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Consultation on improvements in Prince of Wales Road

This response to Camden Council's proposals for walking, cycling and road safety improvements in Prince of Wales Road is from Camden Cycling Campaign, the local borough group of London Cycling Campaign. We represent the interests of cyclists living or working in Camden and aim to expand the opportunities for all to cycle safely in the borough. We have discussed this consultation by email and online (using Cyclescape) and at our members' meeting on 20th August.

Introduction

We are strongly in support of the proposal for a westbound cycle track on Prince of Wales Road (PoW) and also of the proposed improvements at the junctions with Malden Road and Haverstock Hill.

However, to quote the consultation, "The London Strategic Cycling Analysis 2017, identifies Prince of Wales Road as currently being in the top 5-10% of roads in the London road network with the highest cycle flows". In addition Prince of Wales Road is identified in Camden's draft borough-wide cycle network as a "Secondary Proposed Route".

Without an eastbound track on Prince of Wales Road, this is only half a scheme. A complete scheme would enable students to travel between their homes in Kentish Town and Haverstock School – a journey of about 1.5 miles, just right for cycling. We therefore encourage Camden to provide an eastbound route on PoW as an urgent follow up measure. The alternative eastbound route via Queen's Crescent is useful as a temporary measure but would be indirect for people on some routes, e.g. those heading for Royal College Street. Also, the most convenient route using Queens Crescent crosses Malden Road at Marsden Street but that crossing isn't safe for inexperienced cyclists.

In the remainder of our response, we discuss the following topics:

1. Road space for an eastbound cycle track and questioning parking stress.
2. Future proofing.
3. Detailed improvements.

1. Road space for an eastbound cycle track and parking stress

To quote the consultation: "there is not enough road width to allow for a cycle track in both directions on PoW without removing a substantial amount of residents' parking".

We understand that in PoW, the number of permits matches the number of parking bays. But that in the side streets there is a surplus of bays. For example, Hadley Street has 57 spaces and just 38 resident permit holders; Healey Street 35/23, Ryland Road 55/35. There is often very little parking on main roads in Camden, so residents park in side streets. There is no reason why this should not also apply on PoW.

2. Future proofing

Prince of Wales Road eastbound route

The removal of parking bays on the north side of PoW would make 2m of road width available for an eastbound cycle track. We request that the current design should be checked so that it does not preclude the installation of an eastbound cycle track. For example, the potential position of an eastbound track should be taken into account when making build outs at informal pedestrian crossings.

Width of the westbound cycle track is at absolute minimum

To quote the consultation: "Introduction of a 1.5m wide, segregated westbound cycle lane with 0.5m buffer between the track and parking bays". From LCDS:

Minimum widths for one way cycle tracks: Fig 4.11 (page 52)

very low/low flow 1.5 m

medium flow 2.2 m.

high/very high flow 2.5m +

Peak hour flows on one way track. Fig 2.12 (page 54)

Very low <100

low 100-200

medium 200-800

Current numbers of cycles are in the category "very low". Once good infrastructure is in place it is likely that numbers will increase and we're going to need a wider track. We have the following suggestions:

- I. Squeeze a few more centimetres wherever the southern footway is over 2.5 m and the design is already cutting into the existing kerbline e.g. between the railway bridge and Malden Road.
- II. The northern footway is about 3 m wide between St Silas Place and Grafton Road. Push the westbound track further out into the road on the assumption that the eastbound track will be allowed to encroach on the northern footway.
- III. Put the parking buffer zone on the cycle track and mark it to indicate that people should not cycle in it.

Primary Proposed Route on Haverstock Hill

Haverstock Hill is identified in Camden's draft borough-wide cycle network as a "Primary Proposed Route". Sheet 1 of the consultation design drawing shows some evidence of future planning with an advisory cycle lane¹ to the south of the Haverstock Hill/PoW junction.

But while this junction is being improved it is essential to make space for a 2m northbound mandatory cycle lane on Haverstock Hill. Space can be made for this by shifting the island eastwards so as to equalise the width of the north and southbound lanes at about 5.25 m. This would leave space for segregated tracks in both directions to be added at a later date.

3. Detailed improvements

The cycle signal by-passes - no shared space

We were very pleased to see the by-pass allowing southbound cyclists on Haverstock Hill to cut round behind the signal into PoW.

We don't like shared space because it leaves priorities undefined and has caused problems in other schemes. We think that priorities should be made clear and suggest that the by-pass

¹ All cycle lanes should be mandatory

consists of a cycle lane (segregated by raised borders) on which cyclists have priority and that the 'shared space' should be replaced by a zebra crossing at which cyclists must give way to pedestrians.

The same suggestion applies to the bypass allowing westbound cyclists to cut round behind the signal into Malden Crescent.

