

West End Project - Charlotte Street Association Comments

The scheme comprises three elements -

- 1.0 The introduction of two-way working in Gower Street and Tottenham Court Road with all buses in TCR is supported subject to the provision of adequate and appropriately located bus stops (see below).
- 2.0 Improvement of pedestrian amenity in Tottenham Court Road. This is welcome in principle. However, as currently proposed the project materially worsens pedestrian amenity in Torrington Place and Grafton Way (east) which is unacceptable.
- 3.0 Reduction of traffic in TCR by limiting through traffic to buses and bikes. Whilst welcome in principle the current proposals are not supported since they involve significant increase in traffic in the residential streets between Gower Street and TCR and west of TCR (detailed comments below). This outcome is contrary to the principle that through traffic should be directed to main roads to protect residential streets. Modifications are proposed to reduce the problem.

Bus Stops - North & South bound.

North bound. The proposed reduction of bus stops and the location of that proposed is quite unacceptable and impossible to reconcile with Camden's professed concern for the welfare of the old and less mobile.

The distance between the St Giles bus stop and that proposed below Howland Street is 575 ! metres.

The existing stops at Percy Street and Goodge Street station should be retained and an additional one provided south of Howland Street in the location of that proposed.

South bound. The provision of 4 stops in Gower Street should be retained in the equivalent TCR locations.

Taxis.

Taxis should be allowed unrestricted use of TCR. Taxis are part of the public transport system as evidenced by their right to use bus lanes.

The availability of taxis is a requirement for the effective functioning of a major shopping street particularly one as in the case of TCR

where bulky goods are sold.

The identified problem of increased traffic in residential streets would be materially reduced if taxis are allowed in TCR. It would particularly benefit Charlotte Street north & south, Newman Street and produce a 10% reduction in Torrington Place. Apart from the increased traffic volumes in residential streets taxis are notable polluters.

Torrington Place.

A 102% increase in traffic (93% if taxis allowed in TCR) is quite unacceptable.

Torrington Place is home to a large number of families (many large) and has a high pedestrian footfall.

The proposed introduction of a second cycle lane reduces the carriage way with consequent increases in congestion and the contemplated increase in traffic volumes would be seriously damaging to health (known incidence of asthma in children and heart disease in the elderly) and the amenity of residents and pedestrians.

No footfall counts have been made but observation shows the volumes are actually greater than in parts of TCR.

It is quite unacceptable that the health and wellbeing of residents should be endangered by a lack of flexibility in applying the restriction on cars in TCR. Modification to the scheme needs to be made to ameliorate the problem.

It is understood that no studies have been made to establish the extent to which not closing Bedford Avenue, Bailey Street and Capper Street and allowing traffic from these streets into the relevant parts of TCR would reduce traffic volumes in Torrington Place. This exercise needs to be done.

Huntley Street.

This also is a predominantly residential street at the southern end.

No figures have been provided for traffic flows before and after to enable an assessment of the impact of the proposals on this street on the grounds that TFL don't have figures. It is not difficult for LBC to carry out a traffic count of existing levels and model the anticipated changes.

Grafton Way East.

This road is fronted by a large block of flats and the new recently approved hospital and is already heavily trafficked forming as it does part of the gyratory system. The current project would increase traffic volumes by a minimum of 38%.

It is frankly absurd to spend £xm on this project and not resolve the problem of the gyratory system round the hospital. It must be possible to re-configure the existing slip road for buses (relocate buses stand and bus stop?) to allow all north bound traffic coming along Euston Road to proceed without being forced into the gyratory system.

Mortimer Market.

This site is identified in the Fitzrovia AAP as an opportunity site for POS. Para 10.5 Mortimer Market Highway -

“Create public space with seating and planting by reclaiming carriage way and car parking space”

The AAP is a statutory document and it is quite extraordinary that its provisions are so totally ignored and instead of providing much needed open space it is turned into a traffic roundabout.

An amenity space adjacent to the cancer centre would be of great benefit to both users and local residents.

The proposal needs to be modified to keep Capper Street open and provide a POS in Mortimer Market.

Advertising Hoarding.

The removal of the existing large hoarding opposite Torrington Place should be secured as part of the project and a new amenity space created here and in front of the ventilation shaft which should be covered by climbers.

Charlotte Street Association
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