondary streets, where there is heavy cycle demand, are closed or restricted to through-traffic to make them more cycle-friendly. Camden is currently investigating this for Tavistock Place and Torrington Place in Bloomsbury - already a very popular and overcrowded cycle route.

This is an important route, heavily used at peak times with safety issues as well as lack of capacity. See our video: 'the Tavistock place Cycle Tracks' via the page <http://www.camdencyclists.org.uk/camden/campaigns/ssl-upgrade/>

We are pleased that LB Camden has funding for a trial scheme (to eliminate all through motor traffic and hence make the road suitable for cycling) that will be used as feasibility for longer term scheme.

EW 6 - SSL relief route

Roads: Montague Place, Russell Square, Guilford Street, Calthope Street

This route should start from Rathbone Place (Westminster) and follow Percy Street, Bayley Street and the north side of Bedford Square. We are pleased that LB Camden has funding for changes to signals at Russell Square

SE corner to provide cycle phase. Other measures needed are a two-way crossing over Tottenham Court Road and some traffic reduction in Guilford Street-Calthorpe Street.

EW 7- Clerkenwell Boulevard

Roads: Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury Way, Theobalds Road, Clerkenwell Road

From the proposal:

Holborn - Old Street roundabout corridor

'Wands' separating westbound cyclists from oncoming eastbound traffic will be installed by the London Borough of Camden early in the New Year along the contraflow bus lane in Vernon Place and Bloomsbury Way, allowing westbound cyclists to use it and to avoid the Holborn gyratory. Medium and longer-term solutions to this gyratory are being investigated.

East of here, the Theobald's Road - Clerkenwell Road - Old Street corridor from Holborn to Old Street roundabout is one of the most heavily-cycled routes in London (more than 50 per cent of the westbound traffic in the morning peak is bicycles, and 64 per cent at the western end). However, it is busy with other traffic and there is no quiet side-street to use as an alternative route. Fully-segregated cycle tracks will also be difficult here because of the narrowness of the road and the large numbers of bus stops along it.

The three councils responsible for the area – Camden, Islington and Hackney – and TfL will undertake a study into how cycle facilities can be safely implemented on this corridor and to address the impacts of traffic. No options have been ruled in or out.

We are pleased that LB Camden has already used funding to open the contraflow bus lane to cyclists and has funding to carry out a trial road closure in Great Russell Street. The following comments apply to Bloomsbury Way, Theobalds Road and Clerkenwell Road.

- Bicycles represent over half of all vehicles at peak times but these roads are too narrow to provide 'space for cycling' as well as accommodating the current flow of motor vehicles.
- The current road traffic volumes of over 10,000 motor vehicles per day require segregation for cyclists (it is LCC Official Policy that cyclists should be segregated when there are more than 2,000 PCUs per day).
- The volume of motor traffic needs to be reduced so that either the flows go below 2,000 PCUs per day or sufficient road space can be reclaimed to provide separated cycle tracks.
- The junction at Southampton Row is a major barrier.

We urge LBs Camden and Islington to work jointly on a study on preventing private motors from travelling through this alignment, while allowing some local access. The aim should be to complete this study and to put experimental closures in place by March 2015.

Any scheme to reduce through traffic on EW 7 must be designed to prevent displacement onto other routes e.g. EW 5 and EW 6.

The north-south routes from west to east (our own labels):

NS 1- Outer Circle (east side) , Park Square east, Wesminster

A popular and useful route through Regents Park which could be regarded as a quietway provided that through journeys by private motors are eliminated.

NS 2: Oval Road-Newton Street

Roads: Oval Road, Regents Park Road, Park Village East, Cardington Street, Melton Street, Gordon Street, Malet Street, Bury Place, Newton Street

An urgently needed link into the centre from the west eventually joining LCN+ 6.

The main barrier to this route is the junction

- Parkway/Delancey/Oval Road/Albany/Prince Albert/Gloucester Gate

This needs to be modified to allow two-way cycling in Park Village East.

NS 3- Arlington Street, Hampstead Road, TCR or Gower Street

For Hampstead Road, we support lightweight segregation and a 20 mph speed limit to make the junctions safer. Currently Euston Circus is unsuitable for a quietway crossing – with potential left hooks on this route. If HS2 makes a hole in NS 2 this route is going to be essential.

We are unable to comment further on the choice between TCR and Gower Street until we know more about the relative merits of TCR and Gower Street for cycling under the West End Project.

NS4 - LCN+ Route 6

Roads: Royal College Street, St Pancras Way and then either:

Mabledon place, Marchmont Street OR Judd Street, Hunter Street, Lambs Conduit, Red Lion Street and on to Lincolns Inn Fields.

A popular north-south route crossing Route 0. High priority because RCS has been upgraded and number of users has increased and 'advanced funding' has been awarded for northern and southern extensions.

We are pleased that LB Camden already has funding to continue the treatment used in RCS from Crowndale Road to Goods Way junction with Midland Road and are pleased to have been consulted on the details. An urgent next step is to get a design and implementation of two-way cycling in Midland Road and a crossing over Euston Road into Judd Street.

Routes that should be completed by the end of 2014-15

We hope to see half of the CLCG in Camden up and running by the end of 2014-15. LB Camden has done well to achieve funding for several 'ready to go' projects. We therefore urge them to complete the following work in the first year and to be ready to obtain funding for the remaining work in completing these routes and the others listed above:

- EW 2 - Delancey - Pratt: at least the part east of Arlington Road in year 1 and the rest by the end of year 2
- EW 3 - Oakley Square
- EW 5 - SSL: complete the trial
- NS 2 - Oval Road-Newton Street: particularly Park Village East
- NS4 - LCN+ Route 6
- Great Russell St trial closure.

GEW 7- Clerkenwell Boulevard we put very high priority on a feasibility study of elimination through private motor traffic and the subsequent experimental closures.

The difficult barriers to be overcome

The following junctions are major barriers to completion of the CLCG in Camden

- Parkway/Delancey/Oval Road/Albany/Prince Albert/Gloucester Gate
- Camden High Street/Delancey/Pratt
- Bayham Street/Pratt Street
- Midland Road/Euston Road/Judd Street
- Midland Road/Pancras Road
- Southmpton Row/Vernon Place/Theobalds Road

We urge TfL to adopt a more experimental way of working so as to avoid the delays associated with works on junctions, particularly on the TLRN. In particular EW 2 is an absolutely essential link in the CLCG; it would be totally unacceptable for TfL to model it for six months and then pronounce it unfeasible because there is no useful alternative.

We have studied the cycle segregated junction approach and believe that it would be the best solution on at least three of the above junctions. We urge TfL to expedite the documentation for cycle segregated junctions and to encourage their use.

Regents Park Outer Circle

The Outer Circle could become a quietway if the campaign to remove through motor traffic from the Outer Circle is successful. <http://www.trafficfreeregentspark.org.uk/>. This is already supported by Camden Council and we urge TfL to push Crown Estates Paving Commission to start trial closures urgently.

Gaps in the Network

We have identified the following discontinuities:

There are missing links into Camden from the Westminster route on Marlborough Street. Following discussion with Colin Wing (Westminster Cycling Campaign), we propose both of the following:

A: a contraflow up Rathbone Place linking to Percy Street, Bayley Street and the north side of Bedford Square

B: Via Hanway Street to Great Russell Street

Westminster's Victoria Line route (via Cleveland Street) should cross into Osnaburgh Street, but on the TfL CLCG map stops at Euston Road. It should link to Robert Street via Stanhope Street.

Chester Gate: links east-west route on Robert Street to the Outer Circle.

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