

Camden Cycling Campaign

27th March 2024

To: holborn.vision@camden.gov.uk, cc joe.smith@camden.gov.uk

CCC Response to Consultation on Holborn Vision

This response to the consultation on the draft Holborn Vision Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is from Camden Cycling Campaign, the local borough group of the 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 the proposals in general terms at our monthly meeting on 18th March 2024 and by email within our committee.

A. Introduction

Our primary engagement with Camden in this area relates to the Liveable Neighbourhood proposals and we only recently became aware of this parallel consultation on the Holborn Vision. Many of the proposals overlap, particularly those relating to Public Realm (Objective HV4) and most of our comments and suggestions relate to this category.

We group our comments using the 'character areas' covered in the SPD. Some of them reflect opportunities that are already covered, these are flagged with an asterisk. Others are new and we hope they may be considered for inclusion in the final document.

Objectives from the SPD (for reference)

- HV1 A place of innovation that continues to foster business and commerce
- HV2 A genuinely mixed-use neighbourhood that brings together workers, residents, and visitors
- HV3 A place where the existing residential communities are strengthened and enhanced
- HV4 A place connected by excellent public realm where everyone feels safe and encourages walking and cycling
- HV5 A climate resilient place that is able to adapt and thrive and ready to face the future
- HV6 A place where the distinctive character areas of Holborn are celebrated and enriched

B. Comments on Proposals for Character Areas

* - supporting or building on existing proposals

1 – Museum Quarter

Comments:

- o We support the area guidance recommendations.

Opportunities (HV4):

- o Remove motor vehicles or restrict through-traffic from Great Russell Street, Southampton Place and Bedford Place (the northern section of Museum Street is a good model).*
- o Improve wayfinding to the BM from Gower Street and Montague Street.*

2 – Red Lion and Queen Squares

Comments:

- o We support the area guidance recommendations.
- o Page 11: "The historic alignment that led diagonally north-westwards from Red Lion Square" – "should this be north-eastwards"?

Opportunities (HV4):

- o Theobalds Road: introduce protected cycle lanes and better cycle and pedestrian crossings, especially Lamb's Conduit Street to Red Lion Street*
- o Build on recent restrictions on Red Lion Street and Lamb's Conduit Street to improve streetscape*
- o The proposed link from Red Lion Square to Southampton Row should include cycles*
- o Improve Great Ormond Street for cycling*.
- o Improve Queen Square for cycling*
- o Investigate the possibility of cycle access to and from Queen Square via Queen Anne's Walk

3 – Great Queen Street

Comments:

- o We support the area guidance recommendations.
- o Selkirk House redevelopment is out of character and grossly oversized.

Opportunities (HV4):

- o Close junction of Great Queen Street with Drury Lane to motor vehicles.*
- o Improve the cycle crossing of Kingsway from Great Queen Street to Remnant Street; currently this is one of the few ways for cyclists to access Lincoln's Inn Fields.
- o Improve conditions for cycling on Drury Lane between Great Queen's Street and High Holborn.

4 – Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn

Comments:

- o We support the area guidance recommendations.

Opportunities (HV4):

- o Safeguard a route and at earliest opportunity create a cycle link from High Holborn to Lincoln's Inn Fields, possibly through Great Turnstile via Newman's Row, or by a new public right of way from High Holborn to Whetstone Park, to extend the existing route down Red Lion Street.
- o Introduce two-way cycling on the length of Chancery Lane from High Holborn to Fleet Street.

5 – Hatton Garden

Comments:

- o We support the area guidance recommendations.

Opportunities (HV4):

- o Introduce a workplace parking levy and other schemes to reduce visitor parking.*
- o Reopen the southern section of Leather Lane (Greville Street to Holborn) to cycles.

6 – Tottenham Court Road

Comments:

- o We support the area guidance recommendations.

Opportunities (HV4):

- o The section of Tottenham Court Road between New Oxford Street and Great Russell Street is very inhospitable for cycling, as is the junction with New Oxford Street. Opportunity to provide a much better link between St Giles and the part-pedestrianised section of Tottenham Court Road to the north, including segregated cycle lanes and dedicated crossings.

7 – High Holborn, Southampton Row/Kingsway

Comments:

- o We support the area guidance recommendations but are concerned about the impact of the Holborn Tunnels project on surrounding streets, especially if it generates more trips by motor vehicles including taxis and PHVs.

Opportunities (HV4):

- o Pedestrianisation of the eastern section of New Oxford Street with careful attention to design to allow cycling without conflict with pedestrians.*
- o Significant improvement to cycle infrastructure is underway at Proctor Street/Holborn tube and this should be extended to include all of High Holborn.
- o Remove the Holborn Gyrotory and convert Theobalds Road and High Holborn to two-way working.

C. Other Comments

Parking

There are still far too many private motor vehicles making trips into the area, especially, but not exclusively, at evenings and over weekends. This should be addressed by measures such as reducing workplace parking and making CPZs effective 24/7. Instead, more space on the carriageway should be dedicated to cycle parking, especially for cargo bikes.

Development Sites

All development should include improved permeability for cycling and walking and this should be examined as part of the planning process.

Construction Management

Oversight of construction management plans is critical and adherence to these plans, especially in terms of vehicle movements, should be closely monitored.

Language

Please remove the outdated references to traffic 'accidents' and replace them with 'collisions' or other neutral language (pages 5 & 26).

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the SPD. We would be happy to discuss any of our suggestions; contact details are below.

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