

To: safetravel@camden.gov.uk

CC: Anthony Christofi and Sam Margolis

Haverstock Hill/ Rosslyn Hill Walking, Cycling and Road Safety Scheme Consultation Permanent Proposals

This response to the consultation on the above proposal 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 or travelling through Camden and aim to expand the opportunities for all to cycle safely in the borough. We discussed this consultation in detail at our May meeting and also in email.

Making the trial scheme permanent

We very much appreciate the extension up Haverstock Hill from Prince of Wales Road (PoW) almost to Pond Street of the wand-protected cycle route on Chalk Farm Road completed in April 2021. This provides an additional 2 km (1 km in each direction) of protected lanes to the Camden Cycle Network which now covers almost 29km.

We are therefore very strongly in favour of the proposal to make the trial scheme permanent with the following measures retained:

- Mostly 2-m wide cycle lanes, on both sides of Haverstock Hill (upgraded from wand-protection to stepped tracks).
- The removal of all parking and loading spaces from the cycle route (with some moved to side roads) to make space for the cycle lanes and the marking of the cycle route with double yellow lines and blips.
- The removal of all pedestrian refuges at informal crossings to make room for the cycle lanes. And the conversion of five of these crossings to four new zebra crossings and one new signalised crossing.
- The retention of two of the three SUBBs (shared use bus boarders) at the uphill bus stops and the replacement of the one by Glenloch Road by a bus stop bypass (further comments below).
- The provision of low-level signals, 'early release' and extended ASLs for bikes as well as 'pedestrian countdown' facilities at the junctions with England's Lane and Pond Street.

We have strong reservations about the loading bays on the east side of Haverstock Hill and return to this issue below.

The proposed changes to the scheme

Stepped tracks

We are strongly in favour of the replacement of the wand-protected cycle lanes by stepped tracks. These have become a standard for permanent protected cycle lanes in Camden since their first installation in Pancras Road in 2015 and their subsequent use in the Royal College Street northern extension, Midland Road, Gower Street and Goodsway. Although expensive to install, they make the optimum use of the available width and are very robust (e.g. judging by the Pancras Road tracks).

Continuous footways at side road junctions

The consultation lists six side roads that are to have continuous footways; the drawings show the blue-painted cycle track dropping to carriageway level as it crosses the junction i.e. at Eton Road (Drawing 1), Downside Crescent and Howitt Road (Drawing 6), Glenloch Road (Drawing 7), Aspern Grove (Drawing 8, between numbers 218 and 222) and Rowland Hill Street (Drawing 9). We are disappointed that other junctions will have a conventional treatment.

Give-Way lines on the side road (not shown on the drawings): the give way lines should be painted on the side road behind the continuous footway. This makes it less likely that motor vehicles leaving the side road will over-run into the cycle track. See for example [Ryland Road at PoW](#) and [Wilmot Place at St Pancras Way](#).

The level of the cycle lane as it passes the side road: the consultation drawings show the cycle lane descending from the stepped track to carriageway level with an entrance kerb between the cycle track and the footway. This arrangement gives visual continuity to the footway while it relegates the cycle track to being part of the main carriageway.

Ideally, the cycle track should rise to footway level with the entrance kerb between the road and the cycle track. But with the limited space available in Haverstock Hill, the width of the cycle track would need to decrease from 2.0m to 1.5m and turn towards the side road as it passes the junction – as shown in Figure 1, the initial design for the Bloomsbury Street stepped tracks at the junction with Bedford Avenue.



Figure 1: Design for blended junction

Camden officers agreed with us that such a diversion and narrowing of the cycle track was not ideal and devised another solution in which the cycle track slopes down from the footway to the road. (Anyone riding straight along the middle of the stepped track would have a fairly level transit).

This design with the sloping cycle track has recently been completed at Bloomsbury Street (see Figure 2).

We had hoped that this design (with bright blue paint) would be adopted as a standard for stepped tracks at side road junctions in Camden where funding is available for modifying the junction.



