

BLOOMSBURY RESIDENTS' ACTION GROUP

PROOF OF EVIDENCE 10

Practical problems caused for local businesses and residents

SUMMARY

The Full Version of Proof of Evidence 10 sets out eight statements from local businesses and residents about the adverse effects of the trial. The Summary takes extracts from those statements:

1. ..since the implementation of the one-way system in September 2016 I sadly find myself in an all-lose situation. My shop is impossible to access without encountering bumper to tail traffic backed up for the whole length of Judd Street. This makes it a supremely unpopular destination for delivery drivers, which in turn impacts on the smooth running of the business.
2. My two outside tables at the front of the shop (20% of overall seating capacity) are no longer attractive to customers as no-one in their right mind wants to inhale such a heavy dose of vehicular pollutants with their morning coffee/lunch or tea.
3. Customers have been complaining since the new setup as due to having mobility problems - the change has severely impeded them.
4. We also have problems with our deliveries from our suppliers as they are having to use longer routes.

5. As a Costume Designer I have to buy (from the West End) & hire large quantities of clothes (as in photo) and transport them to fittings to various production companies that are based in and around Soho. I obviously cannot do this using public transport nor on a bicycle.



6. Previously my commute in my car from Wicklow Street to Cavendish Square car park along Tavistock and Torrington Place would take me 15 minutes. Now because of the one way system the same journey, now along the periphery of the congestion charge route of Gray's Inn Road/ Euston Road the journey now takes up to an hour.
7. I work long hours up to 12 hours a day and now have the added stress of an extra hour, either way, in my commute. Many times the stress of the drive has brought on migraines. I am a freelance worker and if due to a migraine I'm unable to work I lose out financially. Therefore seriously affecting my work.
8. I just don't feel that TFL or Camden Council are listening to me nor any of the local residents . We don't want this proposal to be made permanent. There has to be a better solution.

9. I am the Chairman of the Gower Street Hotel Association and I represent ten of the hotels on Gower Street. We are writing to oppose the Torrington Place traffic scheme, implemented by Camden Council. We are all in agreement that this new traffic system is impacting on our businesses in a negative way.
10. There are a number of companies that deliver to us (these include Cash & Carry, laundry services and grocers who deliver fresh produce, to name but a few) they have informed us that they are now always behind schedule and that a large proportion of their delivery hours are spent sitting in traffic, trying to come West from Kings Cross. One of our suppliers... has told us that they may have to stop our deliveries as they cannot afford the time that it takes to get to us in WC1.
11. Many of our guests... who arrive from Europe on the Eurostar or at Kings Cross, Liverpool Street etc. are shocked at the journey time from the stations to the hotel, not to mention the affect that this has on taxi fares – we had a disabled guest who spent £35.00 on a taxi from Kings Cross to Gower Street; a distance of 0.6 miles. Our regular guests are beginning to move away from Gower Street and towards the stations so as to not have to pay these increased fares or face the discomfort of sitting in traffic for prolonged periods of time. This area thrives on students and tourists, the B&B's on Gower Street have been servicing this need for accommodation for the last 70 years, and now, because of this ill-thought-out traffic scheme our businesses are under threat.
12. On a personal level, I was born at UCH and have lived in this area for 40 years (for the last 10 in Gordon Mansions, Torrington Place, with my wife and two children). We have found that, as residents, it is becoming increasingly intolerable to 'live' in this area. Negotiating traffic east of Torrington Place is scandalous – my father, who is old and infirm, has to be driven to the health centre on Handel Street (0.5 miles away), the return journey can take upwards of 25 minutes. My small children, who are committed to various community activities in Coram's Fields and beyond, have to allow over 40 minutes to get home. It is distressing and is having a truly negative impact on our lives.
13. We do not feel that the council has properly considered the counter impacts of these road changes on the environment, let alone local businesses and/or residents.

