London Cycling Campaign response to TfL (in Camden) Safer Junctions: Camden Street and Camden Road

23 September 2019

https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/roads/camden-street-camden-road/

About the London Cycling Campaign

London Cycling Campaign (LCC) is a charity with more than 20,000 supporters of whom over 11,000 are fully paid-up members. We speak up on behalf of everyone who cycles or wants to cycle in Greater London; and we speak up for a greener, healthier, happier and better-connected capital.

This response was developed with input from LCC's borough groups.

General comments on this scheme:

- The recent Safer Junctions schemes proposed will improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists but the schemes fall far short of being transformational. They will not achieve "Vision Zero" safe crossings, nor will they make cycling or walking at these locations safe or comfortable.

- Given this, these junctions will likely need re-visiting in the near future if the Mayor's Transport Strategy aims are to be achieved. These schemes are neither being delivered rapidly and cheaply enough to represent a sensible "interim" approach, nor to a high enough quality to be permanent.

- The change in Healthy Streets Check score and the remaining three "critical issues" highlight how this scheme has failed to really deliver change. No Safer Junction should retain any critical issues.

- We fully support the response of our local borough group, which contains more specific detail.

Specific points about this scheme:

- It is marked that despite this scheme being supposedly put in place to deal with clear road danger issues, road danger in the scheme has not been strongly addressed. The scheme includes three Healthy Streets Check zero scores, also known as "critical issues". It should, as should every Safer Junction, feature none.

- Instead of boldly reducing road danger, or increasing walking, cycling and/or public transport use in line with the Mayor's Transport Strategy, this scheme offers welcome gains for pedestrians (new direct, formal pedestrian crossing; marginally wider pedestrian crossing outside Sainsbury's), but virtually nothing for those cycling ("advanced stop lines" and a banned turn).

- There are over a thousand cycling journeys made daily according to DfT's counts in all four directions of the junction, and all four arms of the junction are highlighted in TfL's Strategic Cycling Analysis Fig 1.2 as roads "hosting the highest potential cycling demand". The Camden – Tottenham Hale route should clearly reach this junction from the east as a minimum, and likely should also go west from here too. There is also clearly space south of the junction on Camden Street to provide a physically protected cycle track, and provision north of the junction also could be physically protected in the approach to the junction too – although there appears copious room for cycle tracks, and potentially further reduction in motor traffic lanes, both north and south of the junction for some distance.

- Given the shift of traffic modes the Mayor's Transport Strategy is predicated on, it is surprising that this scheme (that is not badged as "interim" or "temporary") seems designed to largely protect private motor traffic capacity as is. In the medium term, this junction design will fail the strategy on Vision Zero aims, and also mode share aims.

- "Hook" risks to those cycling are retained approaching the junction from the east. And cycle turning movements are not facilitated by the junction design – with those turning from the north onto Camden Road forced to cross multiple lanes of traffic to turn right. Instead, a two-stage right approach with early release should be considered.

- Driver speeds can be very high here, yet the scheme does nothing to reduce top speeds.

General points about infrastructure schemes:

- The Mayor's Transport Strategy relies on a growth in cycle trips to keep London moving. This means infrastructure schemes must be designed to accommodate growth in cycling. Providing space for cycling is a more efficient use of road space than providing space for driving private motor vehicles, particularly for journeys of 5km or less. In terms of providing maximum efficiency for space and energy use, walking, cycling, then public transport are key.

- As demonstrated by the success of recent Cycle Superhighways and mini-Holland projects etc., people cycle when they feel safe. For cycling to become mainstream and enable all ages and abilities to cycle, a network of high-quality, direct routes separate from high volumes and/or speeds of motor vehicle traffic is required to/from all key destinations and residential areas in an area. Schemes should be planned, designed and implemented to maximise potential to increase journeys – with links to nearby amenities, residential centres, transport hubs considered from the outset.

- Spending money on cycling infrastructure has been shown to dramatically boost health outcomes in an area. Spending on cycling schemes outranks all other

transport modes for return on investment according to a DfT study. Schemes which promote cycling meet TfL's "Healthy Streets" checklist. A healthy street is one where people choose to cycle.

- All schemes should be designed to enable people of all ages and abilities to cycle, including disabled people.

- Evidence from TfL and from many schemes in London, the UK and worldwide shows the economic benefits, including to businesses, to be found from enabling a wider range of people to cycle more. Further evidence shows how cycling schemes also benefit air quality and reduce climate changing emissions, as well as improving resident health outcomes and reducing inactivity, as mentioned above.

- LCC wants, 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 issues" eliminated. Above 2,000 Passenger Car Unit (PCUs) motor vehicle movements per day, or 20mph motor traffic speeds, cycling should be physically separated from motor traffic.