Figure 2 - Bloomsbury Street @ Bedford Avenue

We encourage Camden to implement the six above-mentioned junctions with the level change accommodated in the cycle track, as shown in Figure 2.

Strong delineation of the edge of the cycle lane as it passes a side road: this is usually done with advisory lane markings (Diag 1010), for example where [Haverstock Hill passes Steele's Road](#).

We understand that Diag 1010 is available in a variety of widths and styles and request that a wider and more emphatic marking be used across side roads. See the example on the right. This applies to all side road junctions and, together with the proposal to continue to use blue paint and logos, should encourage drivers to take care when crossing the cycle lane.



Junction at Howitt Road

We are concerned about the safety of northbound cyclists passing Howitt Road (Figure 3). They are at risk of being cut up by overtaking vehicles as the cycle track moves out from behind the floating parking into a potential pinch point. They would be better protected with the design shown in Figure 2.

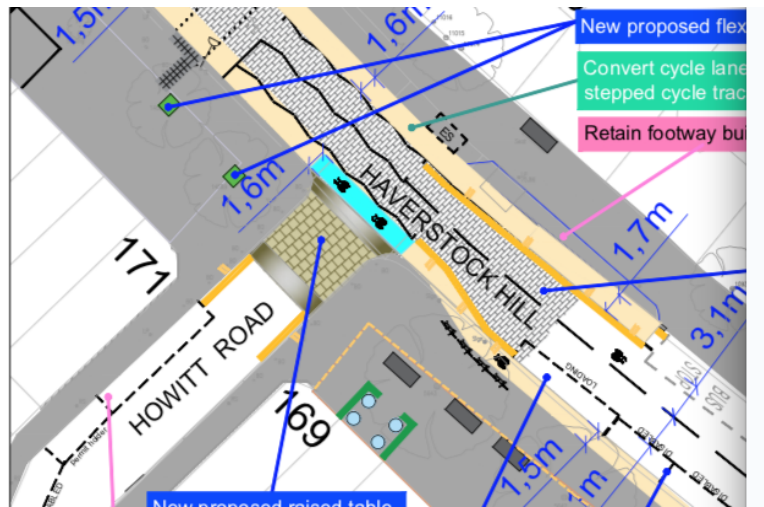


Figure 3. Junction at Howitt Road – from Drawing 6

Other Side Road Junctions

The consultation lists four side road junctions that are to have raised tables rather than continuous footways: Upper Park Road (Drawing 5), Belsize Avenue (Drawing 8), Ornan Road and Belsize Lane (Drawing 9). We would like to see the design shown in Figure 2 used at Upper Park Road and Belsize Avenue. In the latter case, the protected cycle lane vanishes before it needs to, rather than continuing to the start of the bus lane.

Junction at Belsize Avenue

See Figure 4. We would like to see a stepped track northbound from the zebra crossing and continuing across Belsize Avenue as shown in Figure 2, then dropping down to meet the shared bus lane.

The inset loading and parking bays outside the Old Town Hall would need to be at the same level as the stepped track.