14. The trial scheme takes too little account of the need for vehicles to park and unload along Tavistock Place....Asking residents to use the Herbrand Street unloading bay (assuming there is space) increases unloading times. A resident reports having to park for 45 minutes at a time when bringing crates of belongings home. The time was used carrying the crates about 50 yards along the street to the front door. Unloading would have taken about 5 minutes if it had been possible to park outside the front door, take crates inside with the front door left open, and then drive off.
15. In the capacity of both resident and manager of a building, I find that I need to organize numerous "white van" visits – workers with equipment etc. ...The new cycle track scheme adds to these costs by increasing travel times, raising fuel costs and removing loading and unloading. Moreover delivery services do not calculate these additional charges based simply on actual costs but their expected costs, so if there is an increase in the likelihood of not finding a loading or unloading space a charge is levied nevertheless.

16. [I am a photographer and] resident of Derby Lodge, Wicklow Street, King's Cross.... I have lived here since 2001 and shortly after, started riding a motorcycle for my business journeys around London, in particularly when I go into the Town centre (for me that is Oxford Street/Tottenham Court Road).
17. My main route into Town would be along Tavistock Place/ Torrington Place as this is a safer route than using the Euston Road, however since reducing the traffic flow and making Tavistock/Torrington Place one way for motorised traffic, I am now forced, along with the majority of the traffic travelling along Gray's Inn Road, to use Euston Road.
18. Another side effect of this badly designed cycleway is that the Euston Road Westbound Bus Lane is now constantly congested because all the Taxi cars are forced to travel down it, thus making my journey much more dangerous than it had previously been.
19. On the occasions that I now use the Tavistock/Torrington Place, I have observed that the cycle lanes are always empty but for 4 or 5 cyclists. It is clear to me they are only used for a couple of hours in the morning and in the afternoons during the rush hour, while all the rest of the traffic is constantly gridlocked on Euston Road travelling Westbound.
20. In my opinion, this new cycle lane is the cause of the often gridlocked Westbound Euston Road (and the King's Cross end of Gray's Inn Road) and the rise in pollution because of it.

21. I have lived in the neighbourhood for 26 years, in a flat just east of Brunswick Square - on Lloyd Baker St. Over this time I became a regular visitor to Marchmont St and to the shopping centre. Frequently using the car to take dry cleaning to Marchmont St, and make the most of the small hardware and electrical shops as well using the post office to pick up and post parcels, and stock up at the health food shop.... Since the absurd restrictions on Tavistock and Torrington it has proved impossible to continue this routine, one because the queues, mostly cabs, stretching down from Judd St and Hunter St make it impossible to get through and also because I can no longer turn left into Tavistock and left again into Marchmont.

22. Of course I could use a bike or go on foot, but I have shoulder injuries that make carrying a bunch of dry cleaning and shopping for any distance impossible.
23. Now I go up to Chapel St or use shops to the east, including Waitrose in St John St or Islington. It's a shame because I loved that little corner of Bloomsbury and now it is just marooned in a mess of traffic regulations and back to back vehicles.

FULL VERSION OF PROOF OF EVIDENCE 10

Practical problems caused for local businesses and residents

1. Statement from Proprietor of café in Judd Street

- a) I write as the owner of a long established business in Judd Street.
- b) Throughout the past twenty five years years I have had the pleasure to serve the local community and remain the destination for many residents to have a coffee and a chat with other locals. The area's gentrification and subsequent saturation of hipster cafes has been both an advantage and disadvantage, but we continue to survive.
- c) However, since the implementation of the one-way system in September 2016 I sadly find myself in an all-lose situation. My shop is impossible to access without encountering bumper to tail traffic backed up for the whole length of Judd Street. This makes it a supremely unpopular destination for delivery drivers, which in turn impacts on the smooth running of the business. I frequently have to drive in with supplies from the cash and carry and manoeuvring through the traffic just adds precious time to my already heavy work schedule.
- d) My two outside tables at the front of the shop (20% of overall seating capacity) are no longer attractive to customers as no-one in their right mind wants to inhale such a heavy dose of vehicular pollutants with their morning coffee/lunch or tea.
- e) Despite the assurances that the traffic jams would dissipate when drivers became accustomed to the scheme it is simply not the case, and serves to highlight the need for PROPER, INCLUSIVE consultation which was not carried out in this instance.

