

<p>Statement of Case</p> <p>as presented by</p> <p>Friends of Tavistock Square</p> <p>8th September 2017</p>	<p>The Camden (Torrington Place to Tavistock Square) (Prescribed Routes, Waiting and Loading Restrictions and Loading Places) Traffic Order [2017]</p> <p>SUBJECT OF INQUIRY</p> <p>The Camden (Torrington Place to Tavistock Square) (Prescribed Routes, Waiting and Loading Restrictions and Loading Places) Traffic Order [2017]</p>
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The following statement reflects on the experience of the residents as conveyed to and by the Friends of Tavistock Square since the introduction of the experimental scheme and questions the Council decision in implementing the changes. It reviews the council’s traffic modelling and consultation before and after the introduction of the changes.

In our opinion, the council pre-implementation study was inadequate and therefore the conclusions invalid. Until such times that a more considered and all-encompassing proposal is produced to address the matters raised below, we request that the traffic order is reversed and the entire route is put back to its pre-trial layout.

Following the Pre-Inquiry Meeting, item 25 as appears in the inspector’s notes, we are concerned that our Statement of Case and the subsequent evidence may need to be amended as further evidence regarding the traffic modelling emerges.

Our case:

1. The consultation paper was not circulated to the wider catchment area, for example the two large residential blocks around Tavistock Square, Endsleigh and Tavistock Courts, were not included in the consultation process. We were only made aware of the changes when a notice for implementation of trial was issued giving the date of commencement of the scheme.

It is important to state that at the commencement no leaflet was circulated to the residents of Tavistock Court who are directly affected by the changes. Most residents were made aware of the changes only when crossing the road.

2. The desk top study as carried out by Camden Council did not consider the wider area and did not fully model the traffic impact on surrounding streets nor did the council carry out an air quality survey of these streets so that a comparative study could be done and reported upon on the expiry of the trial period.
3. The report retrospectively refers to the impact both with regards to the traffic increase and the pollution levels in the surrounding areas following the implementation of trial scheme. The results are not fully reported on and we are not given the facts on the actual increases. The officers have merely indicated that they will apply mitigating measures, what these are and when these will be applied are not mentioned. These should have been considered before the scheme was devised. There is evidence of significant increases in the traffic load of both Endsleigh Street and Gardens. Both Wellcome Trust and Friends House (Quakers) have security cameras trained on Endsleigh Gardens. The officers could have approached these organisations to monitor the traffic levels before and after implementation of trial scheme at no extra cost to the council.
4. The surveys concentrated on the positive aspects of the scheme and any negative aspect or restrictive consequences were not spelled out to the respondents, the surveys are therefore not complete.
5. The consultation did not fully cover the local needs for deliveries, collections, hospital access and journeys, there does not seem to be any mitigation or offer of improvement in officers' response.

6. On the question of disability, the elderly and the infirm the officers' response is inadequate. It makes references to the improvements to cycling possibilities for disabled cyclist. It does not cover the wheel chair users or other physically infirm people on the ground. The presumption is in favour of people who pass through the neighbourhood rather than the local residents. On the matter of dropping off disabled people the officers offer the outdated and non-inclusive *round the back of the block ramps and drop off* solutions.
7. The report to the cabinet does not offer solutions on the implication or responses from the hospitals and ambulances, patient transport and dial-a-ride services.
8. The report includes a number of letters of support for the scheme from firms and interests which are not in the neighbourhood; the support of these organisations should not be relied upon.
9. The cycling lobby which forms the bulk of the support for the scheme have indicated that they are not in favour of any mitigations offered to the residents and businesses such as loading bays and drop off points, this is the evidence that the scheme is primarily seen as a bike super highway, any arguments regarding car pollution and benefits to pedestrians is a side issue.
10. The report to the cabinet is silent on the fire- brigade and police's view on the changes.
11. The report covers London taxi services response as a lobby and not as one of the wider public transport services.
12. The report does not cover economic consideration and in particular the hotel businesses in the neighbourhood which contribute greatly to employment and local economy. Suffice to say that smaller operators feel the brunt of the restrictions as they can't rely on logistics offered to larger firms and businesses
13. The report does not consider the local character of the area in town planning and residents benefit terms. The consequence of the implementation is a cycling super high way and a one-way vehicular traffic in a predominantly residential area bisecting it. This is a historic neighbourhood with very special character which is not suited as a cycling bypass route.
14. The scheme purports to improving road safety and amenities for pedestrians. This is not the case for those of us who experience the changes every day. It has created further confusion and lack of clarity. This confusion has increased the number of casualties with a great number of near misses which do not get reported. These near misses and accidents have an adverse effect on the confidence of the residents.

15. The report refers to pedestrian flow and narrowness of pavements as a justification for the new traffic order. The narrowness of the pavement is only applicable to the pavement along the southern side of the Tavistock Square, approximately 1.7m. The report does not give pedestrian flow rates to examine the adequacy or otherwise. The main issue for the pedestrians is the surface conditions and not the width. Improvement to surfaces and cross overs would be the appropriate measure in helping people in wheelchairs and families with push-chairs.

Conclusions:

We think the exercise should be revisited with a broader study and consultation to ensure that the right balance is struck to help all the users. Until such time the scheme should be abandoned and the original road and usage layout reinstated.

We are however conscious of the need for a better traffic management system to benefit, the residents, pedestrians, cyclists and the other road users. We propose a system of localised traffic in line with shared surface ethos whereby the priority is given to the locals with reduced speed for cyclists and vehicles. Exhibition Road in Kensington is an example of such schemes in London.

Friends of Tavistock Square

8th September 2017