

Torrington Tavistock Scheme Objection 20171011

The Camden (Torrington Place to Tavistock Place) (Prescribed Routes, Waiting and Loading Restrictions and Loading Places) Traffic Order [2017].

Objection.

1. The first responsibility of a highway authority is to ensure that the roads comply with the relevant central government regulations and advice before embarking on any changes such as new traffic schemes as is the case here. However, Camden do not do this in the case of tactile paving at pedestrian crossings where there is a significant proportion that do not comply with 'The Guidance on the use of Tactile Paving Surfaces Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions 1998'. In particular, the lack of tactile paving at pedestrian crossing refuges [see my Tactile Paving Guidance B 1988 – Refuges extract] at Zebra Crossings, Pelican Crossings and Traffic Signals, the latter being the case for refuges on Tavistock Place. Camden have cited budgetary constraints as the reason for not complying with the Guidance, although they do not actually know which of the many refuges in the borough is non compliant and so what the actual cost would be. My observations are that this non-compliance is of the order of at least fifth in the Holborn area and so quite likely the same across Camden.
2. So Camden are failing in their duty to the hundreds of thousands of pedestrians in the borough citing lack of finance yet are promoting a scheme at a cost of at least £1.1m for the benefit of a few thousand cyclists. Accordingly Camden should carry out a detailed survey of all of its pedestrian crossings before embarking on any new traffic schemes.
3. The traffic data is woefully inadequate, for example with before and after link flows at just two locations on the route for just a one day in May 2015 and May 2016, with no oddly further after survey in 2017. There does not appear to be any data for any routes where the displaced traffic may have transferred to.
4. There are no journey time surveys, that should have been a basic element of the evaluation process.
5. There is no evaluation and monitoring framework, despite an estimated cost of at least £1.1m.
6. There is no cost benefit analysis, despite an estimated cost of at least £1.1m.
7. There is no collision data for 2017.
8. The trial scheme had a dangerous feature of steel bollards in the carriageway that were a dangerous hazard to road users and despite being pointed out in March 2016 no action was taken for months, suggesting that Camden design team are not up to the mark and that safety is overlooked. Also as mentioned above, the pedestrian refuges of Tavistock Place do not have the required tactile paving.

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