

Safety improvements in King's Cross for cyclists

Engagement Report
July 2014

Engagement Report

Early 2014 Engagement – ‘Have your say on improving King’s Cross for cyclists’

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1 Background

Kings Cross is a busy transport interchange, connecting international and national train services, Tube and bus routes as well as facilitating other road users including cyclists and pedestrians. It sits between the boundary of two London Boroughs—Camden and Islington.

To prepare for the London Olympic and Paralympic Games, Transport for London (TfL) improved a number of junctions in the King's Cross area to make it easier for pedestrians to interchange between rail and other local transport options. Benefits for other road users were also provided.

As part of the Mayor's commitment to make cycling easier and safer, TfL is working in partnership with other organisations including LB Camden and Islington to develop plans to improve King's Cross in the medium and long-term. These will improve conditions for road users including cyclists.

2 Introduction

Between 24 February and 24 March 2014, we invited the public and key stakeholders to comment on our interim proposals to improve King's Cross.

The scheme aims to meet a Mayoral priority to deliver road enhancements to make cycling easier and safer, through physical or design measures, to create pleasant and safer cycling environments.

These proposals included improving the junction of Euston Road with York Way and Gray's Inn Road for cyclists by creating separate controlled crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists across Euston Road and the junction with Gray's Inn Road and York Way. This will particularly benefit cyclists travelling northbound from Gray's Inn Road into York Way or Kings Cross station.

2.1 The proposals

The main benefits/changes included within the proposals were as follows:

- Remodelling the junction of Grey's Inn Road with Euston Road to allow for a new safe crossing facilities for less confident cyclists to access York Way from Gray's Inn Road
- Remodelling the junction of Birkenhead Street with Euston Road. Raising a section of Birkenhead Street to be level with adjacent pavements.
- Changing Birkenhead Street to be 'no exit' except for cyclists
- Removal of pavement on York Way to provide a cycle lane
- Removing one lane of traffic along a section of Pentonville Road to create a mandatory cycle lane
- Extending an existing cycle lane on a section of Pentonville Road, and changing the lane from advisory to mandatory
- Widening of a contraflow bus lane on Pentonville Road to allow cyclists travelling westbound to overtake buses
- Introducing an advisory cycle lane and advance stop line on Kings Cross Bridge
- Removal of a loading bay on Gray's Inn Road

- Reclassification of a traffic lane on Euston Road to include all left-turning traffic onto York Way
- Resurfacing of the carriageway throughout the area

Please refer to the leaflet in appendix A which contains an illustrative map of the proposals.

2.2 King's Cross and Euston Road in the future

Further improvements are proposed in the future, including the north-south cycle route and pedestrian crossing facilities on Euston Road.

We have also been working with stakeholders on a feasibility study of the wider King's Cross area. The study aims to consider how all road users including pedestrians and cyclists, could better use the local road network in the long-term. The study will consider returning the gyratory systems back to two-way working.

3 The Engagement

The engagement, which ran between 4 February and 24 March 2014, was designed to enable Transport for London (TfL) to get a better understanding of local opinion relating to our proposals to improve King's Cross for cyclists.

The objectives of the engagement were:

- To provide clear and concise information so that stakeholders understand the rationale behind the changes and the benefits that will be delivered
- To provide an opportunity for stakeholders to provide their comments on the scheme
- To help to identify if there are further ways we can mitigate construction impacts of the scheme on the local community.

3.1 Who we engaged

The engagement intended to seek the views of people living close to King's Cross. We were also keen to seek the views of local businesses and community groups.

We also consulted stakeholders including Camden and Islington Council, local land owners, London TravelWatch, Living Streets, and Camden Cycling Campaign. A summary of key stakeholder responses is provided in section 4.2.

3.2 Engagement material, distribution and publicity

We produced a leaflet explaining our proposals and this was distributed to approximately 5,540 local households and businesses within the King's Cross Area. A copy of this leaflet is shown in appendix A and a map of the distribution area can be found in appendix B.

