

TfL (Greenwich) Blackheath Hill

22 August 2018

https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/roads/blackheath-hill/consult_view/

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:

This scheme is opposed.

The Mayor has committed to reducing serious injuries and fatalities on London's roads to zero by 2041 in his Transport Strategy. He also has committed to increasing the proportion of journeys in the same time period to 80 percent walked, cycled or by public transport. Given there is no indication that this junction will be extensively reworked beyond this scheme in the near future or even medium term, it must be assumed this junction will still be largely as proposed here by 2041. It will therefore fail to deliver on either of the Mayor's ambitions in his Transport Strategy.

Further, even if the Mayor's Transport Strategy, council and TfL policy is ignored, these changes will not significantly improve safety or comfort for those walking and cycling – it will not enable more people to walk or cycle in this area.

Specific comments:

- "Over the last six years, 52 collisions were registered in the vicinity. 26 of these occurred in the last three years." This appears to include two fatalities, one just west of the junction, one at the nearby junction with John Penn Street. Both were pedestrians. And appears to include three serious injuries, one again west of the junction (a cyclist) and two directly on it (motorcyclists). This junction is dangerous, currently.
- The area around the junction on all sides is shown in the Strategic Cycling Analysis as a zone of the "highest" current cycle demand and future potential growth. Yet only 400 cycle journeys are on Blackheath Hill daily and only 200 on Greenwich South Streets (count: 2011). In other words, there is clear evidence that cycling rates are being strongly suppressed by the hostility of these roads and this junction, that the

danger represented by this junction is high compared to the proportion of cyclists using it, and it is likely that cyclists who already live in the area avoid using this junction and these roads.

- Suggesting these plans “improve Blackheath Road for those cycling” is at best hyperbolic. These plans offer the least significant possible improvements for cycling safety or comfort. And it is a sign of how far these plans diverge from the Mayor’s Transport Strategy that the same quote goes on to suggest the plans will also improve the road for those driving. This goes directly against the Transport Strategy. Similarly, saying “the removal / extension of loading bays and the relocation of a bus stop are likely to have a positive impact on the traffic flow in the area” indicates why this scheme fails to perform well for those at the top of the transport hierarchy – those walking and cycling.
- The addition of a formal pedestrian crossing is welcome on one arm. But given the pedestrian numbers here, and given policy, Transport Strategy etc. and space available here, all arms of the junction, as a minimum, should be given formal crossings and signals for pedestrians. And these crossings wherever possible should be direct, rather than staggered.
- The raised section between Greenwich South Street and Blackheath Hill is unlikely on its own to reduce speeds sufficiently.
- Removing parking bays should be done for safety reasons and to provide more space for walking and/or cycling. But not to improve “traffic flow and bus journey time reliability”. And while removing parking bays will reduce “conflict between two wheeled vehicles and parked vehicles”, it will likely increase conflict between high-speed motor vehicles passing closely to those cycling.
- The other options considered were not “deemed desirable due to the potential for traffic reassignment in the wider area”, but there is no indication here that any measures to ensure traffic did not reassign to the wider residential area, or that any consideration of traffic reduction and restriction was considered suitable. If TfL is serious about achieving the Mayor’s Transport Strategy, then it must work harder to reduce motor traffic volumes and it must stop producing schemes that increase motor traffic flow.

General points about cycling schemes:

- LCC requires schemes to 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, 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.
- 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.