

London Borough of Southwark



Quietway Cycling Proposals

Site F – Webb Street and Swan Mead

Public Consultation Summary

September 2014

London Borough of Southwark

Site G - Quietway Cycling Proposals Webb Street and Swan Mead

Public Consultation Summary

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 This document report has been produced by the London Borough of Southwark Public Realm Projects Group, to provide a summary of the consultation exercise for the Quietway Cycling Proposals for Site G on Webb Street between and inclusive of the northern arm of Swan Mead and Tower Bridge Road in the west. The measures are being drafted by the Public Realm Projects Team, with the project manager for this scheme being Chris Mascord (Senior Engineer).

1.1.2 The area under consideration is located within the SE1 district of Southwark (Grange Ward) in the north of the borough. See figure 1 below.

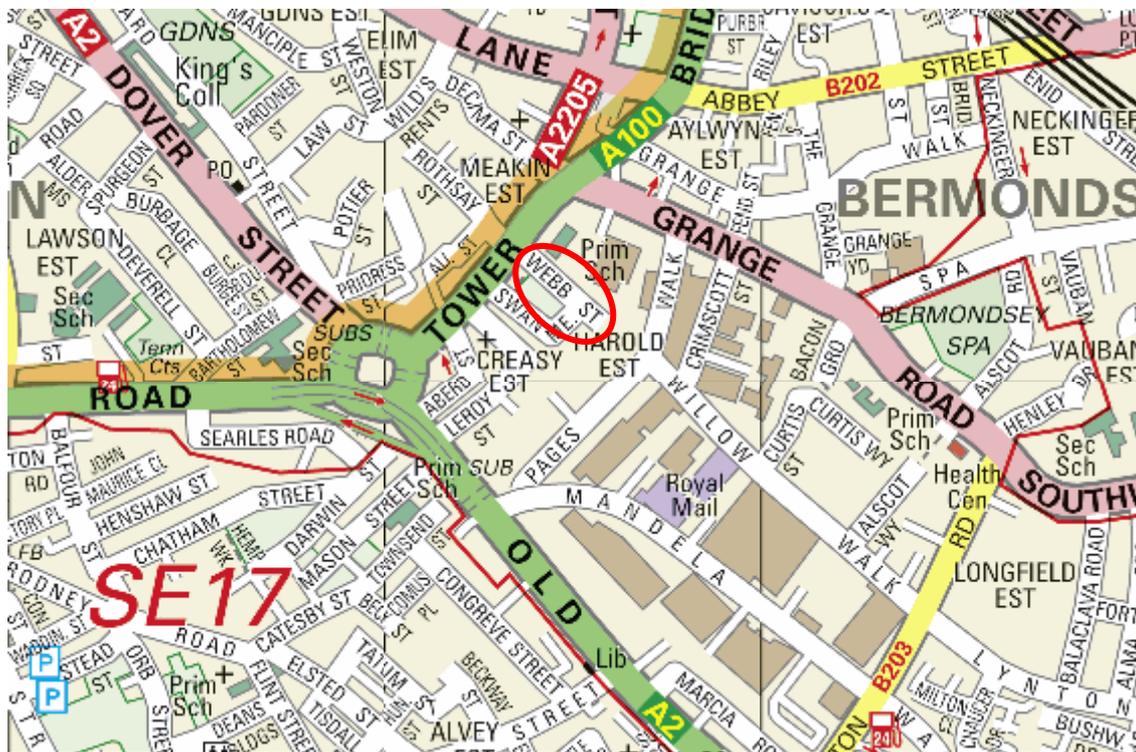


Figure 1: Location of proposed scheme

1.2 Project and Objectives

1.2.1 This site forms part of a series of improvements along the route within Southwark that starts from South Bermondsey Station in the east and traversing local roads to The Cut in the west (see figure 2). The proposed schemes will not only improve accessibility and safety for cyclists, but also significantly improve the streetscape.