The engagement did not ask any specific questions relating to individual elements of the proposals, but sought comments on the overall scheme.

We invited people to respond by providing comments on our online consultation and engagement portal tfl.gov.uk/kingscross-improvements. Stakeholders could also respond by emailing STEngagement@tfl.gov.uk.

3.2 Meetings and public exhibitions

We held drop-in exhibitions over two evenings at the King's Cross Neighbourhood Centre, where information was available to view and TfL staff were on hand to answer questions about the scheme:

Tuesday 4 March 2014: 16:30 – 19:00

Tuesday 11 March 2014: 16:30 – 19:00

Approximately 40 people attended over the two sessions. Attendees were requested to ensure they responded to the engagement via the consultation and engagement portal and as such these issues are reflected within the responses.

Our response to these issues is detailed in 'Responses to Issues Raised' document which can be found in appendix C.

4 Overview of engagement responses

We received a total of 433 responses within engagement period. Of those 421 were from members of the public and 12 were from stakeholders/stakeholder groups.

Below is a summary of the key findings for both respondent groups. The following sections of this report analyse the responses and emerging themes in more detail for each respondent group.

4.1 Responses from Members of the Public

All of the responses received from members of the public were tagged, analysed and key themes identified. This enabled us to identify and address areas of concern. Listed below are the main issues/comments raised by members of the public, together with information about how frequent the comments were raised.

Comment	No of responses	Percentage
Suggests that segregated cycle lanes and/or advance traffic lights for cyclists to be introduced throughout	220	52%
Cycle lanes need to be continuous/mandatory	190	45%
Concerned that the proposals are not safe – especially for cyclists	136	32%
Suggests that TfL should do more at this junction – especially benefits for cyclists	115	27%
TfL need to consider left and right hooks as part of the design	94	22%
Suggests that cyclists and pedestrians need to be given greater priority as part of space allocation	86	20%
Suggests that proposals will create conflicts at the junction between cyclists and pedestrians	76	18%

Suggests removing a traffic lane on Gray's Inn Road to provide a cycle lane	60	14%
Suggests that the gyratory should be removed	26	6%

Our response to these issues is detailed in 'Reponses to Issues Raised' document which can be found in appendix C

Some respondents provided comments supporting the proposals. Please see a selection below:

- I am broadly supportive of the scheme.
- As a non-cyclist and non-motorist I support the proposals. Anything that makes crossing the Euston Road a shade easier here is to be welcomed.
- The Kings Cross junction is currently intimidating and dangerous for all road users, in particular pedestrians and cyclists. I strongly support moves to improve the junction.
- I have a looked at the proposed improvements to the road layout around King's Cross and welcome the addition of some extra cycle lanes in the area. I particularly welcome the introduction of the mandatory cycle lane going east up Pentonville Road.

4.2 Responses from Stakeholders

Twelve responses were received from key stakeholder/stakeholder groups. The majority of stakeholder responses were received either through the consultation and engagement portal or by email.

A synopsis of each of these responses from key stakeholders has been outlined below:

London Borough of Camden

Camden Council supported the need to make major changes to make the junction safer for cyclists and better for pedestrians and also welcomed the proposal to widen the existing bus and cycle contraflow lane westbound on Pentonville Road and to introduce a mandatory cycle lane for eastbound cyclists. However, the Council stated that they believe that the removal of traffic capacity on Euston Road and on Gray's Inn Road is required to fully address their aspirations. They would like to see a more radical design to improve cycling and pedestrian facilities in the area.

Camden Council raised concerns about the amount of available space on the central crossing island on Euston Road and a perceived conflict between pedestrians crossing to and from Pentonville Road and cyclists travelling south to north that are using the new facility.

Camden also requested that TfL provide further justification for introducing no exit from Birkenhead Street onto Euston Road except for cyclists.

London Borough of Islington

Islington Council supported the principle of safer and more welcoming facilities for cyclists at King's Cross. This includes the introduction of an Advance Stop Line at Caledonian Road and the provision of a mandatory cycle lane and widening of the contra-flow bus lane on Pentonville Road.

