

# Consultation response on Transport for London plans for East-West superhighway phase 2

March 2015



## 1. Introduction

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 further proposals for the East-West cycle superhighway.

We believe the East-West superhighway represents a major step forward in creating streets that are safe and inviting for cycling. We note that the public consultation received over 14,000 responses, 80% of which were positive.

However, we are seriously concerned by the absence of safe space for cycling outside Buckingham Palace under the current plans. Cyclists will be expected to use the existing shared-use area – mixing with thousands of pedestrians at one of London's most popular tourist destinations. If cyclists choose to use the carriageway instead, they will have to mix with six lanes of motor traffic on the unacceptably dangerous Spur Rd gyratory. The lack of space for cycling in this area represents a critical failure for the whole East-West Cycle Superhighway plan.

It is absolutely essential to ensure that this route is implemented to a high standard. We strongly recommend that the Royal Parks and Transport for London revisit the designs for Spur Rd gyratory and agree to Cycle Superhighway standard segregated cycle facilities for all possible movements on Spur Road in a safe, direct, attractive and coherent manner. Otherwise there will be high risk of collision between all road users in the area of the Memorial, including the millions of tourists who visit Green Park each year.

The maintenance of high volumes of through motor traffic in the Royal Parks is the largest obstacle to providing safe access for people on cycles. This through traffic seriously undermines every other activity in the Royal Parks and diminishes their value as public assets. Without controlling the volume and speed of through motor traffic the provision of safe space for cycling is far more costly and intrusive than should be necessary.

If Transport for London and the Royal Parks authority were to consider reducing the volume of through motor traffic the existing park roads could be used by people on cycles without fear of injury. That would leave more space for pedestrians, people on horseback and for all the ceremonial activities essential to the Royal Parks.

We urge you to take on board the following additional recommendations, which have been identified through our Infrastructure Review working group process and in collaboration with LCC local groups, and which we would be willing to discuss in more detail with you.

This consultation response deals with the proposals in the phase 2 consultation on the East West Cycle Superhighway. It should be read in conjunction with the first consultation response on the majority of this cycle route.

## 2. Lancaster Gate

London Cycling Campaign welcomes the proposal to turn Bayswater Road back to two-way traffic. Eastbound cyclists currently have to go round two sides of the intimidating gyratory system. The park exit at Lancaster Gate should provide a straight over crossing of Bayswater Road. The network should provide clear access links for the many people using cycles to access Paddington Station, a key destination, as well as linking to the proposed Westway Superhighway, which will provide a link to Maida Vale.

We are also concerned at the lack of cycling provision on Bayswater Rd between Lancaster Terrace and Westbourne Street where cyclists would be required to overtake buses at the bus stop in heavy traffic. Those moving straight ahead or joining the cycle superhighway further along on Bayswater Rd are presented with the challenging task of merging across a very wide inside lane and into the right-hand lane. A bus stop bypass would enable cyclists to continue straight ahead and safely into the cycle track.

We welcome the introduction of segregated cycle lanes on Bayswater Road east of Westbourne Street.

At the eastbound approach to the junction of Bayswater Road with Lancaster Terrace, there is potential conflict between cyclists proceeding straight ahead and left-turning traffic. The use of an 'Early Start' junction design on Bayswater Road is unacceptable where there is a high demand for motor traffic including buses to turn left into Lancaster Terrace. On Bayswater Road and Westbourne Terrace the early start junctions are likely to be blocked with queuing motor traffic in peak hour, eliminating any safety benefit. At Westbourne Terrace the long distance between the cyclists' stop line and the actual left turn lets fast motor traffic catch up with slow cyclists – all the motor traffic is turning left, while almost all the cyclists will be going straight on.

There needs to be a protected route for cyclists using Bayswater Road, with separate signal phasing for cyclists and motor vehicles, to eliminate the risk of left turn collisions for eastbound cyclists at Lancaster Terrace and Stanhope Terrace.

