



London Cycling Campaign Consultation Response

Bond St Proposals July 2016

(Submitted 27th July 2016)

Details of the proposals for Bond St:

(<https://openforum.westminster.gov.uk/bond-street-enhancement>)

Westminster City Council is embarking on a major project to upgrade Old and New Bond Street in time for the opening of the Elizabeth Line (Crossrail) in 2018. This aims to deliver a fully revitalised public realm environment that reflects Bond Street's reputation and makes the street attractive to visitors in a competitive international environment. The project will reinforce Bond Street's place as a global centre for luxury retail and the international art market. Improving the public spaces in Bond Street has been identified as a priority in the West End Partnership's delivery plan.

Located in the heart of historic Mayfair, Bond Street is an iconic location with an unmatched international reputation for high-end retail, art and culture. Over the years the streetscape has become tired and the quality of the public realm no longer reflects Bond Street's standing. The project will rejuvenate the street by resurfacing the patchwork road, repaving the footways using quality materials, updating the street furniture, lighting and signs.

The City Council, as the local highway authority, will lead the project, working closely with key partners including the New West End Company and Transport for London.

Investment in the public spaces on Bond Street will reconnect the street to the wider Mayfair area and create a unique environment which people will want to visit, spend time and relax in, and where businesses will want to locate.

London Cycling Campaign Response:

Overall we oppose the proposals for Bond St and believe that there are safety concerns for people walking and cycling in their current form.

Our response has been developed with input from the co-chairs of our Infrastructure Review Group and in support of our borough group, Westminster Cycling Campaign.

The most efficient road space use is not for private motor vehicles. The London Cycling Campaign therefore generally expects schemes to be designed to accommodate growth in cycling and to reduce motor vehicle traffic – particularly for journeys 5km or less.

In general, the London Cycling Campaign want, as a condition of funding, all highway development

designed to London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS), with all “Critical Fails” eliminated from the scheme’s Cycling Level of Service assessment (CLOS). We would also strongly suggest that all schemes including cycling provision should be of comparable quality to similar schemes at cities with a high modal share of cycling, i.e. with a CLOS rating of 70 or above.

Given that, we wish to raise the following point with the scheme: given the current status of Oxford Street and existing proposals to pedestrianise Oxford Street are ongoing, the timing of this scheme is decidedly unwise. Any realistic pedestrianisation or part-pedestrianisation of Oxford Street will require huge and strategic shifts in the routing of buses in the area, in fact across the entire west end. There is, the opportunity to radically and strategically redesign the west end for its residents and users based on this.

The likelihood is therefore that this scheme will be rendered largely irrelevant by changes on Oxford Street. We also believe the same principles should apply to the Tottenham Court Road/Gower Street, Baker Street/Gloucester Place schemes and the end of CS11 at Portland Place – that these schemes are relooked at in light of changes around Oxford Street.

Whether or not Oxford Street goes ahead, there is a general point to be made about not just Bond Street but much of the streets around it also – on both sides of Regent Street. These largely narrow streets are ideal for cycling and walking, and the vast majority of journeys starting or ending in these areas will be short ones. Yet pedestrians and cyclists are squeezed to the margins and face huge amounts of hostile, aggressive and fast-moving traffic. The answer is not to spend lots of money on expensive paving materials and tinkering at the margins with some parking changes and some junction changes

The best use of money in this scheme would be to restrict motor traffic using point closures similar to the existing design on Clifford St / New Bond st to create a traffic free zone to allow access for delivery vehicles, residents’ cars and taxis, but not any “through” traffic. Within that zone, “shared space” materials could control traffic speeds and calm drivers, with pedestrians and people cycling able to make short journeys around the area in peaceful conditions. All streets should then allow two-way cycling by default.

The result would be transformational for the area – and likely massively boost retail and resident amenity, as well as enabling a shift from cars to walking, cycling and public transport. This would be entirely in keeping with TfL and the new Mayor’s “Healthy Streets” strategy – and would work well with Oxford Street plans.