

Deputation to Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee 6th February 2024

Camden Transport Strategy Annual Update 2023

Thank you for accepting this deputation. My name is John Chamberlain and I am on the committee of the Camden Cycling Campaign. We represent people of all types who cycle in Camden and those who would like to cycle but are afraid to do so.

I would like to commend this report for its thoroughness and clarity. We are very supportive of all that Camden is doing in support of the Transport Strategy and note the contribution that this makes to the Climate and Clean Air Action Plans. The list of what has been delivered in 2023, as shown in Table 1 (section 3.1), is commendable and we also congratulate Camden for finding alternative funding sources given the cuts in TfL (LIP) funding.

It is also good to see progress on metrics such as percentage trips by cycle and on foot on track to the 2024/25 targets.

We have a few comments that we would like to make:

Regarding progress on building Camden's cycle network: 2023 was to a large extent a year of consolidation with many temporary schemes being converted to permanent schemes. We think that Camden's policy of implementing schemes as trials and then, if approved, upgrading them, works well, but it does take time. We are pleased to see that the plans for 2024 include significant new schemes such as the E-W cross-Camden corridor and Clerkenwell Road and hope that this continues the progress towards reaching the challenging target of 40 km of protected cycle tracks by the end of 2025.

On main roads where there are no segregated cycle tracks bus lanes are an important safe space for cycling and Camden has some good examples, such as on Torriano Avenue outside the school, and on Highgate Road. We are aware of requests that these lanes be opened to powered two-wheelers. Cyclists find the proximity of heavier and faster motorcycles and scooters very intimidating, as do pedestrians, and we urge you to resist this. Introducing PTWs would certainly reduce the number of people cycling in Camden.

Many collisions take place at junctions and we are pleased to see progress both on the major roads such as around the Holborn gyratory but also at minor side-roads where improving sight-lines by removing parking and creating junctions with continuous footways where pedestrians have clear priority and motor vehicles are slowed right down is good for cyclists as well as pedestrians.

Progress on Low Traffic Neighbourhoods has been slow. As well as the benefits to residents and visitors from cleaner air, safer streets and the improved amenity, LTNs are a critical part of the cycle network as they enable safe cycle routes through neighbourhoods and create links to and between the protected lanes on main roads. So we are very keen to see this program

accelerate, particularly in the outer parts of the borough such as West Hampstead and Dartmouth Park.

We are aware of the challenges but draw councillors' attention to the results of consultation before and after schemes go in, for example:

- Camden Square LTN: Pre-trial 64% opposed, after trial 65% in favour
- Haverstock Hill cycle lanes: Pre-trial 55% opposed, post-trial 55% in favour

We are glad that adult and child cycle training has resumed and also are pleased to see the proposals for mobility hubs, initially in Somerstown but hopefully branching out into other parts of the borough. We are very keen on the use of cargo bikes as an important way of moving away from traditional delivery vehicles and mobility hubs are an important facilitator of this.

We are concerned about the figures for serious injuries and fatalities shown in Appendix A. Although overall KSI figures are down, this does not apply to pedestrians and cyclists. The supplementary graphs show that one reason for this is a significant increase on the TfL roads (TLRN). We urge Camden to work with TfL on looking at the reasons for this. We note that TfL have recently introduced 20 mph limits on all their roads in Camden and also have introduced segregated cycle lanes on Oakley Square and Hampstead Road; perhaps these will help.

On the subject of TfL, we are very pleased that Camden has worked to challenge TfL to do better, for example with the new safe crossings of Camden Road and the improvements to the initial plans for the Oakley Square lanes and junctions.

Camden continues to be a Cycling Centre of Excellence and we are pleased to live in a borough which consistently features towards the top of the Healthy Streets Scorecard and other independent measures. We are very excited about the plans for 2024 and future years, especially on Clerkenwell Road and the resurrection of the Holborn Liveable Neighbourhood.

Thank you

John Chamberlain

Camden Cycling Campaign