They believe that the retention of gyratory systems in the King's Cross area minimize the opportunities to improve safety for cyclists. They also raised concerns that they felt that cyclists would not use the new crossing facility across Euston Road as they felt cyclists would not be made aware of it. They also said that pedestrians would disbenefit through losing footway space on the crossing.

Camden Cycling Campaign

Camden Cycling Campaign (CCC) does not support the interim scheme. They state that the new crossing would present a risk of conflict between pedestrians and cyclists.

They also state that there should be more segregated cycle lanes as part of the design including along Gray's Inn Road into York Way and that cycle lanes should be clearly marked.

CCC also put forward a number of design suggestions including the introduction of a contra-flow cycle lane on Pentonville Road, a cycle route via Northdown Street and a cycle route using a contra-flow cycle lane on Gray's Inn Road and St Chads Place.

Sustrans

Sustrans suggests that segregation is required at the junction across all movements and directions unless significant actions are taken to address vehicle speeds and volumes

Sustrans also raised safety concerns about the new crossing and suggested that it may create conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians.

They suggest that segregated lanes should be more widely adopted in the design and suggest a number of other improvements. They also state that they look forward to reviewing wider proposals to remove the gyratory and the new north-south cycle route.

King's Cross and St Pancras Business Partnership

The King's Cross and St Pancras Business Partnership suggested that pedestrians flow may be impacted due to the proposed removal of footway on York Road.

On the whole, The King's Cross and St Pancras Business Partnership welcomed the cycling improvements and stated that their members were appreciative of TfL's efforts to protect cyclists.

University College London

University College London stated that the interim proposals offer an improvement but said that they are piecemeal and do not offer adequate safety for cyclists.

They suggested that an alternative design put forward by internet blogger Maidstone on Bike would be better for the junction. This design introduces segregated cycle

lanes along Euston Road, Pentonville Road, Gray's Inn Road and King's Cross Bridge.

Southwark Living Streets

Southwark Living Streets suggests that the proposals do not meet the suggestions outlined in the report from TRL and Living Streets from 2008 which put forward areas of potential improvement.

They suggest that the proposals do not meet the aspirations of TfL's Roads Task Force.

They also state that there should be more segregated cycle lanes, that left and right hooks and 20 mph limits should have been considered as part of the design.

United Cabbies Group London Limited

United cabbies Group suggest that the introduction of the ASL on King's Cross Bridge will limit visibility for drivers making the manoeuvre onto Gray's Inn Road and strand drivers in the yellow-box junction.

They also suggest that the removal of one lane of traffic on Pentonville Road to provide a mandatory cycle lane will have a significantly negative impact on local traffic causing delays and an increase of pollution levels.

Inclusive Cycling Forum

Inclusive Cycling Forum asks if the proposed design is suitable for disabled cyclists using bikes, trikes and hand bikes.

University of the Arts – Student Union

The Student Union suggests that there should be continuous and protected cycle lanes as part of the design.

They also state that there should be more segregated cycle lanes and that that left and right hooks should have been considered as part of the design.

Cycling Embassy of Great Britain

The Cycling Embassy of Great Britain stated that there should be more segregated cycle lanes and direct routes through the junction.

They suggest that the proposed cycle crossing will prove unpopular for cyclists because of the perceived journey time delays in crossing the junction and suggest a single phased crossing.

They suggest that contra-flow cycle lanes be introduced on Pentonville Road, Caledonian Road and York Way.

Kenji Hirasawa (Boyfriend of Deep Lee – the cyclist killed at the junction) in 2011

He suggests that Advance Stop Line's should be used by cyclists only waiting at the junction and not other road users.

Appendix A – Copy of the engagement leaflet

Background

King's Cross is both a busy road and rail interchange.

To prepare for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, we improved a number of junctions in the King's Cross area to make it easier for pedestrians to interchange between rail and other local transport options. Benefits

for other road users were also provided.