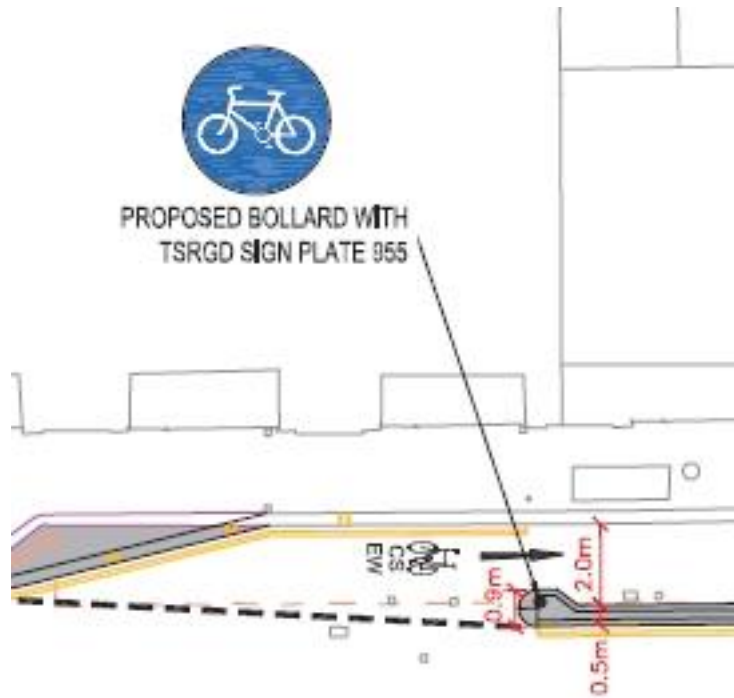
At the eastbound approach to the junction of Bayswater Road with Westbourne Terrace, there is potential conflict between cyclists proceeding straight ahead and traffic turning half left towards Stanhope Terrace. There do not appear to be any proposals to reduce this conflict.

Three metres is not an acceptable width for the two way cycle track on Westbourne St. The track must be wide enough to accommodate both current levels of cycling and a growth in demand (four metres minimum). Further width can be accommodated through a narrowing of the western lane used for access, loading and a bus stand.

As per our comments in the original consultation on the East-West cycle superhighway, we are concerned by the many unnecessary width restrictions to place a bollard on the separating island. This creates a real hazard blocking cyclists where they are most vulnerable to motor traffic. The bollard should be omitted as on the Stratford High Street Superhighway and many other cycle routes in London. It could be replaced by a wand without increasing the width of the island.

Cycles must have access to Bathurst St, which is closed to motor traffic.

Connectivity with other routes is key. The current proposals do not provide access for northbound cyclists going to Sussex Gardens which is an obvious desire line leading to Marylebone, Camden and Islington. A cycle crossing should be provided at Sussex Gardens to get cyclists north. There must also be provision for cyclists to turn right at the Westbourne Crescent junction.



### 3. Hyde Park

London Cycling Campaign appreciates the Royal Parks wish not to have a single Cycle Superhighway through route dominating the character of Hyde Park. It is therefore essential that as many route options as possible are available for people on cycles. The regular disruption to routes by events and ceremonies also means a wide choice of cycling routes is required. The failure to design for increased use of Serpentine Road by people on bikes is a cause for concern. As a result there is likely to be increased congestion and risk to park users in the Coalbrookdale Gate and Broad Walk/Speakers Corner areas.

#### Hyde Park: Section B, North Carriage Drive and West Carriage Drive

Southbound cyclists must be protected from left-turning traffic by the signal timing on Bayswater Road: this must be guaranteed. The corner of North Carriage drive should be built out to slow drivers and prevent conflict.

At Victoria Gate northbound cyclists will share an unsignalised toucan with pedestrians. This is a cause for concern due to numbers and will lead to conflict. A Zebra-Toucan parallel crossing would be a preferable solution.

#### Hyde Park: Section C, West Carriage Drive

The current cycle tracks along West Carriage Drive are unsuitable for large volumes of cyclists or for use in both directions, so an upgrade is welcome. However, the cycle track should not reduce below 4 metres. We note that the cycle track reduces down at Serpentine Road and to 3m over the Serpentine, and past the car park south of the bridge.

The design should ensure that traffic emerging from Serpentine Road and other access roads does not block the cycle track.