Jo Wright
PATISSERIE DEUX AMIS

2. Statement from Pharmacist in Leigh Street

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

- a) I would like to add my support in opposing the present Tavistock place setup.
- b) We are a long established Pharmacy serving the local community.

- c) Customers have been complaining since the new setup as due to having mobility problems the change has severely impeded them.
- d) We also have problems with our deliveries from our suppliers as they are having to use longer routes.
- e) We also make deliveries to local residents by car and again to get to eg. Gower st area I have to go onto Euston Rd first.
- f) There is more congestion on our road Leigh St /Judd St and surrounding minor roads causing increase in pollution.

Mr Kirti Patel (Pharmacist)
John Walker Chemist
Leigh Street

3. Statement by Costume Designer, who runs her own business

- a) Photo showing goods to be transported



- b) As a Costume Designer I have to buy (from the West End) & hire large quantities

of clothes and transport them to fittings to various production companies that are based in and around Soho. Please see attached photo of the amount of clothes that I have to transport around. I obviously cannot do this using public transport nor on a bicycle.

- c) Previously my commute in my car from Wicklow Street to Cavendish Square car park along Tavistock and Torrington Place would take me 15 minutes. Now because of the one way system the same journey, now along the periphery of the congestion charge route of Gray's Inn Road/ Euston Road the journey now takes up to an hour. I pay the residents discount congestion charge and now have to sit in gridlocked traffic with all the other drivers who either don't need to or don't want to pay the congestion charge . All sitting on the Euston Road creating even more pollution.
- d) Where is the sense in that?
- e) I work long hours up to 12 hours a day and now have the added stress of an extra hour, either way, in my commute. Many times the stress of the drive has brought on migraines. I am a freelance worker and if due to a migraine I'm unable to work I lose out financially. Therefore seriously affecting my work.
- f) No one at TFL or Camden has taken into account the very serious gridlock that the new one way system have created on the area of King's Cross Road / Swinton Street / Gray's Inn Road. An already heavily congested area which is now creating even heavier pollution in this neighbourhood. I live in Wicklow Street and I've been told that the air pollution is now better in a very small section of Tavistock and Torrington Place. Really ? So what exactly are TFL and Camden doing as they seem totally ignorant to how this isn't solving air pollution it's simply diverting heavier loads of traffic to different streets in the area, yet I imagine they're not testing the air in those areas that are now greatly affected.
- g) The map of the Tavistock Place / Torrington Place that Camden and TFL were using conveniently doesn't extend to the outer area of Gray's Inn Road or Euston Road. If my car is parked on Swinton Street it has often taken me over half an hour to get to the lights at the top of Gray's Inn Road....a distance you could walk in less than five minutes. However if I'm transporting large quantities of clothes to a fitting in the West End walking / public transport is not an option. Nor is a black cab as the fares have increased due to the traffic congestion.
- h) This one-way system has caused great devastation to those of us who live and work here yet TFL and Camden Council just don't care and seem more concerned about creating a Bloomsbury Student Campus which is all about the 'safe' freedom of movement for the young and able bodied whilst ignoring the needs of the local residents who actually live here and pay Council Tax. Why don't local residents opinions matter ? The lanes are only used during the rush hour traffic and then during the rest of the day are virtually empty.
- i) Not everyone has a nine to five job in an office where they have the luxury of choosing how they commute to work. Many of us NEED to use a car.
- j) I just don't feel that TFL or Camden Council are listening to me nor any of the local residents . We don't want this proposal to be made permanent. There has to be a better solution.

Fiona Dealey 17th September 2017.

4. Statement from Chairman of Gower Street Hotel Association

Gower Street Hotel Association
65-67 Gower Street
London WC1E 6HJ
info@ridgemounthotel.co.uk
02076361141

To Whom it May Concern

I am the Chairman of the Gower Street Hotel Association and I represent ten of the hotels on Gower Street.

