London Cycling Campaign

2 June 2016

Hounslow Boston Manor Road consultation

http://www.hounslow.gov.uk/index/council_and_democracy/consultations/cycling_proposal_boston manor_rd_consult.htm

This response is made on behalf of the London Cycling Campaign, 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 was developed with input from the co-chairs of our Infrastructure Review Group and is in support of the response of our borough group, Hounslow Cycling.

In general, the London Cycling Campaign want, as a condition of funding, all highway development designed to London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS), with a Cycling Level of Service (CLoS) rating of 70 or above, with all "Critical Fails" eliminated.

We support this scheme in principle – in particular the provision of cycle tracks separated from motor vehicle traffic will provide a far safer and more enjoyable cycling environment. However, we wish to raise the following specific issues with this scheme:

- We absolutely support the provision of protected space for cycling as a priority for this road – as it carries around 17,000 motor vehicles daily and 700 HGVs. And we appreciate the design rationale for providing a bidirectional track given there are far fewer significant junctions and through routes on the SW side of Boston Manor Road, Boston Road, Lower Boston Road, Boston Gardens and Half Acre. That said, we do have significant reservations about its use and design here.
- Of greatest concern, we understand that Ealing Council have previously responded saying that they would not continue a bidirectional track northwards on the road. Continuity is vital and we would strongly suggest that neither council should move forward with plans without full agreement on a design that will continue smoothly across the borough boundary.
- This scheme has potential for significant extension, to Ealing Hospital and the A4020 to the north, and Brentford rail station and Half Acre to the south. Without such extension, the scheme will be so short it will be of limited use in encouraging new cycling journeys. So, again, it's vital all boroughs are involved and on-board with any design. In the same vein, continuity of provision across the area is well worth considering. According to Hounslow Cycling, TfL are considering a Cycle Superhighway along the A315 using with-flow stepped tracks. If Ealing Council will accept with-flow stepped tracks on their half of Boston Road, and not bidirectional track, and the same type of track is likely to be used elsewhere nearby, it may well be worth considering alternative track designs for continuity purposes.
- For any protected track, junction design is vital to ensure safe and enjoyable cycling isn't continually interrupted by scary and/or risky junction crossings.
- For low traffic side streets, such as most found here, a "continuous" raised footway and cycle track (also known as a "Copenhagen" crossing) should be considered. This should be done with tight junction radii and ideally a single traffic lane entry in/out in order to ensure

slow and calm behaviour from drivers entering/exiting the side streets. The junction design at the southern end of Boston Gardens does not currently look in keeping with, or to the quality of, the other side street entrance/exit treatments. Whatever designs are used, it's important that cycling and pedestrian priority across side streets is reinforced to ensure continuity and comfort for active travel modes.

- Of concern, also, is the entrance to the GSK site under the M4. This is described as a "Switch-over facility to be designed at the signalised GlaxoSmithKline junction, to allow cyclists to safely cross junction". But that design doesn't seem present in current plans. For the scheme to provide a safe and enjoyable cycling environment for all, it's vital that this junction (as with all other major junctions) enables those cycling to enter and exit the track comfortably and safely, and therefore the lights phasing and junction design should eliminate hook risks and likely will need to separate cycling and motor vehicle movements in time and/or space.
- All junctions, particularly major ones, should be designed so as to enable those cycling of all ages and all abilities to join or leave the track to continue their journeys on other streets. This does not appear to have been taken into account with the current design for the junction with Swyncombe Avenue, for instance, or any other streets leading north-east from the main road.
- The track design also appears to include sections where it is at carriageway level. Presumably this is with some form of physical separation – otherwise those cycling will be riding in the opposite direction to nearby motor vehicle traffic – this would be a very dangerous design. If physical separation is kerbing or semi-segregated measures such as "armadillos", then the track width must be maintained at a 3m width minimum – rather than eating into track width to cause pinch points.
- Where possible, the track should be wider than 3m. And 3m should be considered an absolute minimum. 4m+ would be far better for future-proofing the track as uptake of cycling in the area increases, and to allow faster riders to overtake slower or less confident ones comfortably within the track and without risking crossing into the opposite direction of travel.
- South of the M4 underpass, the track becomes "shared use". There doesn't appear to be a clear need to do this. And shared use in this type of context simply creates cycle-pedestrian conflict. Please design for a continuation of the bidirectional track instead.
- Car parking should also not be located between cycle track and pavement, but between track and carriageway – this not only mitigates the most likely "dooring" risk of the driver dooring someone cycling while getting out, but also turns parked cars into extra physical protection for people cycling on the track.