

The Camden (Torrington Place to Tavistock Square) (Prescribed Routes, Waiting and Loading Restrictions and Loading Places) Traffic Order [2017]

PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCE: DPI/X5210/17/8

Proof of Evidence - Camden Cycling Campaign, Witness: Gareth Maer
Title: Support for the Scheme from Organisations in the Area

In December 2015 CCC and the group of people from Living Streets that would in July 2016 become) London Living Streets launched the Safer Bloomsbury campaign to gather support for the scheme from local businesses and colleges.

We handed leaflets, Appendix 1, to people using the Tavistock Place cycle track suggesting that they persuade their CEO or equivalent to write to Councillor Phil Jones expressing their support.

By July 2016, over three dozen businesses, colleges and institutions had sent statements of support. We put these all on <http://saferbloomsbury.org.uk/supporting-organisations/>



Here are some extracts:

Continental Stores, 54 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9RG

Mohamed Jelali, General Manager

We did not manage to speak to this business during the consultation process but have recently made contact and they are very keen that their views should be presented to the Inquiry, as follows:

“We are writing in support of the recent trial cycle lanes along Torrington Place, Gordon Square and Tavistock Place. We opened our second shop at the ‘Continental Stores’ site on Tavistock Place in 2014. We are an independent coffee shop serving coffees, brunches, sandwiches, cakes and pastries. Our other shop is on Store St. The arrival of the Tavistock Place cycle scheme has been of great benefit to our business. It has made the shop more attractive for people to sit, especially outside, as the street is now so much calmer and less polluted. The steady stream of cyclists also creates a lively street scene, far more so than a stop-go traffic jam. A significant proportion of our customers are cyclists who stop by the shop as they travel through the area. In addition, we use the cycle track every day to deliver food from our kitchen, which is here on Tavistock Place, to our other shop on Store St. We use a freight bike to make these deliveries, which are now much easier and safer to carry out. We do receive some deliveries by vehicle, but we have had no problems with these, after the drivers had quickly learnt the routes they need to take once the one-way system had been introduced. Overall, the cycle scheme has significantly improved the attractiveness of this neighbourhood for our business, and we very much wish it to be retained.”

Farrell + Clark Architects, Tudor House, 35 Gresse Street, W1T 1QY

Ed Griffin RIBA Partner

“Farrell + Clark Architects have been based in the Borough of Camden now for 7 years with a lease for many more. One of the key reasons for choosing to locate our office in this Borough was for its public transport links and commitment to improving the provisions for cycling. The Tavistock/Torrington Place scheme now directly links our office to the main train stations at Kings Cross and Euston. As an architectural practice with a core belief in sustainable development we also try ourselves to keep our own carbon footprint on the planet as small as possible. This includes encouraging and supporting those of us who wish to cycle to the office. Our research has shown that the biggest obstacle is the belief that cycling is not safe in London. The excellent provision now for cycling in the Tavistock/Torrington Place trial is definitely one of the attractions of the neighbourhood to us, and feedback from those of us here who use it already is overwhelmingly positive, and most important improving safety for all road users and pedestrians.”

London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, WC1E 7HT

Professor Dame Anne Mills DCMG CBE FMedSci FRS, Acting Director and Deputy Director & Provost.

“The London School employs 1400 staff and have approximately 1100 London-based postgraduate students. A significant number of our staff and students based in London choose to cycle to work; however, an even larger proportion would cycle if they felt comfortable and safe on the roads. ... The protected cycle lanes make

active travel a real option for everyone, not just the young and fit, and have an additional benefit of reducing air pollution. The cycling scheme is good for our organisation and for health of all Londoners whether they cycle or not.”

Marie Stopes International, 1 Conway Street, Fitzroy Square, W1T 6LP.

31 individuals, employed here wrote a joint letter.

“The scheme has significantly improved our daily cycles, helping us feel much more safe, less stressed, and has generally made our commute significantly more enjoyable. Indeed, one of our senior staff broke their rib in an accident on the old cycle path due to the volume of cycle traffic. We are confident that protected cycle lane initiatives such as this will encourage more cyclists from our workplace to make the choice to commute by bicycle as well, and that increasing cycling access and reducing traffic congestion and related pollution is a good thing for residents and workers in the area.”

Nuffield Foundation, 28 Bedford Square, WC1B 3JS

Josh Hillman, Acting Director and Director of Education.

“Consistent with the general pattern in London, a significant number of our employees cycle to work and to meetings on a daily or regular basis. There are others who would cycle to and from the office and during the day to meetings if they felt that doing so were safer than it currently is. We also have a large number of visitors to the building for meetings, seminars and conferences and a small, significant and growing number of these cycle to be with us.”

Price and Myers

37 Alfred Place, London WC1E 7DP

Peter Dash, Partner

“Price & Myers is a leading structural engineering consultancy employing over 185 people based in Bloomsbury (on Alfred Place). We provide structural, civil and sustainability consultancy services and have been based in the area for over 35 years. We have always provided excellent facilities for the cyclists in our office with showers, lockers and secure cycle storage, not least because many of the Partners (including myself) cycle to work. Like many businesses in London, the number of our employees who cycle has grown over the past few years but it has now reached a peak. We know, because we have asked, that the limiting factor is a perceived lack of safety. An even larger proportion of our employees would cycle to the office if they felt comfortable and safe on the roads. We could easily double the number of people who cycle to work if they had safe, segregated cycle paths to use. ... The excellent provision for cycling in the Tavistock/Torrington Place trial scheme has already had an impact and encouraged more people to cycle to work.”

SOAS University of London, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, WC1H 0XG

Valerie Amos, Director.

“SOAS is a major institution in the Borough of Camden, with more than 5,000 students and 1,000 staff members. A large number of our community chooses to cycle to campus. In a survey we conducted last year, ... we learned that more would cycle if there were improvements in cycling provision. We recognise that the scheme also has wider benefits such as helping to improve air quality, ensuring the roads are

safer for pedestrians to cross, and creating a pleasant environment to work and study ... SOAS welcomes the Tavistock Place and Torrington Place road improvements ...”

Springer Nature, 4 Crinan Street, N1 9XW

Charlie Thelu, Head of Strategic Sourcing Corporate Procurement

“SpringerNature is one of the world’s leading global research, educational and professional publishers based in King’s Cross and employing c.2000 people in this area.... The excellent provision for cycling in the Tavistock/Torrington Place trial scheme will help us attract and retain the employees our business needs to continue to thrive. They will also make London a more attractive city in which to build and run our business. The scheme is, on balance, excellent for our business and for London.”

Conclusion

There is substantial support for the scheme amongst the local business community. We have heard that a few local businesses initially had some problems with deliveries but these will mainly have been overcome by changes in routine, the use of a trolley, etc. The statements of support on the Safer Bloomsbury website demonstrate that, to local businesses, the advantages of the scheme outweigh the disadvantages.

Appendix 1 - Leaflet to gather responses from organisations



Help to keep the new space for cycling on Tavistock Place

Tavistock Place is now pleasanter for everyone who lives, works or studies in the area.

Help us to keep it!

Get together with your colleagues or fellow students and ask your employer or college to send a statement to Camden Council.

Local businesses and institutions must show their support to ensure that this time-limited trial becomes permanent. It is already under attack from groups whose road space has been reduced. Send supporting statements as soon as possible. More information and letter templates at: saferbloomsbury.org.uk.

Contact: info@saferbloomsbury.org.uk