As part of the Mayor's commitment to make cycling easier and safer, further interim changes to roads within the Transport for London Road Network in the King's Cross area have been identified in order to improve facilities for cyclists.

Delivering the improvements

Some temporary lane closures will be necessary, however we aim to minimise the impact on local traffic by undertaking this work when the roads are most quiet including evenings, weekends and holiday periods.

In addition, temporary bus diversions may also be required

to undertake some of the improvement work. Where possible, this will be carried out during weekends in order to minimise disruption to bus users.

Work will begin in Summer 2014 and is expected to take approximately five months to complete.

Find out more

We will be holding two drop-in events where you can come and find out more information about our plans. Members of the King's Cross Improvements team will be on hand to answer your questions.

Dates: 4 and 11 March 2014

Time: 16:30 – 19:00

Venue: King's Cross Neighbourhood Centre 51 Argyle Street London WC1H 8EF

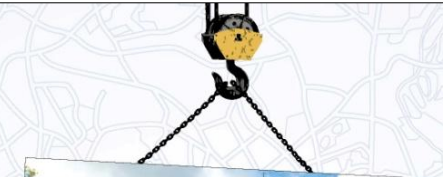
Next steps

Please let us know if you have any comments about the forthcoming improvement work planned for King's Cross by 25 March 2014.

Visit: tfl.gov.uk/kingscross-improvements

Or write to our address: FREEPOST TFL FEEDBACK

We will publish details of the feedback received and responses to the most frequently asked questions on our website tfl.gov.uk/kingscross-improvements in Spring 2014.



Safety improvements in King's Cross for cyclists

MAYOR OF LONDON



Proposed improvements and changes in King's Cross

We have worked in partnership with stakeholders to plan a number of interim changes to roads in the King's Cross area. These will improve conditions for road users, including cyclists.

As an example, work on Gray's Inn Road to York Way. Separate

controlled crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists will be provided across Euston Road at the junction with Gray's Inn Road and York Way.

Please take a look at the map for details of all the proposed improvements.

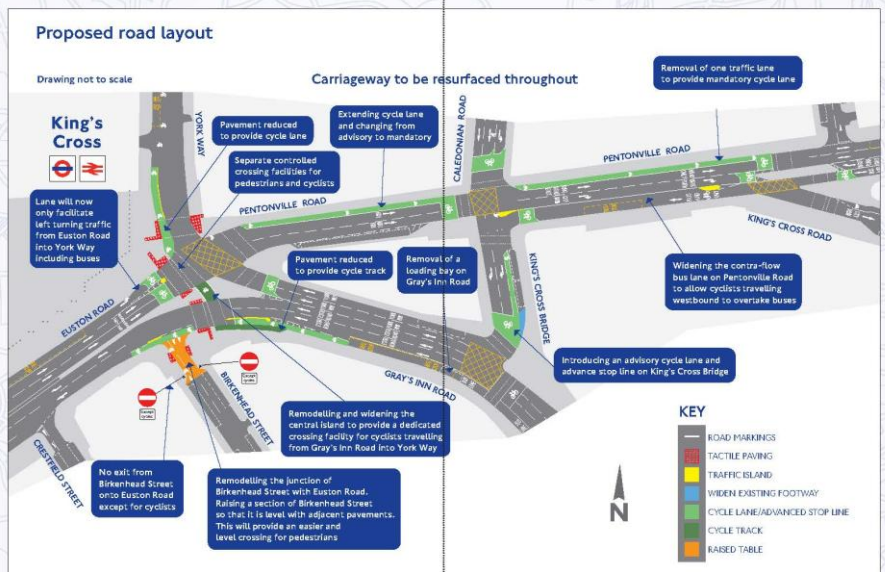
King's Cross in the future

Further improvements are proposed in the future, one of which includes the north-south cycle route.