#### **Hyde Park: Section D, West Carriage Drive and South Carriage Drive**

The bypass of the junction at Coalbrookdale Gate is welcome, but the junction itself is as bad as previously. Extremely high flows of East-West cyclists will use the Coalbrookdale Gate junction due to the relocation of the main flow away from Rotten Row and it is the route of the now abandoned Cycle Superhighway 9. They need more space and separate phasing at traffic lights to get across to South Carriage Drive.

The junction currently still poses a left-hook risk for southbound cyclists. Safe access to and from Exhibition Road does not appear to have been considered.

#### **Hyde Park: Section E, South Carriage Drive**

This is a very busy area with high pedestrian and cycle flows. The cycle track should not reduce below 4 metres at Prince of Wales gate, especially where there will be cycles joining and leaving the flow. The Albert Gate crossing should be a Zebra/Toucan parallel crossing to avoid conflict. It is currently confusing whether pedestrians and cyclists crossing at Albert Gate should keep respectively to the right or left sides.

#### **Hyde Park, Section F: South Carriage Drive, Broad Walk and Serpentine Rd**

The shared use pinch point leading out of the park and through to Hyde Park Corner may cause conflict.

Connectivity is vital at this location and connecting Quietway and Central London Grid routes, such as the Quietway route linked by Park Lane, should be prioritised so that they are delivered at the same time as the East-West Cycle Superhighway. The 1.5 metre width on this link is substandard. There is enough space to double that and still maintain the same 3.1 metre width for motor traffic as there is further west on South Carriage Drive.



Photo: Colin Wing

As the photo shows, the existing crossing of South Carriage Drive has never been satisfactory. Cyclists often have to break through a queue of traffic waiting at the zebra crossing. This can result in some strange manoeuvres like the one in the photo.

A signal-controlled crossing at this point is unlikely to provide sufficient priority for the dominant flows of pedestrians and cyclists at this point. It would likely attract more motor traffic onto this route at peak times. It would also lead to platooning of cyclists and pedestrians increasing the potential for conflict. A Zebra-Toucan parallel crossing at this point is a preferable solution.

#### **4. St James's/Green Park**

##### **St James's/Green Park, section A: Green Park**

The two way track on Constitution Hill is welcome. However, all other proposals in this section are a major cause for concern. None of the cycle movements to and from Constitution Hill are catered for sufficiently. Proposals for cyclists to share space with pedestrians in such a busy environment, with high flows of pedestrians and cyclists moving across many conflicting desire lines, will create a major conflict point on an otherwise high quality route while also disrupting the pedestrian amenity of a major tourist hot spot and important public space. Safe and convenient protected cycle lanes must be provided at the Spur Road gyratory for all route choices. See section F below for more detail.

##### **St James's/Green Park, section B: The Mall (North Horse Ride)**

The primary direct route for the E-W Cycle Superhighway should go along Birdcage Walk and Spur Road. The Mall is an important link to the Superhighway and should provide a safe cycle route from Trafalgar Square to Constitution Hill and Buckingham Gate. The Mall should not be a through motor traffic route. With six carriageway lanes there is plenty of room for a protected cycle tracks which should be provided on this already popular route. Currently this is a dangerously sub-standard route – it will put pedestrians at risk from cyclists and cyclists will get the blame as a consequence of the lack of provision. Conflict with coaches and parked cars when there are events is also a cause for concern.

The existing bollards on the North Horse Ride will cause conflict with high volumes of cyclists mixing with pedestrians. Any bollards used on cycle superhighway routes must not cause access problems for any cycle – all infrastructure must be fully inclusive.

The crossing of Marlborough Road would benefit from straightening. The proposed signal phasing is unacceptable. The scheme shows seven phases with cycle and pedestrian access on one phase. The main flows of motor traffic get 3 or 4 phases while the minor flows get 2.

##### **St James's/Green Park section C, the Mall and Horse Guards Rd**

The protected cycle track should not stop at the junction, but should continue to Trafalgar Square.

