

# Torrington Place to Tavistock Place temporary trial of traffic changes

Information leaflet



# Torrington Place to Tavistock Place temporary trial of traffic changes



**Overcrowded cycle track on Tavistock Place**



**Narrow pavement on Tavistock Square**

Camden Council is introducing a trial of temporary traffic changes on the east / west route that includes the streets Torrington Place, Byng Place, Gordon Square, Tavistock Square and Tavistock Place. This leaflet explains why the changes are being introduced, what the changes are and how they will affect you.

The changes are planned to be in place for 12 months and will be introduced using an experimental traffic order. During this time detailed monitoring will be undertaken. Once the trial has been in place for a few months the Council will write again to local residents and businesses to formally seek views on the changes. These views will help inform a decision on whether the changes should be made permanent. However, you do not need to wait for us to contact you – you can comment on the scheme using the email or postal address at the end of this leaflet and these comments will be given equal consideration.

Works for the trial will take place between 6 and 23 November, and will include closure of the westbound lane to traffic.

## **Why the Council is undertaking this trial**

The road forms part of an important east / west cycle link connecting Marylebone, Fitzrovia, Bloomsbury, King's Cross and Angel.

The most recent surveys in 2015 recorded 1,009 cyclists during the morning peak hour and 880 in the afternoon peak hour. These figures demonstrate that the route is the busiest street for cycling in Camden and one of the busiest in London.

The route now suffers from a number of issues:

- The number of cyclists has grown to a point where the existing cycle track does not provide sufficient space and also makes it difficult to safely overtake.
- It is estimated that 50,000-60,000 students are based at the University of London Bloomsbury colleges, and they generate a large number of walking and cycling journeys. The area is extremely busy with pedestrians (over 1,800 pedestrians were counted on Torrington Place during the morning peak hour, rising to over 2,580 between 1pm and 2pm).

- The current road layout with narrow pavements, a two-way protected cycle track (on one side of the street) and a traffic lane in each direction does not provide a safe and attractive environment for the large number of pedestrians.
- The route suffers from a poor casualty record, particularly due to collisions between motor vehicles and both cyclists and pedestrians.
- Residents have also raised concerns that crossing the cycle track and then two traffic lanes can be difficult and confusing.
- A number of local groups, residents and institutions have asked the Council to look at ways of reducing the impact of through traffic in the area. As part of the approval for the West End project, the Council agreed to bring forward proposals for a trial to reduce the impact of through traffic on local residents in Torrington Place between Gower Street and Tottenham Court Road.

**Because of the width of the road it is not possible to provide more space for walking and cycling without significantly reducing the space available for motor traffic. The experimental trial gives the opportunity to test a potential solution to these issues.**

The changes introduced with the trial will provide a safer and more attractive cycling route, which will improve conditions for existing cyclists, while also encouraging new cyclists. Removing westbound traffic will also make the corridor a more pleasant environment for pedestrians, with improved air quality and streets that are easier to cross.

The infographic below highlights the reasons for the changes:

