



Leon Daniels
MD Surface Transport
Transport for London
Palestra
197 Blackfriars rd
London SE1 8NJ

13th September

Dear Mr. Daniels,

We write regarding the proposals for the Bow interchange westbound traffic scheme. We understand that TfL proposes to install a 'mirror image' of the eastbound scheme together with the 'early start' measure that is in place.

Having considered the functioning of the eastbound scheme since inception we have come to the conclusion that 'early start' as developed by TfL is not a suitable solution for such major junctions.

We recognise the considerable efforts made by TfL to develop an innovative scheme whose intention was to reduce left turn danger (efforts which were hampered by the constraint of maintaining the motor capacity of the junction).

We also note that TfL says that some of the problems of the new junction stem from a lack of clarity due to existing national guidelines preventing clearer and simpler signaling such as low level signals for cycle users.

While DfT clearance for such signals would be helpful we do not think that installing cycle specific lights would be sufficient for this facility to become safe and convenient enough for cyclists of all ages and abilities.

There are several problems with the new scheme, which we feel make it inadequate.

- Confusion of both drivers and cyclists: the layout is not intuitively understood and is therefore likely to lead to hazardous situations caused by people who actually want to do the right thing.
- Size and nature of the junction: cyclists have to cover a relatively long distance to get to the other side. Therefore the early start only works for the faster cyclists positioned at the front of the 'bike box.' We have observed many maneuvers where drivers caught up with a cyclist further back in the queue and posed a 'left hook' risk. It is evident that cyclists at this junction need their own signal phase. We have identified considerable slack in the junction cycle. It should be possible to provide a cycle phase during the dead time when traffic from the next (clockwise) arm enters the junction. Early start may be better suited on smaller intersections as used on the European continent.

- Guaranteed red: cyclists face a red light almost 100% of the time whereas drivers have a long green phase. It is important to note that stopping and starting is much more difficult for cyclists than for drivers, which is why the concept of 'minimum stopping chance' has been applied in the Netherlands, acknowledging that cyclists need momentum to reduce effort.
- Lack of space: the feeder lane funnels cyclists through one by one. This does not cater for anticipated higher volumes of bicycle traffic and would create problems even now if all cyclists used the junction instead of the flyover. The problems of inadequate provision for growth in demand are evident along Cycle Superhighway 3.
- Junction exit: Cyclists remain at considerable risk when exiting the junction: this is not addressed by the current scheme.
- Pedestrians: there is no benefit to pedestrians at all despite this junction being all but unusable on foot by the young or the frail.

In view of the continued problems evident at Bow LCC cannot support the existing early start facility or its proposed use on the westbound arm. We do not think this layout should be used as a standard solution to the 'left hook' problem.

We urge TfL to look again at measures that give dedicated signal time for cyclists, address road danger at source and which can be implemented in the short and medium term. We do not think these changes need to wait for a complete overhaul of the junction and do not believe that concerns about reducing traffic capacity should compromise cyclist and pedestrian safety.

Yours,



Dr. Ashok Sinha
Chief Executive Officer
London Cycling Campaign