

## London Cycling Campaign

16 February 2016

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 was developed in support of our local Westminster Cycling Campaign group and with input from the co-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 providing for existing cyclists who want to travel at a more gentle pace. 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 to the degree needed to genuinely boost cycling numbers. This is the case with too many sections of this Quietway.

So, while we support the principle of a much-needed direct cycle route along this north-south alignment in this area, avoiding major roads, we wish to raise several serious concerns regarding this route and the detail associated with it:

**Duke Street** – while traffic volumes are low, speeds are not necessarily. So we would like to see sinusoidal speed humps and/or raised tables at junctions as a minimum to ensure these issues are dealt with.

The proposal is to split southbound and northbound cycling via Duke Street and New Bond Street – with a large distance between the two, this is an unacceptable level of deflection from likely desired routes and represents a fundamental failure to understand the needs and habits of cyclists. Either both routes should be made two-way for cycling, or as a minimum, one should. And a more area-wide and holistic approach to considering the likely routing needs for motorists, cyclists and public transport users etc. is desirable. That could lead to some streets, for instance, being modally filtered to only cater to servicing, cyclists and pedestrians, with other parallel streets being primarily for motor traffic.

**Grosvenor Square** – traffic speeds and volumes can be quite high around this square. And the proposal barely affects this. It also introduces potential "hook" risk issues for cyclists turning from a two-way Brook Street, north into Duke Street.

The proposals here also fail to take into account broader issues – should Grosvenor Square's gyratory be removed? Or should proper protected space for cycling around it be installed? And similarly, is making Brook Street two-way the best solution for it? Or again, would protected cycle tracks along it be a better use of the space? The same question obviously applies to other two-way conversions proposed.

**New Bond Street** – again, traffic volumes are fairly high but worse, speeds can be very high. Again, as a minimum, speed humps and/or raised tables should be used. On top of that, given lane widths, there may be space to introduce a semi-segregated cycle lane (with removal of parking). Removing the stacking lanes at the Brook Street junction would likely allow space for two semi-segregated cycle lanes (or a wider two-way track) – allowing two-way cycling here. The Brook Street junction

design (particularly the two stacking lanes on New Bond Street) also fails to facilitate safe and easy cycling, and retains hook risks – so is not fitting for a Quietway.

The entire section that splits here a) should feature bi-directional cycling on one route alignment, b) should go further in terms of speed and traffic reduction and junction treatments and c) as per Westminster Council's own cycling strategy document's stated aim to become a "national leader in cycling provision", the council should be willing to go much further in terms of removing either motor vehicle carriageway space (perhaps by retaining one-way motor vehicle operation on streets) and/or parking space in order to facilitate truly protected and safe space for all ages, all abilities cycling – as befits a "Quietway".

**Davies Street** – is there a need to return Davies Street from being a cul-de-sac after completion of Bond Street Station works? Given local traffic flows will have adapted, it would be better to consider permanent closures to enable the best possible Quietway on an area-wide basis. If Davies Street is reopened, we would suggest the current junction design neither facilitates all turning movements for cyclists well enough, nor eliminate hook risks well enough. And it's certainly not a fitting design for a Quietway.

**Grosvenor Street junction** – again, too little has been done at this junction to eliminate hook risks and enable cycling turns.

**Berkeley Square** – the current square is dominated by high volumes of fast-moving motor traffic. The scheme, and the proposals from the Grosvenor Estate, will do little or nothing to alleviate these issues. Further, these proposals once more demonstrate either an absolute unwillingness from Westminster Council to live up to its own cycling strategy and other cycling commitments, or to understand in any realistic manner, the needs of not just current cyclists but how to design to potentially increase numbers cycling by enabling all-ages, all-abilities cycling – surely one of the key design tenets of anything designated a "Quietway"?

Cyclists using Berkeley Square will encounter numerous hostile and likely aggressive and intimidating areas in this design: the junction with Bruton Street has not been appropriately calmed, nor has the junction with Berkeley Street, or Fitzmaurice Place, nor Davies Street; advisory cycle lanes are next to useless; there is space for track on all sides given lane widths, parking etc. yet is only provided for a very short section on the south side; that track is impossible to access for anyone going around Berkeley Square; the track also does not feature any design elements to deal with cyclists crossing junctions on it; the Square also likely is on the route for Quietway 19, but no design elements that facilitate that potential link are included; and current turning movements around Hill Street and Mount Street are in no way addressed, despite these already making cycling through the area a very hostile experience.

**Berkeley Street** – this entire design is unnecessarily convoluted, and once again fails to deal with a street and area that is hostile for cycling. Raised tables and/or speed humps should be a minimum, but frankly, removal of much of the traffic volume would be far preferable.

**Stratton Street** – putting a modal filter or "bus gate" on Stratton Street would allow service and local vehicle access as well as the bus, but remove other through traffic. The result would calm the street dramatically. The current design will see cyclists in a contra-flow advisory lane in conflict with oncoming traffic (and coming from behind parked cars).

**Piccadilly** – the protected space for cycling is welcome, however there are still issues with its design: it's too narrow to be ideal; there is a risk the turn from the track towards Queen's Walk and the park

will be overrun by queuing eastbound traffic on Piccadilly; and cyclists on Piccadilly are poorly served by the design, with turns into the park, from the west not facilitated and nor are turns from the east into Stratton Street etc.

Finally, and in general, the London Cycling Campaign would like to see all 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.