We are writing to oppose the Torrington Place traffic scheme, implemented by Camden Council. We are all in agreement that this new traffic system is impacting on our businesses in a negative way.

There are a number of companies that deliver to us (these include Cash & Carry, laundry services and grocers who deliver fresh produce, to name but a few) they have informed us that they are now always behind schedule and that a large proportion of their delivery hours are spent sitting in traffic, trying to come West from Kings Cross. One of our suppliers, who delivers from Essex has told us that they may have to stop our deliveries as they cannot afford the time that it takes to get to us in WC1.

Many of our guests (the majority of whom are tourists) who arrive from Europe on the Eurostar or at Kings Cross, Liverpool Street etc. are shocked at the journey time from the stations to the hotel, not to mention the affect that this has on taxi fares – we had a disabled guest who spent £35.00 on a taxi from Kings Cross to Gower Street; a distance of 0.6 miles. Our regular guests are beginning to move away from Gower Street and towards the stations so as to not have to pay these increased fares or face the discomfort of sitting in traffic for prolonged periods of time. This area thrives on students and tourists, the B&B's on Gower Street have been servicing this need for accommodation for the last 70 years, and now, because of this ill-thought-out traffic scheme our businesses are under threat.

On a personal level, I was born at UCH and have lived in this area for 40 years (for the last 10 in Gordon Mansions, Torrington Place, with my wife and two children). We have found that, as residents, it is becoming increasingly intolerable to 'live' in this area. Negotiating traffic east of Torrington Place is scandalous – my father, who is old and infirm, has to be driven to the health centre on Handel Street (0.5 miles away), the return journey can take upwards of 25 minutes. My small children, who are committed to various community activities in Coram's Fields and beyond, have to allow over 40 minutes to get home. It is distressing and is having a truly negative impact on our lives.

The council have not considered the residents and small businesses when implementing this traffic scheme. **Why has there been no thought given to alternative routes (East to West) that might allow this scheme to be implemented with less disruption to the residents/businesses in this area?** At the moment, the side streets around our businesses and homes are becoming rat runs with a dramatic increase in pollution, noise and discomfort.

We do not feel that the council has properly considered the counter impacts of these road changes on the environment, let alone local businesses and/or residents.

Yours Faithfully

Aled Rees

5. Statement by local resident about the practical problems posed for daily living

- a) The trial scheme takes too little account of the need for vehicles to park and unload along Tavistock Place. There is an unloading bay at the top of Herbrand Street but it is too small. The photos below show a van delivering laundry to hotels east of Herbrand Street. It takes up more than the bay by several feet. This sort of delivery takes more than a minute or two. There are similar long parks by vehicles bringing building materials, etc to buildings nearby. The Herbrand Street unloading bay is also sometimes used by ambulances because there are not always enough ambulance bays.



- b) Asking residents to use the Herbrand Street unloading bay (assuming there is space) increases unloading times. A resident reports having to park for 45 minutes at a time when bringing crates of belongings home. The time was used carrying the crates about 50 yards along the street to the front door. Unloading would have taken about 5 minutes if it had been possible to park outside the front door, take crates inside with the front door left open, and then drive off.
- c) Unloading is difficult enough on the south side of Tavistock Place but even more difficult for residents on the north side of Tavistock Place because of the need to cross the road, possibly heavily laden. And how are residents expected to move house? How far must furniture be carried along the pavement? The practical implications of this trial have not been thought through.

Diana Scarrott, Tavistock Place, London

6. Statement by manager of a building in the area who is also a resident

- a) In the capacity of both resident and manager of a building, I find that I need to organize numerous "white van" visits – workers with equipment etc. Traffic jams raising travel times, the congestion charge, parking charges, abandoned deliveries and parking fines all add to the cost of the services provided, which are passed on to residents even though many of these restrictive measures are intended to stop the flow from outside the residential area.