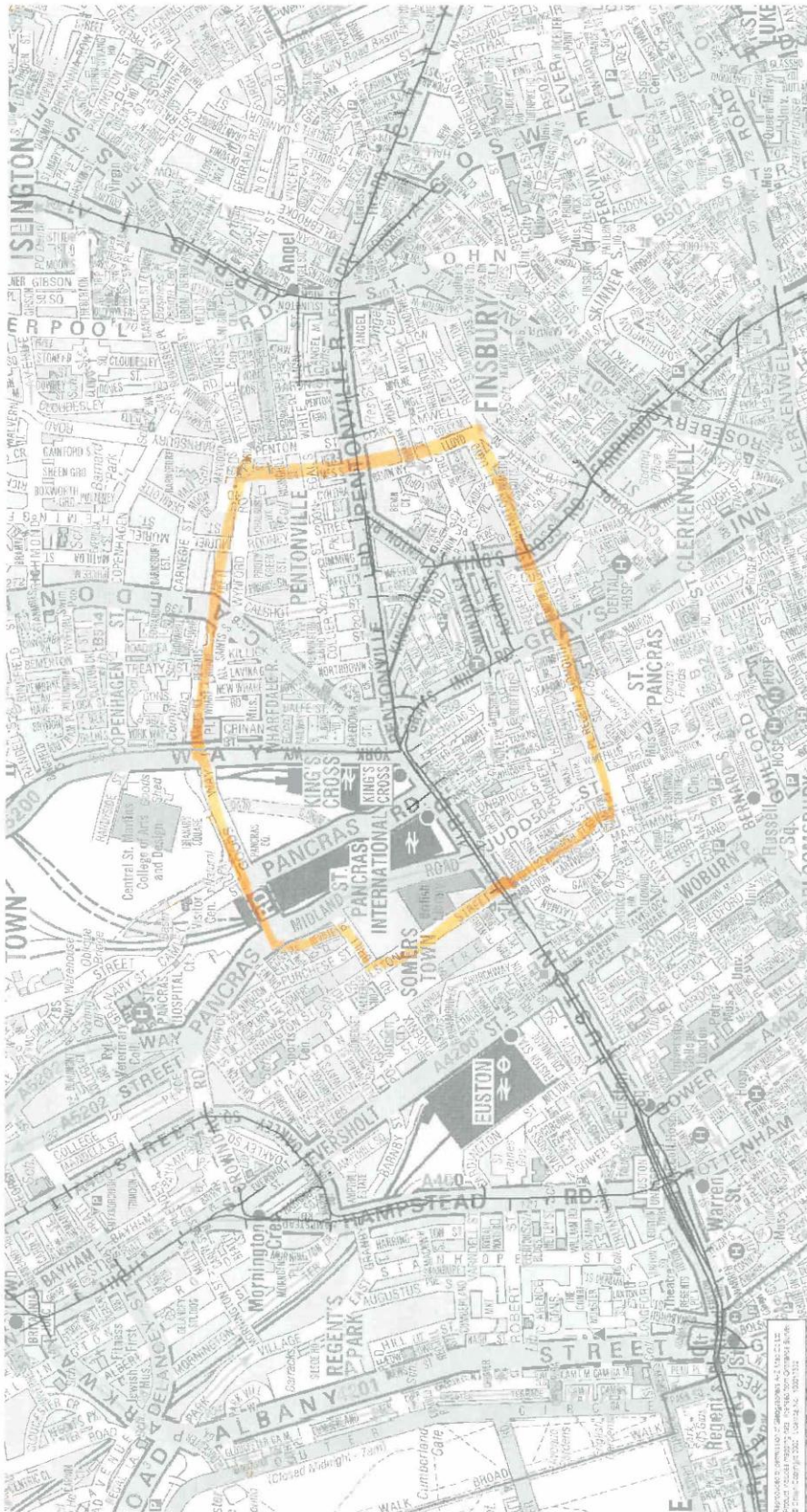
We have also been working with stakeholders on a feasibility study of the King's Cross gyratory systems. The study aims to consider how all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists, could better use the local road

network in the long-term. The study will also consider returning the gyratory systems back to two-way working.

