

Deputation to Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee 6th February 2024 Camden Transport Strategy Annual Update 2023: A submission from David Harrison, Vice Chair, London Living Streets

London Living Streets is the London branch of Living Streets, the National Charity for Pedestrians. We are volunteers who campaign to promote walking and a better walking environment. We have strongly supported Camden's Transport Strategy, which is exemplary, and led to the transformation of the borough

Camden's achievements

Camden has many recent achievements, which have produced major benefits for pedestrians. We do not list them all, but pick out a few:

- The completion of Princes Circus which is not only a great public space in itself but forms part of an important walking route between the British Museum, Seven Dials, Covent Garden and Trafalgar Square. It is a triumph.
- The many additional pedestrian crossings, installed or planned, including those on York Way, Haverstock Hill, Camden St and Earnshaw Way
- The Camden Square and Arlington Rd LTNs
- The School Streets programme; and
- The extensive streateries programme, which must be the most extensive in the country

The Future

We welcome many of the forthcoming proposals, eg for Holborn, for the Regent's Park Estate, for new LTNs, eg in Darmouth Park, for improvements to main roads such as Kilburn High Rd and Camden High St and East/West Camden cycle route, which we trust will be designed to benefit pedestrians as well.

Key priorities for London Living Streets

While welcoming Camden's achievements and plans, we urge Camden look forward to further pedestrian improvements, many of which Camden is already considering, in particular:

- For the Regent's Park Estate, creating a low pollution green corridor through to Albany St and Chester Gate
- For the Euston area,
 - creating a southern Well-being Walk to King's Cross through Endsleigh Gardens and Woburn Walk. Close the junction of Gordon St and Euston Road to motor traffic.
 - Improving pedestrian access to Euston Station across Euston Road
- For King's Cross, install a pedestrian crossing of Euston Rd from the east side of Pancras Rd to the east side of Belgrove St..
- For the Holborn Area,
 - pedestrianising Great Russell St outside the British Museum, while allowing buses to continue to use it; it is a disgrace that one of world's greatest cultural institution stands on a heavily polluted road

- Widening the pavement of Drury Lane north of Macklin St, by removing parking. The pavement is very narrow here; delivery could be allowed by providing loading bays for very short periods on the widened pavement
- Continuing to work with Westminster Council to install a filter on Great Queen St; and to improve pedestrian crossings on Kingsway, notably to improve the link between Sardinia St. and Kemble St..
- For the Camden Area, a green walking corridor along Miller/Plender St.
- For the South End Green Area, taking forward the Neighbourhood Forum's Vision, creating more space for pedestrians

General point about the place of pedestrians in the Camden Transport Strategy

While Camden has done an enormous amount to improve conditions for pedestrians, the Transport Strategy and its update, tend to pitch walking benefits as additional to other projects. For example, there is a section on Healthy routes for cycling, and Healthy routes for buses, we would like to see a section on Healthy routes for pedestrians. We think this would give walking routes a greater focus.

We would also like to see more explicitly pedestrian-focused outputs in Table 1 (Review of main outputs/deliverable). Outputs which might be included are 1) additional pedestrian crossings, 2) improved walking routes through estates, 3) widened pavements and 4) new green corridors.

Conclusions

We applaud Camden's remarkable achievements and plans in the Transport Strategy and update, and hope we have made useful proposals for the future.