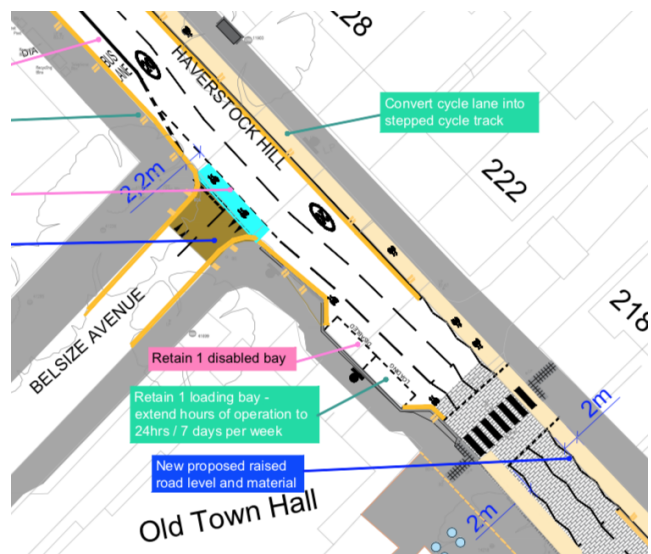


Figure 4: the Old Town Hall and past Belsize Avenue – from Drawing 8

A small number of side road junctions not mentioned include Steele's Road, Parkhill Road, Antrim Grove and Belsize Grove. These are already raised but without continuous footway. If funds will not allow modification, we would accept the proposal to leave them as they are with the blue-painted cycle lane at carriageway level but with stronger lane markings.

Floating parking and loading; and a bus stop bypass – Drawings 6 and 7

We very much like the way the design for the uphill cycle track has been able to exploit the excess space on the western footway between between Belsize Grove and Howitt Road and from Glenloch Road to the Old Town Hall, so as to provide nine new 'floating' parking bays (including one disabled) and four new 'floating' loading bays, areas of green and an island for a bus stop bypass.

We note that the footway is equally wide between Howitt Road and Glenloch Road while the cycle lanes through this section are very narrow (1.5-1.7 m). We think that the lanes could be made wider here (see below).

We are particularly pleased that the SUBB just north of Glenloch Road will be replaced by a bus stop bypass; where there's available space, bus stop bypasses are far preferable to SUBBs. The shelter (not shown on the drawing) should be moved onto the island as shown in the visualisation.

New road surface and raised road between Howitt Road and Old Town Hall

We like the proposal to add a new road surface material as shown in the two visualisations. We agree that this would make this section look more like a destination and less like a through route.

We understand from officers that the intention is to have two levels:

1. 'New proposed raised road level and material' - a bit above the normal road level
2. The bus stop island and stepped cycle track at footway level

If the cycle track will be at the same level as the footway the boundary needs to be made clear. This could be done by use of different materials (tarmac for example) and by tactiles or other boundary marking on the footway.

As mentioned above, the cycle tracks are very narrow at the southern end of this section); their width should be increased to 2m by taking the space from the edge of the footway.

Improvements to pedestrian crossings

We support the proposal to raise the pedestrian crossings north of Eton Road, north of Steele's Road, south of Upper Park Road, south of Belsize Grove, south of Ornan Road and to signalise the already raised zebra crossing near to Rowland Hill Street.

No parking/loading within 10m of junctions

We support the proposal to add double yellow lines with double blip markings at junctions with side roads to prevent vehicles from parking and loading at the junctions. This will vastly improve visibility for people attempting to cross the road.

No parking/loading on the northbound bus lane on Rosslyn Hill

We support the proposal to introduce double yellow lines with double blips along the 24/7 bus lane on Rosslyn Hill. Not only will it prevent buses from being delayed by parked vehicles but also make cycling in the bus lane much safer.

Other issues

Loading bays in the southbound cycle lane

Whenever there is a motor vehicle in a loading bay, it causes a break in the current protection provided by wands or in the proposed protection from stepped tracks, forcing cyclists to pull out into the motor vehicle lane. The positioning of loading bays in cycle lanes is detrimental to the safety of their users and likely to prevent some people from using the route.

We have always objected to such arrangements both at [234 Royal College Street](#) and at locations in Gower Street. When the users conform to the hours of operation, as they do at those locations, the problem is part time and the situation is predictable even if not good.

During the time since the scheme was implemented, the loading bays [outside the Haverstock Tavern](#) and [opposite Glenloch Road](#) have been occupied by motor vehicles at all hours with no concern with observing the regulations (Mon-Sat 10 am – noon).

The loading bay outside The Haverstock Tavern is almost opposite Steele's Road, making it hazardous for cyclists to leave the stepped track; while rejoining the stepped track will be difficult with the steep down hill slope and the nearby bus stop. With the proposed new floating loading bays across the road, there should be no need to retain the bay opposite Glenloch Road, let alone add another.