## CURRENT USERS MODE OF TRANSPORT

\* DURING MORNING PEAK HOURS  
\* ASSUMING AN AVERAGE CAR OCCUPANCY OF 1.2



CYCLISTS 43%



PEDESTRIANS 41%



VEHICLES 16%

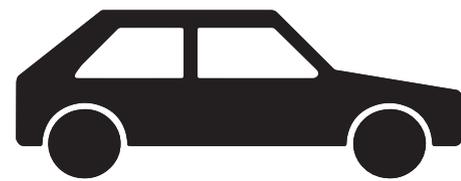
## CURRENT SHARE OF THE SPACE



CYCLISTS 13%



PEDESTRIANS 44%



VEHICLES 43%

## PROPOSED SHARE OF THE SPACE



CYCLISTS 35%



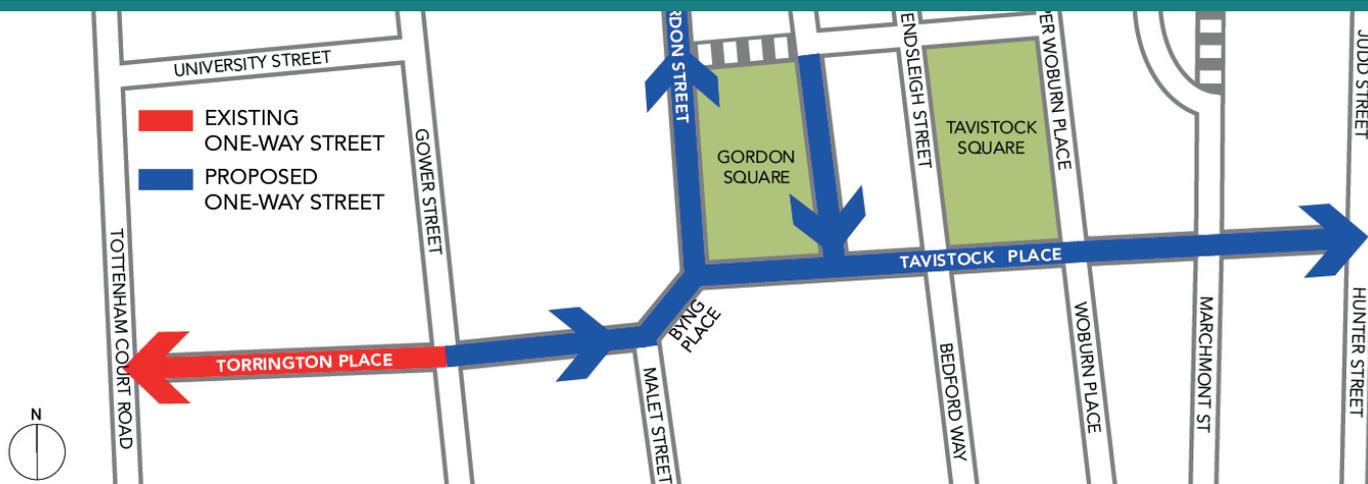
PEDESTRIANS 44%



VEHICLES 21%

# The changes during the trial

The experimental traffic changes are summarised in the plan below. A more detailed plan showing all of the changes is provided on pages 6 and 7 of this leaflet.



## Between the junctions with Tottenham Court Road and Gower Street:

- Introduce a protected westbound cycle lane on the south side of the carriageway by narrowing the existing traffic lane.
- Maintain the existing one-way for westbound traffic.
- Convert the existing two-way protected cycle track to operate as a one-way eastbound cycle lane.
- Introduce a new pedestrian (zebra) crossing on the western arm at the junction of Torrington Place and Huntley Street.
- No parking or loading allowed (loading will be allowed on Huntley Street adjacent to Torrington Place and on Tottenham Court Road outside Habitat).

## A. Between the junctions with Gower Street and Judd Street:

- Convert the existing westbound traffic lane to a one-way westbound cycle lane.
- Maintain one eastbound motor traffic lane – westbound motor traffic will not be permitted on the corridor.
- Convert the existing two-way protected cycle track to operate as a one-way eastbound cycle lane.

- No parking or loading allowed (loading will be allowed on Malet Street, Herbrand Street and Marchmont Street south).
- Retain the existing taxi rank outside Tavistock Hotel (taxis will only be able to access the rank in an eastbound direction).

