

## **London Cycling Campaign**

**3 December 2015**

### **Consultation response for the City of London Quietways/Central London Grid Farringdon Street – Beech Street and Moor Lane – Upper Thames Street**

The London Cycling Campaign is the capital's leading cycling organisation with more than 12,000 members and 40,000 supporters. We welcome the opportunity to comment on these plans and our response has been developed in partnership with the chairs of our Infrastructure Review Group.

We welcome the theory of Quietways targeting less confident cyclists who want to use low-traffic routes, while also increasing provision for existing cyclists. We also welcome the Mayor's vision for Quietways that are direct, designed as whole routes, segregated from motor traffic where they briefly join busy roads and make use of "filtered permeability" that restricts through motor traffic etc. Sadly, our assessment based on the first routes to reach public consultation is that Quietways thus far fail to fulfil these ambitions.

This is the case with the City of London proposed Quietways as part of the Central London Grid running east-west from Beech Street to Farringdon Street, and north-south from Moor Lane to Upper Thames Street.

#### **Farringdon Street – Beech Street**

The junction of Snow Hill, West Smithfield and Farringdon Street and the stretch of West Smithfield do not in any way represent appropriate facilities for less confident cyclists. Currently this junction suffers from both fast-moving and high traffic flows at present in both directions, with a significant number of HGVs that are offputting to ride near as a less confident cyclist and are disproportionately represented in serious and lethal collisions between cyclists and vehicles.

Eastbound cyclists are, according to the detailed designs, expected to mix with such traffic in unprotected space, despite this space featuring a single very wide traffic lane. The same cyclists will be expected to turn across traffic into the North-South short section of Smithfield Street. Cyclists in both directions must then cross Smithfield Street – again often subject to fast-moving traffic and/or heavy flows, including high numbers of HGVs.

Meanwhile, many cyclists will likely continue directly along West Smithfield to the junction with Aldergate Street – this more direct route should also be considered for appropriate treatment.

Hosier Lane already features a modal filter halfway along it – which is presumably retained – and we welcome. That said, pavements here are very narrow and there are only single yellow lines. We would welcome changes here to both give more space to pedestrians and to remove informal loading/unloading arrangements in the narrower carriage sections that curtail space for cycling and create dooring risks.

Given the scheme's presumed aim to boost cycling numbers through the area, we would welcome wider and better crossings of the pedestrianised island between the Smithfield ambulance station area and the rotunda. Currently cyclists are corralled through a very narrow gate. Long-term we

would ask the City to consider encouraging the ambulance station to move out of the middle of the road to improve public realm.

While we welcome the provision of two way cycling on Cloth Fair, without any plans to control vehicle speed or delineate right of way, then in such a narrow street there is a concern cyclists will face aggressive oncoming traffic heading east. Again, hardly “quiet”. Cloth Fair would be a good candidate for a modal filter.

Long Lane, its junction with Aldergate Street and the length of Beech Street can in no way be described as “quiet”. Again, the Mayor’s stated aim for Quietways is that they are “segregated from motor traffic where they briefly join busy roads”. These two busy roads and junction are proposed to only receive minimal interventions and no segregation – the result is they will not be used by less confident cyclists and represent a major failure in the scheme.

Either these roads and junctions need segregation in time and/or space for cycling movements, or they need alternative measures. One option could be to close Beech Street tunnel to all motor vehicles bar buses with a “bus gate”. The tunnel has been closed before during construction without undue traffic impacts.

As a result of the above points, the London Cycling Campaign cannot support the proposals as an appropriate “Quietway”.

### **Moor Lane – Upper Thames Street**

We absolutely welcome the introduction of a modal filter at the northern end of Moor Lane. However, without an area-wide plan, we believe there is a significant risk that traffic currently coming from further south along Moor Lane will simply divert down Milton Street via Silk Street.

We also believe that cyclists arriving at the Quietway from or exiting it to Bunhill Row, already a common movement for cyclists, face a difficult set of turns on Chiswell Street. Designs to facilitate cyclists crossing here would be welcome.

Gresham Street is busy for a “quiet” route. As is King Street. As is the staggered junction with Cheapside. And on Queen Street the proposal appears to be to remove what basic cycle facilities there are. The junction with Queen Victoria Street also seems untreated for, again, a busy junction.

Again, the result of several long sections of busy street with no real treatments (even the removal of advisory cycle lanes), will be this scheme will not attract less confident cyclists. And what is perplexing here is that the City Of London has used modal filters at the southern end of Queen Street to positive effect (although the shared surfaces now require better demarcation).

Much wrong with this scheme could be solved by looking at the busier of the “side” streets with a view to area-wide modal filtering. At the very least, street treatments should move towards protected space (e.g. semi-segregated or separate track upgrades) to current lanes and separation in time for cyclists through junctions to both encourage less confident cyclists and eliminate safety risks for current cyclists.

Again, as a result of the above points, the London Cycling Campaign cannot support the proposals as an appropriate “Quietway”.

In general, the London Cycling Campaign would like to see all such schemes given a CLoS rating (as well as adhering to the latest London Cycle Design Standards) that demonstrates significant improvement from the current layout will be achieved for cycling, and that eliminates all “critical fails” in any proposed design before being funded for construction, let alone public consultation.

The London Cycling Campaign notes that the City of London has recently made great strides forward in terms of plans to enable cycling and walking, to make places for people and to reduce motor vehicle dominance in its streets. That these schemes fail to do so, is a real missed opportunity.