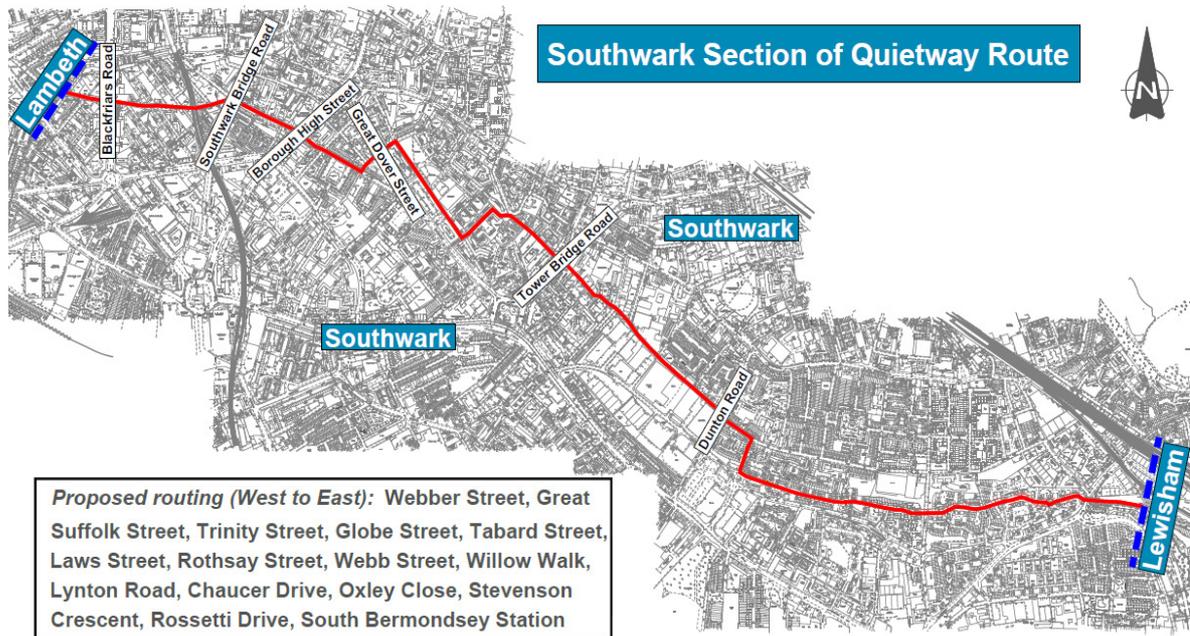


Figure 2: Southwark's section of Quietway Route

1.2.2 Quietways are a network of bike routes for less confident cyclists using residential streets with low traffic volumes. The routes are not just for current cyclists, but are for people who have always been put off cycling by the thought of sharing the road with high volumes of cars, vans, buses and lorries. Introducing Quietways forms an integral part of the Mayor of London's vision for cycling and the council's objective to significantly increase the number of residents using a cycling as their preferred mode of transport, particularly for local journeys.

1.2.3 The measures proposed in this consultation are part of the Council's ongoing commitment to make Southwark's streets safer and more accessible for all. The proposed measures will enhance the environment for all road users, reducing traffic speeds and improving pedestrian safety. Cycling proposals also have the added health benefits of improving the environment through reducing carbon emissions and getting more people onto bikes which in turn enhances their fitness and health.

1.2.4 The following measures were consulted upon to improve cycling and pedestrian accessibility and enhance the streetscape for Site G:

- As part of the Tower Bridge Road footway and streetscape improvements being consulted upon and implemented by Transport for London, it is proposed that the Tower Bridge Road / Webb Street / Rothsay Street junction be signalised.
- Webb Street to be made one way eastbound from Tower Bridge Road to Swan Mead, with a westbound contra-flow cycle lane so that cyclists can exit Webb Street using the new traffic signals. (Existing parking and loading facilities on the southern side of Webb Street opposite the school to be removed).