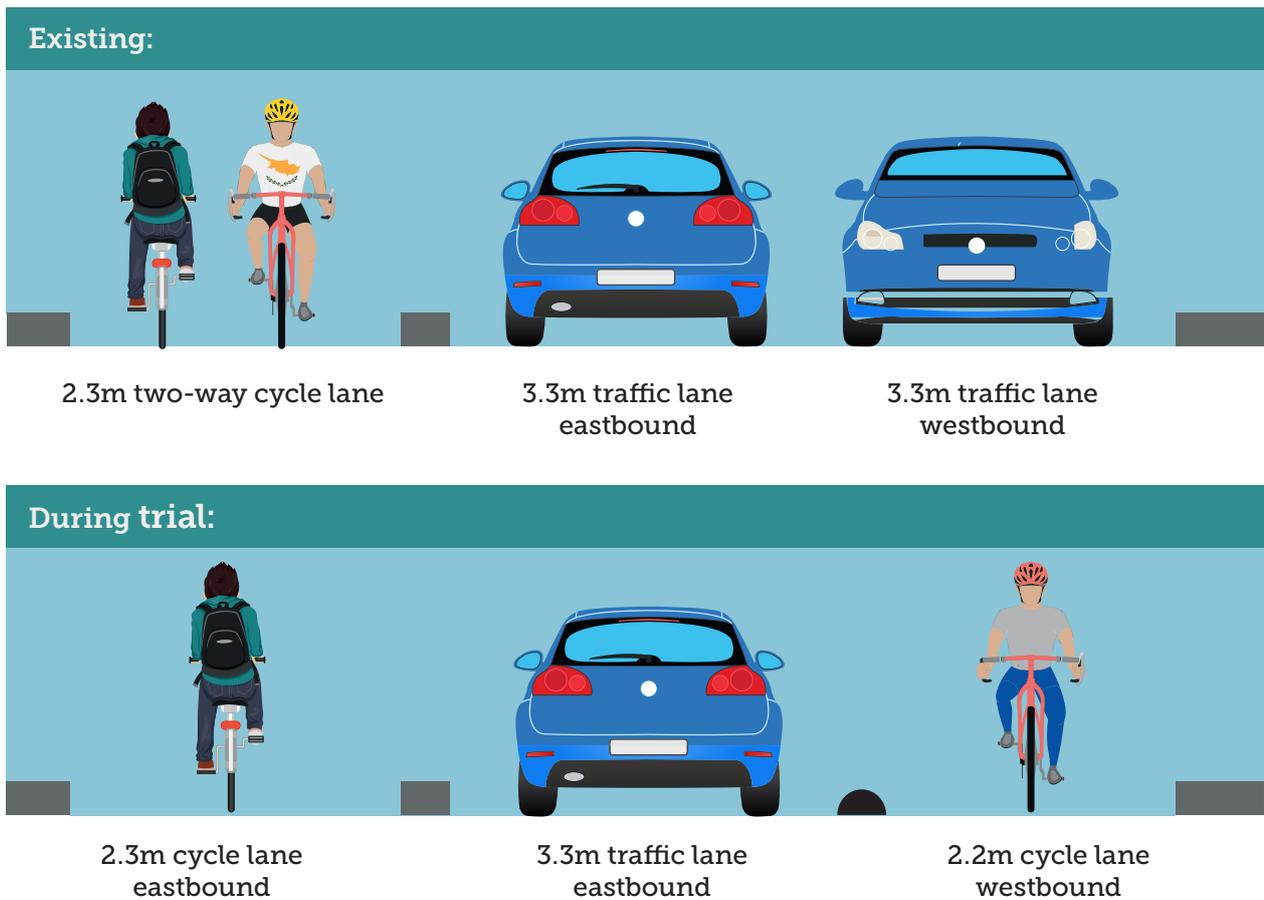
## B. Gordon Square, to reduce conflict between cycles and motor traffic:

- Convert Gordon Square (west) to one-way northbound (excluding cycles) from Torrington Place to Endsleigh Gardens.
- Convert Gordon Square (east) to one-way southbound (excluding cycles) from Endsleigh Place to Torrington Place.

## C. Across the full corridor (Tottenham Court Road to Judd Street):

- Parking and loading restrictions are required to keep traffic moving and prevent cyclists being obstructed.
- Banned turns for motor traffic will be introduced at all junctions to prevent vehicles driving westbound along the corridor, as shown in the detailed plan. These banned turns will be enforced by temporary barriers to discourage vehicular traffic from driving westbound along the corridor.
- Intermittent lightweight barriers will be provided to minimise the risk of eastbound traffic diverting into the path of westbound cyclists.

The diagram below shows the existing and trial road layout on Torrington Place / Tavistock Place.



The widths given above are average widths, and vary along the route due to the space available.