The proposal to add another bay opposite north of Orman Road is objectionable, as the cycling infrastructure between there and Rowland Hill Street is already very inadequate and broken by an inline bus stop.

We therefore strongly object to the proposal to retain the loading bays at Haverstock Tavern and opposite Glenloch Road and to add additional bays as mentioned above.

The all-hours loading bay opposite Belsize Lane will not become an issue until cycle lanes are installed in that part of Rosslyn Hill.

Joining and leaving the stepped tracks

- Stepped tracks opposite side roads need dropped kerbs (e.g. at Belsize Avenue, Eton Avenue, Steele's Road and Parkhill Road, Antrim Grove, and Upper Park Road). Careful design will be needed to ensure that cyclists can join the tracks from different angles. See, for example, [the dropped kerb opposite Bedford Avenue in Bloomsbury Street](#), which is as wide as the road opposite. There is also the issue of making it very clear where the kerb is dropped – see this example [in Royal College Street opposite Ivor Street](#) where the removal of the kerb plus the double yellow lines make it clear where there is no step.
- Turning right out of Downside Crescent into the cycle track behind the loading bays or from the track into Downside Crescent requires gaps in the parking.
- If Camden decides to retain the loading bays:
 - they should be at the same level as the stepped tracks; see [this example in Gower Street](#);
 - there needs to be a dropped kerb before the loading bay to enable cyclists to join the road and another after the loading bay to enable them to rejoin the stepped track;
 - the cycle lane should be clearly marked with cycle logos where it crosses the loading bay;
 - enforcement, including vandal-proof signage, is critical.

Parking across the footway and cycle track and on zebra crossings

- Property entrances (such as to the pub forecourt on Drawing 3) should be marked with double yellow lines back to the property line to stop people parking in them.
- Zig-zags for Zebra crossings should be as short as possible, particularly on the downstream side, as motorists often seem to park on them.

In line bus stops (southbound side)

The main objection to inline bus stops is that they not only interrupt the cycle lane where the bus stops but also require space before and after; the result is a long stretch of unprotected cycle lane when there's no bus at the stop. Experience has also shown that the zones before and after the actual bus stop are used for illegal parking and loading.

As noted in our response to the consultation on the trial scheme, we do accept that SUBBs are risky on steep downhill parts of the route, i.e. between PoW and England's Lane (~5% gradient), ruling out the stop between Eton Road and Steele's Road. The stop between Rowland Hill Street and Ornan Road is also ruled out as the cycle track is very narrow.

We ask Camden to re-consider the feasibility of installing SUBBs at the remaining three bus stops on the eastern side of Haverstock Hill (just north of tube station, north of Downside Crescent and opposite Antrim Grove).

Improvements to the signalised junction at England's Lane

The early release and longer ASLs have improved conditions for cyclists waiting at the signal when it changes to green but they do not deal with the following issues:

- Northbound cyclists arriving during the green stage are at risk of left hooks from motor vehicles turning left into England's Lane.
- Turning right into England's Lane is very difficult for southbound cyclists

We ask Camden to consider providing a dedicated signal stage for cycles on Haverstock Hill so as to overcome those issues.

Green Mobility Hub by the Tube Station

As mentioned in our response to the 2021 consultation on the pop-up cycle lanes on Haverstock Hill, we believe that it would be worth investigating the space behind the fence outside Belsize Park station for use as a 'mobility hub' where there would be all sorts of bike parking as well as services such as bike repair stands and pumps.

Following advice from Camden officers, we wrote to Abbas Raza at TfL in September 2021 who replied saying he would raise it with the station team and get back to us. In spite of a reminder in October 2022 and more recently, we have got nowhere with this. We urge Camden to pursue this issue with TfL.



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

Paul Allen, John Chamberlain, George Coulouris, Jean Dollimore, Steve Prowse
coordinator@camdencyclists.org.uk
Camden Cycling Campaign, 1 Estelle Road, London NW3 2JX