

To: safetravel@camden.gov.uk; Anthony Christofi

Southampton Row and Theobalds Road Safe and Healthy Streets

This response to the consultation on the above proposals from Camden Council 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).

We commend Camden for acting with urgency regarding the safety of this junction following the death in August of Dr Marta Krawiec from a collision with an HGV as she cycled into the junction on Southampton Row. The interim measures installed in October were a first step designed to prevent a similar collision. We welcome this consultation on a more permanent scheme to further improve safety for all of the cycling movements across this junction.

We strongly support the proposed design which has no critical failures (e.g. left hooks) and no banned turns, as shown in our JAT study outlined in Appendix 1.

Our comments on each of the proposals:

- The new northbound segregated cycle track on Southampton Row on entry to and exit from the junction provides a safe crossing for northbound cyclists since there is no risk of left hooks – the northbound motors are not allowed to turn left into Vernon Place
- The new cycle gate southbound on Southampton Row (N) at the junction with Theobald's Road should enable cyclists to cross the junction without interaction with the motor vehicles behind them. However, we are not convinced that the delayed release of motor vehicles on the Southampton Row (S) approach is sufficient to avoid conflicts between southbound cycles and right turning northbound motor vehicles.
- The re-positioning of the bus stop away from the approach to the cycle gate is useful.
- The ASL box with early release on the Vernon Place arm enables cycles already in the ASL box to get across the junction before the buses behind them. But cycles arriving late may be squeezed out by buses or taxis heading for the bus lane in Theobalds Road.
- The re-alignment of the pedestrian crossing over Vernon Place has the advantages of allowing northbound cycles to turn left or wait for a two-stage right turn as well as providing a direct crossing for pedestrians.
- Early release for buses and cycles in the contraflow bus lane on Theobalds Road. This will help to reduce conflict between cyclists who are at the front and right-turning motor vehicles coming from Vernon Place. But if the lane is occupied, cycles may not be able to reach the ASL and sometimes, if buses are backed up on Vernon Place, the lane does not clear during a signal cycle (see below).
- The full time bus, cycle and taxi lanes on Theobalds Road as far as Lamb's Conduit Street and on Southampton Row from the junction to Catton Street are welcome, because it is better to share only with buses and taxis although not as good as a cycle lane.
- The removal of all guard railing is very important for the safety of cyclists and the convenience of pedestrians. The rails surrounding the EB bus lane on Theobalds Road can form a cage trapping cyclists behind a stationary bus.
- The two-stage right turns provide a safe solution for anyone who can't manage a single stage right turn due to the conflicts they encounter while crossing the junction – mostly due to arriving when the signal is already on green.

Our proposals for enhancements:

- Two stage right turns: people waiting in the allocated positions will not know when they can move forwards because they will not be able to see the low-level signals. We suggest that the state of the cycle signal should be shown on a repeater pole opposite.
- Cyclists in the contraflow bus lane on Theobalds Road need a route past buses that are not moving forward, for example when there is a bus in Vernon Place that isn't moving.
- The bus lane on Vernon Place is for buses and cycles only whereas the proposed bus lanes on Theobalds Road and on Southampton Row are to be shared with taxis as well. We would prefer that cycles should not have to share with taxis.

Limitations of this design and its context:

We would like to see a junction that is suitable for all cyclists with protected cycle lanes and dedicated signal stages for cycles on all of its four arms. Two stage right turns are not a satisfactory solution especially where there is substantial demand; it slows cycling journeys to maintain motoring journey times and in any case there will not be room or turning space for large numbers of cycles or some non-standard bikes.

A set of dedicated cycle signal stages would allow all the cycle movements including right turns to be made in a single stage and without any interaction with motor vehicles – in this case, opposing vehicles turning right.

So long as westbound cycles have to use the contraflow bus lane, this junction cannot be made suitable for all cyclists.

However welcome the improvements are, the area will remain unsafe for cycling until the whole of the gyratory is replaced, as in the proposals for the Holborn Liveable Neighbourhood.

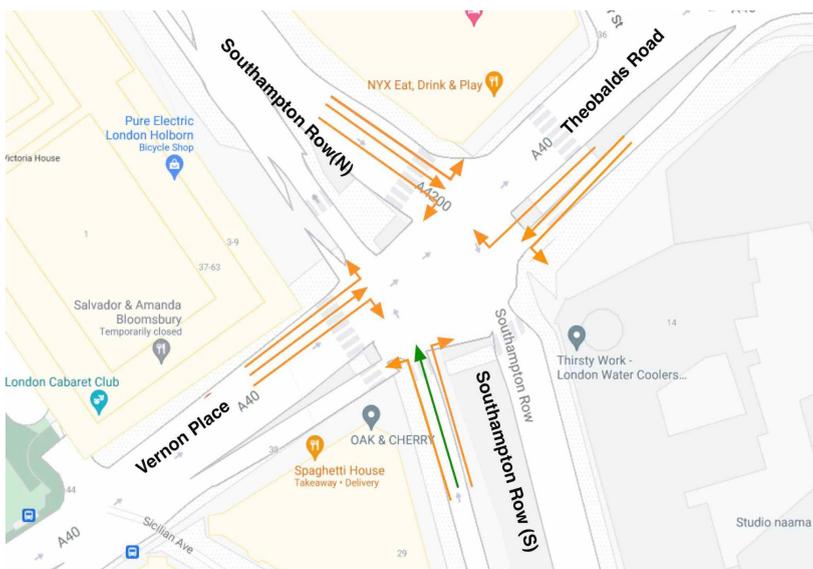
Please acknowledge receipt of this response. We would be very happy to discuss any aspect of our comments; contact details are below.

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Appendix 1: JAT assessment of the design (See LTN 1/20 Appendix B)



See our detailed study of the proposals in the web post [here](#).

This diagram shows the scores for each movement across the junction. All but one of the scores are amber, with a total of 13/24.

An amber score indicates that the movement is suitable for most cyclists whereas a movement with a green score would be suitable for all cyclists (new, young or old).

Notation and scoring for cycle movements:

	X: Banned movement: unacceptable
	0: Conditions likely to give rise to the most common type of collisions
	1: Suitable for most cyclists (70%)
	2: Suitable for new, young, old cyclists (100%)

Scores	
Vernon Place	3/6
Southampton Row (N)	3/6
Southampton Row (S)	4/6
Theobalds Road	3/6
Total	13/24