## What will happen next?

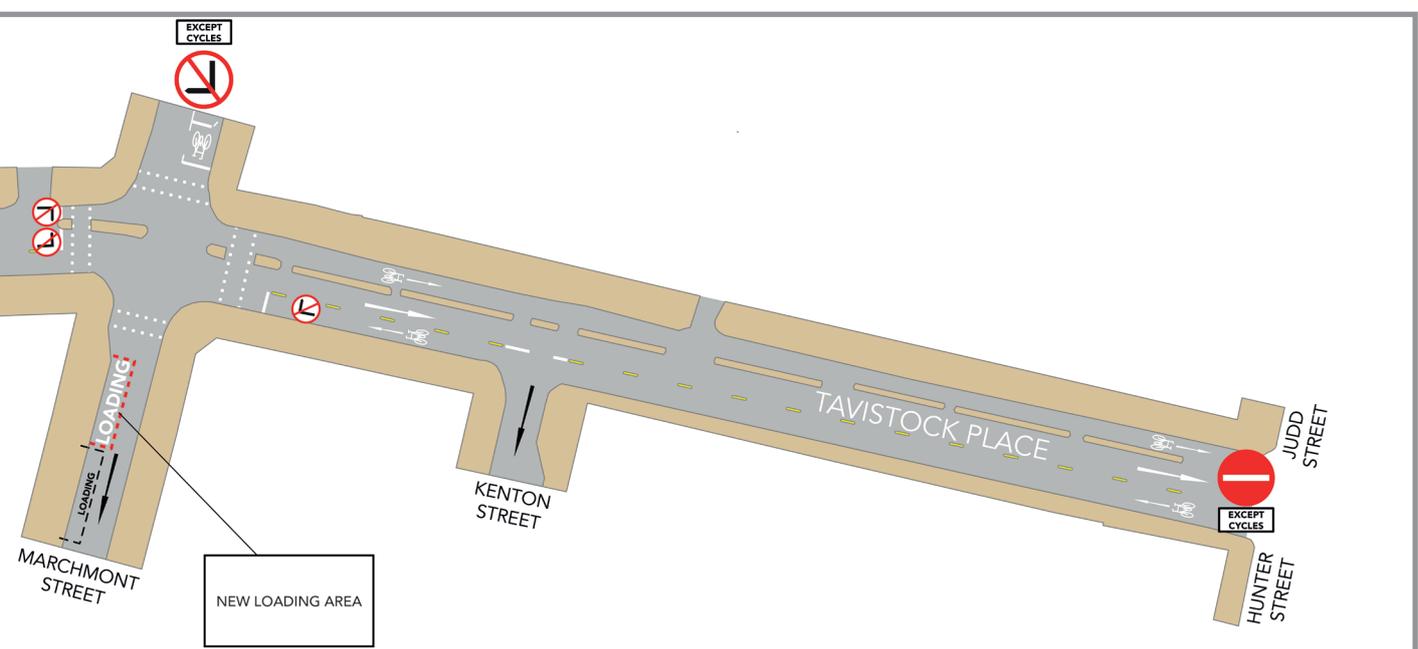
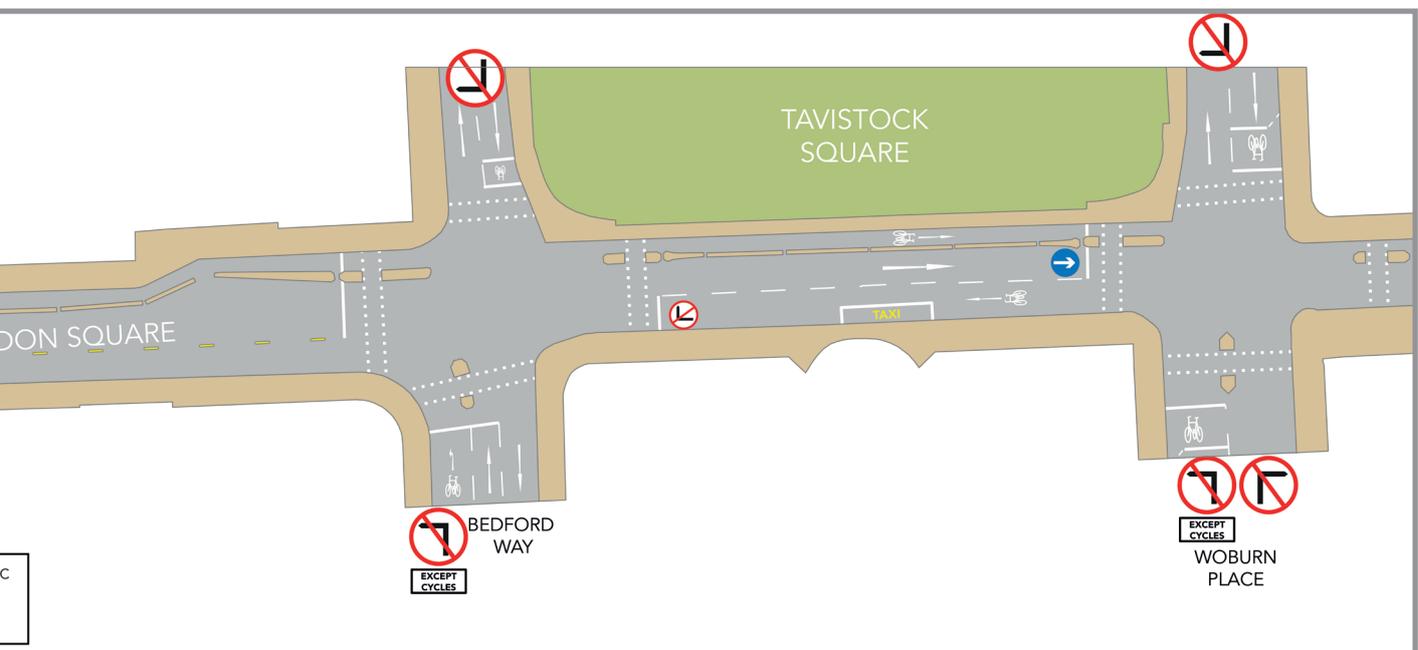
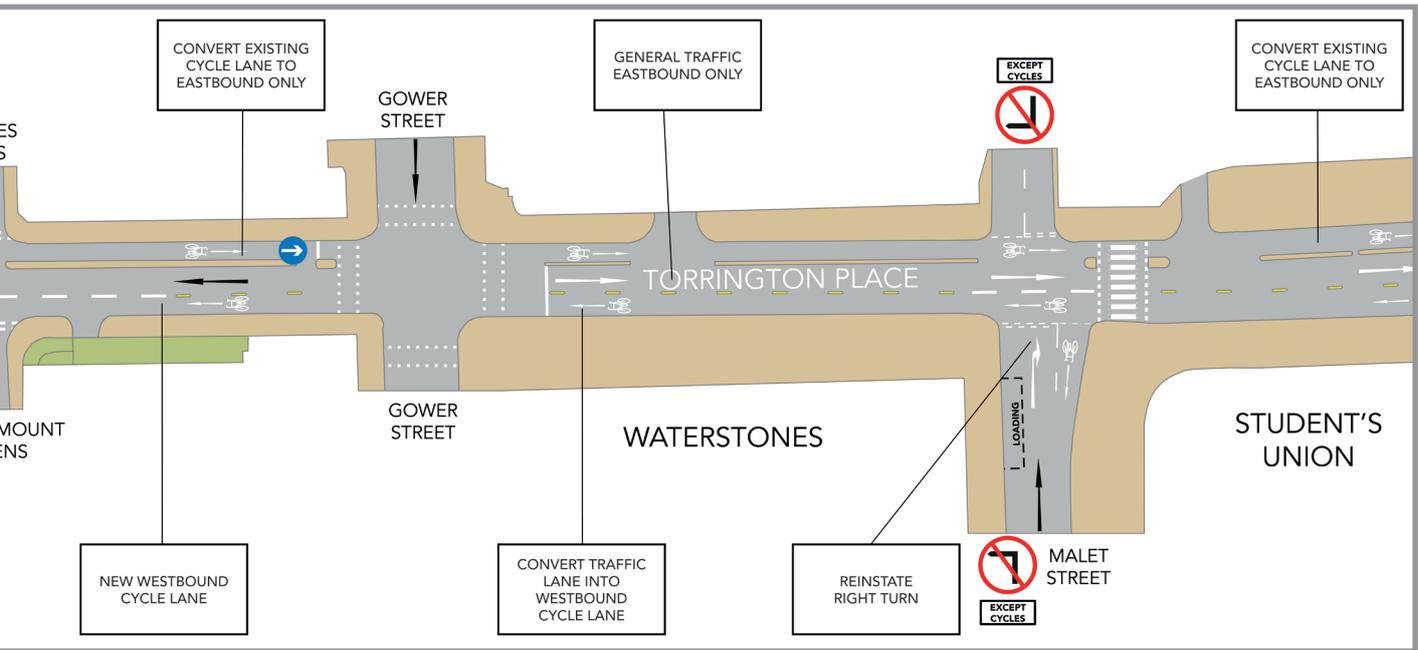
Works for the trial will take place between 6 and 23 November and will include closure of the westbound lane to traffic. During this period cyclists will be directed to move into the new cycle lane when required. The changes are planned to remain in place for twelve months, and during this time detailed monitoring will be undertaken to assess the impact on air quality, traffic, pedestrians and cyclists.

During the trial period there will be a formal consultation period (likely to be in early 2016) to help inform a decision on whether the changes should be made permanent or not. The Council will also undertake a representative survey to capture the views of residents, businesses, visitors, students and those using the route.

If the trial shows that the changes have been positive and that there has been support for these, then the Council will consider making the traffic arrangements permanent. As part of a permanent project the Council could also look to make further improvements to the corridor, including wider pavements and improved pedestrian crossings.

An impression of how the street could look at Gordon Square in the future, if the changes are made permanent, is shown on page 8.







**Above is an impression of how the street could look at Gordon Square in the future, if the changes are made permanent.**

## **i** More information

More information, including frequently asked questions and maps showing alternative traffic routes through the area can be found at [www.camden.gov.uk/torringontavistocktrial](http://www.camden.gov.uk/torringontavistocktrial). You can also email the Council at [torringontavistocktrial@camden.gov.uk](mailto:torringontavistocktrial@camden.gov.uk).

Scheme Ref: CENV/2015/25,  
London Borough of Camden,  
Culture and Environment Directorate,  
Transport Strategy Service,  
FREEPOST RSLT-RJBR-TXAA,  
London, WC1H 9JE