As part of the feasibility study we will develop a concept to illustrate how the roads in King's Cross could function in the future and will consult the wider public in order to help shape these long-term aspirations.



Appendix B – Leaflet distribution area



Appendix C – Response to issues raised

The introduction of advance traffic lights for cyclists

TfL is currently trialling low level traffic signals at a number of test locations.

Subject to satisfactory trials, we anticipate that the Department for Transport will approve the use of low level signals in early 2015. We will then install the signals at identified sites in the future.

The introduction of segregated cycle lanes

In order to introduce segregated cycle lanes in Kings Cross, we would need to create the space for these by removing either lanes of traffic or pedestrian footway.

If a lane of traffic were removed in both directions, it would result in significant delays to local traffic including buses. The subsequent queing would raise safety concerns at other locations in the area.

Removal of pedestrian footway would not be acceptable because there would not be adequate space provided for pedestrians in the area.

Introduction of continuous and mandatory cycle lanes

Where there is capacity to do so, we have provided mandatory cycle lanes as part of our plans. This includes the removal of one lane of traffic on Pentonville Road to create a mandatory cycle lane.

At present, there is not adequate capacity to provide any further cycle lanes as that would require the removal of either traffic lanes or pedestrian footway.

Safety

The plans have been developed in part to provide a safer crossing for cyclists travelling from Gray's Inn Road into York Way. .

We believe that that our plans would create a safer environment at the junction than exists at present.

Cyclists on York Way

Following comments received about the provision of a segregated cycle lane on York Way, we have revised our proposals.

We are now proposing to introduce a semi-segregated cycle lane which will allow cyclists to move onto the main carriageway and overtake stationary buses and taxis.

Further improvements in the Kings Cross area

Some respondents suggested making further improvements including removing the gyratory systems in the King's Cross area.

We are currently planning a number of improvements in the area including the introduction of a north-south cycle route.

We have also been working with stakeholders on a feasibility study of the King's Cross gyratory systems. The study aims to consider how all road users, including

cyclists and pedestrians, could better use the local road network in the long-term. The study will also consider returning the gyratory systems back to two-way working.

As part of the feasibility study we will develop a concept to illustrate how the roads in King's Cross could function in the future and will consult the wider public in order to shape these long-term aspirations.

Left and right hooks

We have considered left or right hook turns as part of our design for King's Cross. For example, we are providing a segregated cycle lane from Gray's Inn Road into Euston Road which we know to be a pinch point for cyclists.

We are also considering other junctions in the wider King's Cross and Euston Road area as part of the aforementioned feasibility study.

Road space allocation

King's Cross and Euston Road is part of the inner ring road which provides a strategic movement function and provides a west to east link across London. The road carries large numbers of bus passengers and freight vehicles necessary to service London.

Where there is spare capacity, we have allocated road space to cyclists. For example, we are planning to remove a traffic lane in Pentonville Road to provide a mandatory cycle lane.

The feasibility study of the Kings Cross Gyratory will consider the inner ring road function more widely and will also review if changes can be made to the capacity of King's Cross/Euston Road in the future,

Conflict between cyclists and pedestrians

We do not believe that conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians travelling between Gray's Inn Road and York Way will be significant.

We have defined a cycle track across the junction. In addition, the signals will operate to allow cyclists north into York Way will do so at the same time that pedestrians are travelling north – south across Euston Road.

The phasing of the signals and the defined cycle track will minimise conflicts at the junction.

Removing a lane of traffic on Gray's Inn Road

There is not adequate capacity to remove a lane of traffic on Gray's Inn Road at the junction with York Road. If a lane were to be removed, it would create an approximately 11 minute delay to traffic including buses.

We believe that our plans provide the safest route for cyclists travelling north from Gray's Inn Road through the junction into York Way.

Removal of the gyratory systems

Please refer to the 'further improvements in the Kings Cross area' section above.