

London Cycling Campaign response to Harrow Northern Cycle Route

13 February 2020

<https://consult.harrow.gov.uk/consult.ti/northcycle/consultationHome>

About the London Cycling Campaign

London Cycling Campaign (LCC) is a charity with more than 20,000 supporters of whom over 11,000 are fully paid-up members. We speak up on behalf of everyone who cycles or wants to cycle in Greater London; and we speak up for a greener, healthier, happier and better-connected capital.

This response was developed with input from LCC's borough groups.

General comments on this scheme:

- This scheme is opposed. It will not enable more people to cycle in the area, nor will it fulfil the potential identified in TfL's Strategic Cycling Analysis (SCA) nearby for cycling, nor will it make existing cycling significantly safer.
- This scheme as currently proposed likely represents a waste of public funds. Harrow Council should not move forward with it, nor should TfL (if it is planned to) provide any funding for it. Instead, Harrow should start afresh with schemes aimed at fulfilling cycling corridors in the borough as identified in the SCA with direct, comfortable and high-quality cycle routes as a bare minimum designed to fulfil TfL's new Cycleway Quality Criteria.
- Indeed, we would urge Harrow Council to, as a matter of absolute urgency, and particularly considering the council's declaration of a climate emergency, do the following:
 - Produce a robust climate emergency action plan and new transport strategy alongside, demonstrating how, as a council, it will act to rapidly reduce car use and unleash the potential for cycling (and walking and public transport use) in the borough and for its residents.
 - Update all Highways engineers and officers training to reflect modern approaches to design and enabling cycling, to ensure all Highways schemes are designed to fulfil a re-tooled transport strategy with appropriate mode shift targets including reductions in car use.
 - Ensure all councillors, particularly those in the cabinet, are fully briefed and trained to understand cycling, cycling schemes, the role of motor traffic in a climate emergency.
 - Both councillors and officers should consider visiting schemes elsewhere in London to learn from, such as those in the Enfield and Waltham Forest mini-Hollands particularly.

- Commit to engaging fully with resident experts and campaigners on such schemes going forward well before public consultation, and importantly, listening to them and taking on board criticisms.

Specific comments on this scheme:

- This route is far from any TfL SCA identified corridor of cycling potential. If there is to be a scheme in the area it should fulfil one of these, such as between Pinner and Harrow, or between Harrow and Hendon, or Wealdstone and Edgware.
- This route is not direct. And not appearing on the SCA implies that the destinations along the alignment will not enable many people to swap car journeys for cycle journeys etc.
- Throughout the scheme there are numerous issues that ensure the route will neither attract new people to cycling, nor provide an attractive route for those brave enough to already cycle here. Using gravel paths on isolated cul-de-sacs will remove most of the potential for this route to be used by women and those with children, and will be unappealing to most types of bicycle. Elsewhere fast-moving main roads with high volumes of motor traffic treated with only narrow advisory cycle lanes will put off all but the most confident current cyclists. This latter approach certainly would fall far outside TfL's Cycleway Quality Criteria, as well as international design guidance on Cycleways.
- As well as failing to provide adequate protected space for cycling on main roads, all junction treatments are far below the standard required to be either likely to be used by those who currently cycle here or enable more people to cycle here.
- The SCA shows the High Road, Boxtree Road and Elms Road junction as featuring a north-south Cycleway here also. North-south and east-west provision here is entirely inadequate at present and as planned.
- Much of the route is not set to be improved and expects those cycling either to do so on pavements with paving slabs or on hostile roads. Neither option is an acceptable approach to increasing cycle numbers and/or safety. Indeed, such an approach is unlikely to be even perceived as a cycle route by most residents.
- The spur on Elms Road appears to have no discernible purpose or destination.
- The route towards Edgware stops well before Edgware.

General points about infrastructure schemes:

- The Mayor's Transport Strategy relies on a growth in cycle trips to keep London moving. This means infrastructure schemes must be designed to accommodate growth in cycling. Providing space for cycling is a more efficient use of road space than providing space for driving private motor vehicles, particularly for journeys of

5km or less. In terms of providing maximum efficiency for space and energy use, walking, cycling, then public transport are key.

- As demonstrated by the success of recent Cycle Superhighways and mini-Holland projects etc., people cycle when they feel safe. For cycling to become mainstream and enable all ages and abilities to cycle, a network of high-quality, direct routes separate from high volumes and/or speeds of motor vehicle traffic is required to/from all key destinations and residential areas in an area. Schemes should be planned, designed and implemented to maximise potential to increase journeys – with links to nearby amenities, residential centres, transport hubs considered from the outset.
- Spending money on cycling infrastructure has been shown to dramatically boost health outcomes in an area. Spending on cycling schemes outranks all other transport modes for return on investment according to a DfT study. Schemes which promote cycling meet TfL's "Healthy Streets" checklist. A healthy street is one where people choose to cycle.
- All schemes should be designed to enable people of all ages and abilities to cycle, including disabled people.
- Evidence from TfL and from many schemes in London, the UK and worldwide shows the economic benefits, including to businesses, to be found from enabling a wider range of people to cycle more. Further evidence shows how cycling schemes also benefit air quality and reduce climate changing emissions, as well as improving resident health outcomes and reducing inactivity, as mentioned above.
- LCC wants, as a condition of funding, all highway development designed to London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS), with a Cycling Level of Service (CLOS) rating of 70 or above, with all "critical issues" eliminated. Above 2,000 Passenger Car Unit (PCUs) motor vehicle movements per day, or 20mph motor traffic speeds, cycling should be physically separated from motor traffic.