Blended junctions

Blended junctions provide continuous paths for cyclists and for pedestrians across minor road junctions. This means that the footway and cycle track are much more conspicuous and a driver has to take their motor vehicle over a hump when crossing the paths of cycles and pedestrians. As far as we know there are none of these in Camden at present and there is opportunity to remedy that in this scheme. We would like to see blended junctions at Hadley Street, Harmond Street, Crogsland Road, Truro Street and Craddock Street.

Getting into and out of the westbound track from northern junctions

This applies mainly to the westbound cycle track opposite Talacre Road and Ryland Road.

Talacre Road (sheet 5 of the design drawing): there needs to be a break in the parking and a ramp onto the cycle track to enable people to turn right out of Talacre Road and enter the westbound track and to turn right out of the westbound track and enter Talacre Road.

Ryland Road (sheet 7 of the design drawing): people can leave the westbound track at Healey Street but it is not clear how people turning right from Ryland Road will enter the track.

Malden Road Junction

We welcome the proposed tightening of the geometry at this junction and the reduction from two to one approach lanes on PoW eastbound and on Malden Crescent. But we are concerned that left hook risks still remain on three approaches. The provision of a protected cycle track as is proposed on PoW westbound should always be accompanied by measures to make junctions free of major risks such as this.

The least that should be done is to provide early release signals for cycles on all the affected arms. For these to be effective it is essential that the feeder lanes at this junction are made mandatory as mentioned below.

The AM and PM cycle counts show that significant numbers of people cycle eastbound on PoW across Malden Road and the improvements are likely to attract more. We therefore suggest that the left turn for motor vehicles into Malden Road should be banned.

Mandatory cycle lanes

All cycle lanes should be mandatory. We are pleased to note (from sheet 1 of the design drawing), that the southbound advisory lane on Haverstock Hill is to be changed to mandatory.

But we are disappointed to see the following proposals for advisory cycle lanes:

At the Haverstock Hill junction (sheet 1 of the design drawing):

Southbound cycle lane on Haverstock Hill down to the bus lane.

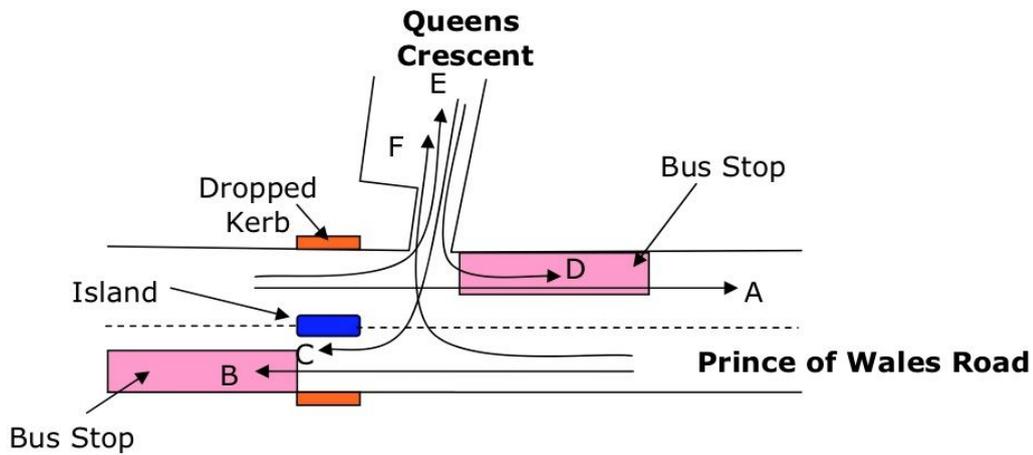
At the Malden Road junction (sheet 3 of the design drawing):

Eastbound feeder on PoW.

Westbound cycle lane on PoW west of the junction.

Queen's Crescent cycle gap through road closure

Our cycle counts carried out during the am and pm peaks on a weekday² show that this cycle gap is used mainly by people turning left from PoW and turning right out of Queen's Crescent: movements E and C in the figure below.



<i>Movement</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>
<i>Description</i>	PoW EB	PoW WB	QC to PoW WB	QC to PoW EB	PoW EB to QC	PoW WB to QC
<i>a.m.</i>	43	48	16	4	4	0
<i>p.m.</i>	13	10	9	0	5	1

To avoid conflicts between pedestrians and turning cyclists, we repeat our previously stated concern that the pedestrian crossing should be on the the east side of the cycle crossing (not on the west side as shown on sheet 2 of the design drawing). To aid westbound cyclists turning into Queen's Crescent the turn into the track should be made much less sharp.

Please 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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² a.m. was 30/1/18 0800-0900 p.m. was 22/1/18 1615-1715