- Raised carriageway table to be installed in Webb Street adjacent to the proposed new pedestrian entrance into The Grange Primary School to reduce traffic speeds and compliment the proposed redevelopment of the school.
- The proposed raised table will incorporate a new pedestrian crossing location to improve access to the school. Planters to be installed on the northern side of the table to provide segregation between the road and footway and improve the streetscape.
- The footways and carriageway of Webb Street are to be resurfaced to improve the visual quality of the streetscape.
- The existing parking bay adjacent to the park will be inset with built out planting areas to improve the streetscape. Section of parking bay to be converted to a loading bay with the remaining section for resident parking.
- Raised carriageway table proposed at the junction of Webb Street and Swan Mead to reduced traffic speeds, improve pedestrian accessibility and enhance the streetscape. The table junction will be designed so that it can accommodate the right turning movements of larger vehicles when required.
- Corner of park adjacent to the new carriageway table to be modified so that a footway can be accommodated adjacent to the raised table linking Swan Mead to Webb Street.
- Swan Mead to be made one way southbound from Webb Street to southern junction of Swan Mead (accessing Tower Bridge Road). This section of Swan Mead is to be widened to ensure larger vehicles can use the road to access Tower Bridge Road from Webb Street.
- New chain link fencing proposed to replace existing metal tube fence adjacent to the park, to improve the streetscape.

(See Appendix A – Initial Scheme Design)

1.3 Consultation Procedure

- 1.3.1 The views of the local community and those of statutory consultees have been sought, prior to the development of measures to a detailed design stage. Active community participation was encouraged through the use of a consultation document and questionnaire (see Appendix B – Consultation Documents).
- 1.3.2 The consultation document included a covering letter describing the proposals and a request for comments (including information to assist in translation and large print versions of the consultation document), preliminary design drawings (A3 size) and a questionnaire/comment form that could be sent to the Public Realm Projects Group with a pre-paid address reply.
- 1.3.3 The consultation document was delivered to a geographical area centred on the Webb Street between Tower Bridge Road and Pages Walk junction with Willow Walk using strategic roads and pedestrian desire lines as defined cut off points (See Appendix C – Location Plan and Extents of Consultation).

- 1.3.4 The distribution area was large enough to gain views from the wider community that may be considered to be affected by the proposed measures. A mailing list was established for the area by way of the Council’s GIS database. In addition, the consultation documents and plans were supplied to the Council’s established list of statutory consultees including London Buses, cycle groups and the Metropolitan Police. Please see Appendix D of list of addresses within the distribution area. Consultation documents were also delivered to the Southwark Housing Department and Grange Primary School.
- 1.3.5 The consultation documents were delivered by Royal Mail to 276 addresses detailed within the distribution list. The documents were delivered on the 25th July 2014, with a return deadline of the 15th August 2014, allowing 3 weeks for the consultation period. However due to the summer holiday period, responses were accepted online until the 5th September 2014.
- 1.3.6 The proposals were also available to view online using consultation section of the council’s website, with an e-form questionnaire provided in order to capture responses.

2.0 Consultation Responses

2.1 Response Rate and Distribution

- 2.1.1 A total of 25 responses were received during the consultation period (20 returned questionnaires and 5 online responses), equating to a 9% response rate.
- 2.1.2 Four responses were received from Statutory Consultees (Southwark Living Streets, Southwark Cyclists, Lambeth Cyclists and Sustrans).

2.2 Questionnaire Analysis

- 2.2.1 The questionnaire element of the consultation document contained the following key questions and associated tick box options:

Q1. Are you a resident or business?

Q2. Do you support the proposals?

- 2.2.2 The following is a summary of replies received:

Question 1 - Are you a resident or business?

| | Resident | Business |
|---------|----------|----------|
| Replies | 23 | 2 |
| Total | 92% | 8% |

Table 1: Retuned questionnaire results for question 1

2.2.3 Table 1 indicates that the majority of responses received throughout the consultation period were from local residents, with only two businesses formally replying.

