

# Kings Cross Road and Pentonville Road safety improvement scheme

24th March 2023

To: [haveyoursay@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:haveyoursay@tfl.gov.uk)

CC: *Camden and Islington officers*

This is a joint response from Action Vision Zero, London Cycling Campaign, London Living Streets and Sustrans.

We would like to thank TfL for inviting us to the meeting on 10th March to discuss the scope of the Phase 1 work on the gyratory and the plans for the King's Cross Road/Northdown Street junction.

While we understand the financial constraints leading to a phased approach to the gyratory improvements, we urge TfL to prioritise road safety over other interventions such as those aimed at improving network performance. Far too many people continue to be killed or seriously injured, mainly at junctions. We therefore hope to see these improvements, as well as the subsequent phases, take place sooner than the currently outlined programme.

We invite TfL to revisit the decision made in 2018 to keep one-way working, particularly in the context of the Mayor's new targets for net zero. The removal of the King's Cross gyratory would be by far the best solution to simultaneously tackle a multitude of issues, and help towards all of the Mayor's Transport Strategy goals.

## **Phase 1**

Collision data for the five years 2017 - 2021 shows that the section of the Ring Road between Pancras Road and Kings Cross Road is very dangerous for both pedestrians and cyclists. The KSIs are clustered at the four junctions (the two just mentioned, plus York Way and Caledonian Road) and include two pedestrian fatalities. The imminent reduction of the speed limit to 20mph is an important first step to support the Mayor's Vision Zero policies in this area. But each one of these junctions also needs to be significantly redesigned to ensure the safety and convenience of all vulnerable road users.

Bearing in mind TfL's overall decision to keep the gyratory one-way and to incorporate pedestrian and cycling improvements, the main needs of people walking and cycling are:

- For people walking and those using wheelchairs and mobility scooters:
  - To ensure compliance with the new lower speed limit within the context of a retained one-way (and often multi-lane) gyratory system.
  - To ensure the provision of frequent safe, fully accessible and direct formal crossing provision (with pedestrian stages on all arms).
  - The highest priority is the Pancras Road / Euston Road junction. Pedestrians heading south from King's Cross Station have to cross four sets of lights (two over Pancras Road, two over Euston Road). The long waits lead to people ignoring the green man at considerable risk. As a matter of urgency, the proposed pedestrian crossing from the east side of Pancras Road to Belgrove Street should be installed and there should be a single direct crossing of Pancras Road. In the longer term, the south end of Pancras Road should be closed to motor traffic. Motor vehicles can enter and exit from the North.

- For people cycling:
  - The enabling of safe and protected north-south movements across Euston Road and Pentonville Road, the most important being to link the cycle routes on York Way and Grays Inn Road in as direct a way as possible.
  - The provision of a high-quality protected cycle route in both directions on Euston Road and Pentonville Road. The east-west route on Tavistock Place – almost 400m away is no substitute. LTN 1/20 Appendix A recommends a cycle network mesh width of not more than 250m – over 1,000m receiving a zero/red score in the DfT's Cycling Level of Service.

The King's Cross area as a whole needs urgent work for people walking and cycling, not only to improve safety but also to enable mode shift and ensure safe and attractive options to access public transport in the area – bus, tube and train. We therefore wish to convey to TfL the urgency of completing all of the work described in Phase 1 without further delay, including the following:

- High-quality pedestrian and cycle crossings over Euston Road and Pentonville Road at Pancras Road, York Way/Gray's Inn Road, Caledonian Road/King's Cross Bridge and King's Cross Road. This includes addressing pedestrian crossings with missing arms.
- With-flow and contraflow protected cycle lanes on Gray's Inn Road between Euston Road and Ferdinand Street.
- To propose shared space only where there are no technically viable alternatives.

### **Kings Cross Road and Pentonville Road Junction**

The design for the junction at King's Cross Road, currently under consultation, is too weak. In particular we are very concerned about:

- The extensive use of shared space on both footways and over the Toucan crossing. There appears to be ample space to accommodate separate pedestrian and cycle crossings.
- The lack of consideration for east-west cycling e.g. eastbound cycles are at risk of being squeezed as buses move into the bus lane beyond Northdown Street; and the westbound cycle lane is very narrow; while anyone turning into King's Cross Road must face two-tier provision.

These and other issues need to be fixed to support Vision Zero goals.

We look forward to your comments on the above and to working with you at the earliest opportunity on future phases of this scheme and on Safer Junctions projects more generally. We hope to be able to support a scheme here when amendments have been made to the proposals, but until the scheme is improved, we do not believe it is good enough to actively support.

John Chamberlain and Jean Dollimore, *Camden Cycling Campaign*

Giulio Ferrini, *Sustrans*

David Harrison, *London Living Streets*

Nick Kocharhook, *Cycle Islington*

Jeremy Leach, *Action Vision Zero*

Simon Munk, *London Cycling Campaign*