- b) Though these costs arise in the management of the building and are reflected in service charges, leaseholders and tenants bear similar costs for private deliveries and the maintenance and repair of their household equipment. Moreover the provision of services at the public cost, for example, meals on wheels, district nurse visits and ferrying medics to hospitals, are similarly affected. In an area of London where car ownership has already been rendered impractical by such restrictions, there is a far greater private reliance on deliveries, perhaps acutely so in the case of the elderly and infirm. The cumulative cost of these restrictions largely designed to manage or restrict through traffic bears most heavily on those on low incomes.
- c) The new cycle track scheme adds to these costs by increasing travel times, raising fuel costs and removing loading and unloading. Moreover delivery services do not calculate these additional charges based simply on actual costs but their expected costs, so if there is an increase in the likelihood of not finding a loading or unloading space a charge is levied nevertheless. This means that any loading/unloading area must have a surfeit of space to ensure a high probability of finding an open bay.
- d) However, if we reverted to the original road layout which existed up to 2005, cycle lane east, next to vehicle line east, next to vehicle lane west, next to cycle lane west with no physical cycle lane dividers, there would be material cost savings during off-peak times where there could be both loading and unloading and drop offs and pickups on to the pavements meeting the needs of residents rather than exclusive interest of transient traffic.

Paul Cockle, 18/09/17

7. Statement by local photographer who is also local resident

- a) I am a resident of Derby Lodge, Wicklow Street, King's Cross which is located to the East of Gray's Inn Road, a short distance from the new cycle lanes. I have lived here since 2001 and shortly after, started riding a motorcycle for my business journeys around London, in particularly when I go into the Town centre (for me that is Oxford Street/Tottenham Court Road).
- b) My main route into Town would be along Tavistock Place/ Torrington Place as this is a safer route than using the Euston Road, however since reducing the traffic flow and making Tavistock/Torrington Place one way for motorised traffic, I am now forced, along with the majority of the traffic travelling along Gray's Inn Road, to use Euston Road.
- c) Another side effect of this badly designed cycleway is that the Euston Road Westbound Bus Lane is now constantly congested because all the Taxi cars are forced to travel down it, thus making my journey much more dangerous than it had previously been.
- d) On the occasions that I now use the Tavistock/Torrington Place, I have observed that the cycle lanes are always empty but for 4 or 5 cyclists. It is clear to me they are only used for a couple of hours in the morning and in the afternoons during the rush hour, while all the rest of the traffic is constantly gridlocked on Euston Road travelling Westbound.
- e) In my opinion, this new cycle lane is the cause of the often gridlocked Westbound Euston Road (and the King's Cross end of Gray's Inn Road) and the rise in pollution because of it.

- f) The Tavistock/Torrington Place roadway should be returned back to 2-way traffic for ALL road users and not just a select few.

Darren Brade, Photographer

8. Statement demonstrating adverse impact on business in Marchmont Street and local area

- a) I have lived in the neighbourhood for 26 years, in a flat just east of Brunswick Square - on Lloyd Baker St. Over this time I became a regular visitor to Marchmont St and to the shopping centre. Frequently using the car to take dry cleaning to Marchmont St, and make the most of the small hardware and electrical shops as well using the post office to pick up and post parcels, and stock up at the health food shop. I could easily access the street and surrounding area and was often able to then continue on into town for meetings at publishers and at the BBC. I also used to regularly use Carluccio's and Waitrose, but it's the small shops on Marchmont that I miss using most. Since the absurd restrictions on Tavistock and Torrington it has proved impossible to continue this routine, one because the queues, mostly cabs, stretching down from Judd St and Hunter St make it impossible to get through and also because I can no longer turn left into Tavistock and left again into Marchmont.
- b) Of course I could use a bike or go on foot, but I have shoulder injuries that make carrying a bunch of dry cleaning and shopping for any distance impossible. In fact carrying dry cleaning for a mile is just not practical, and impossible to do on a bike.
- c) Now I go up to Chapel St or use shops to the east, including Waitrose in St John St or Islington. It's a shame because I loved that little corner of Bloomsbury and now it is just marooned in a mess of traffic regulations and back to back vehicles.

Jill Waters
Lloyd Baker St WC1X