This is currently a difficult junction even for motor vehicles to navigate, especially when there is a queue of traffic back from Trafalgar Square. David Cameron was famously photographed cycling the wrong way around the existing bollard. The signal timings are critical at the junction: north bound from Horse Guards there should be a very short motor vehicle phase followed by a much longer

cycle phase. There should be a strong disincentive to use of this road for rat running. There is plenty of space for stacking.

It is unclear whether the existing signal-controlled pedestrian crossings near this junction should be replaced by pedestrian phases of the proposed new signals. The signal timing must be set so that cyclists do not have to stop more than once at the three sets of signals. Eastbound cyclists heading for Admiralty Arch and Trafalgar Square should be able to by-pass lights all the time except to give way when pedestrians are crossing east of the junction if the existing signal-controlled pedestrian crossings remain in place. The lack of capacity on the proposed off carriageway track will encourage some cyclists to use the main carriageway. Such cyclists coming out of Horse Guards Road are exposed to collision risk with left turning motor vehicles.

#### **St James's/Green Park Section D, Horse Guards Road**

Horse Guards Rd is a popular route with north-south cyclists. However it is also a busy rat-run, particularly for taxis. It should be closed to through motor traffic. The method of closure could be removable for ceremonies or emergencies.

#### **St James's/Green Park section E, Horse Guards Rd and Birdcage Walk**

The junction of Horse Guards Road and Birdcage Walk is difficult for everyone at present - cyclists, pedestrians and motorists. Cyclists are involved in the majority of collisions at this junction. Recent modifications have only partly solved the problem. Horse Guards Rd must be closed to through motor traffic, with this a banned turn as per the existing proposal. Great George St should also be filtered.

As presented the signal control at this junction is overly complicated. The long set back for cyclists northbound on Storey's Gate will take a long time to clear the junction. This flow is coincident with the southbound cyclists from Horse Guards Road. Those heading west are held by the pedestrian crossing and may be at risk from the southbound motor traffic in the next phase.

We are concerned by the pinch points at the crossings on Birdcage Walk where the track goes down to 2.8 metres, which is unacceptably narrow.

#### **St James's/Green Park, Section F (and section A) - Spur Rd gyratory**

The junction of The Mall and Spur Road is deeply concerning. None of the cycle movements to and from Constitution Hill are catered for sufficiently. Proposals for cyclists to share space with pedestrians in such a busy environment, with high flows of pedestrians and cyclists moving across many conflicting desire lines, will create a major conflict point on an otherwise high quality route while also disrupting the pedestrian amenity of a major tourist hot spot and important public space. The opportunity to design safe and convenient protected cycle lanes on the Spur Road gyratory should not be missed.

The proposals must include protected cycle provision on all arms of the junction between The Mall, Spur Road and Constitution Hill (entering and exiting the Cycle Superhighway).

The lack of capacity for cycling due to being directed to share extremely busy pedestrian areas will force many cyclists back onto the carriageway where the facilities will be worse than at present. It is highly likely that the result will be chaos and increased risk of casualties for cyclists and pedestrians.

Increased delay from additional signalised junction and extra phases at Buckingham Gate make the current situation unacceptable even before the point of cyclists being squeezed and cut up on Link Road and both sides of Queen Victoria memorial.

Our preferred solution is to remove the gyratory, filtering Link Road so it is only access for Buckingham Palace deliveries. This would greatly simplify all the junctions and provide much more clear space for pedestrian movements.

The provision for westbound cyclists on Birdcage Walk heading for Hyde Park Corner is equally worrying. Having been delayed to negotiate a cross over to the south side of the road at the Spur Road junction these cyclists are then expected to cross back, leaving the protected track to join an ASL. On green they are then mixed with on-coming motor traffic turning left. The road width on Link Road is drastically reduced at the very point where most conflicts occur.

## **5. Victoria Embankment/Northumberland Avenue**

London Cycling Campaign welcomes the moving of the bus and coach stop. Existing delays to all traffic on this route is from coach parking, and moving the coach parking will help to solve this.

While we welcome the connectivity provided for cyclists moving between Victoria Embankment and Northumberland Avenue, where cyclists are supposed to go might not be obvious in dark weather – there must be clear markings for the cycle tracks.