Question 2 – Do you support the proposals?

| | Support | Opposed | No Opinion |
|---------|---------|---------|------------|
| Replies | 14 | 11 | 0 |
| Total | 56% | 44% | 0% |

Table 2: Returned questionnaire results for question 2

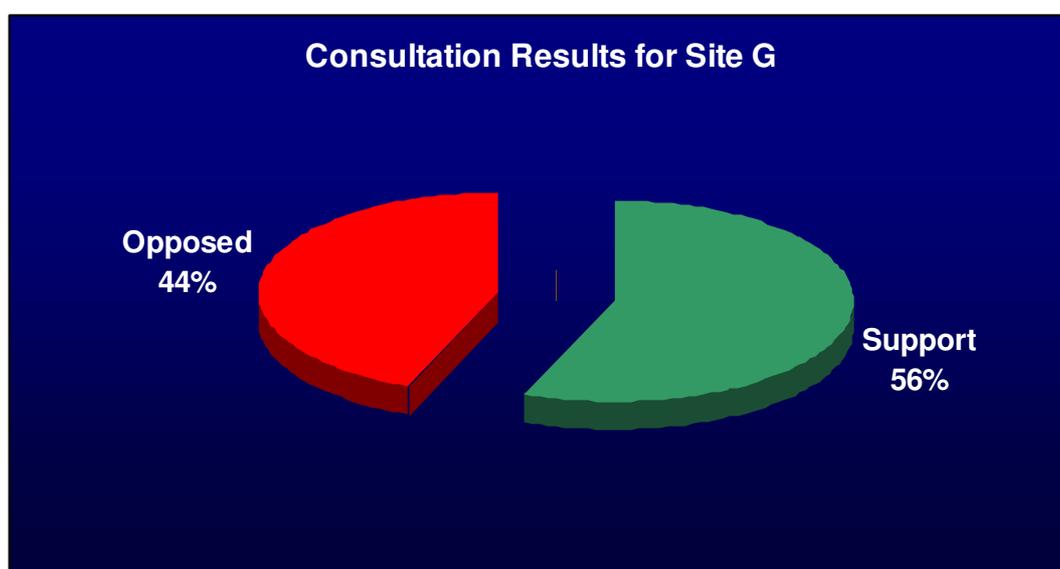


Figure 3: Graphical representation of consultation data for question 2

2.2.4 Table 2 and figure 2 indicate a majority of support for question 2, with 56% welcoming the proposed measures.

2.3 Additional Comments

2.3.1 The questionnaire element of the consultation document invited consultees to attach any additional comments they may have on the proposals when returning the reply-paid questionnaire. Consultees were also able to reply to the consultation online using the council’s website.

2.3.2 The majority of respondents (56%) indicated support for the proposed measures, and discussed that they will make the area look better and traffic flow will be much smoother in Webb Street.

2.3.3 A respondent commented that more bike lanes were needed for the safety and security of the increasing number of cyclists and the contra-flow cycle lane in Webb Street is a great improvement.

- 2.3.4 A number of comments were received stating the scheme is an excellent policy to improve the layout for cyclists and pedestrians and should really enhance the roads surrounding the park.
- 2.3.5 A comment in support stated that the route is used by cyclists and they currently use the pedestrian footway to access Webb Street through the chicane barriers which is dangerous. The construction of a cycle track and separate footway will help protect pedestrians.
- 2.3.6 A comment was received discussing that it is very difficult to cross Tower Bridge Road, especially in peak times as traffic is heavy. Signals at this location just for cycles to exit Webb Street will totally address this problem and make the route so much safer.
- 2.3.7 A respondent highlighted that making Webb Street one-way was an excellent idea, as the street is too narrow to cater for two-way traffic, especially when the parents are there in the morning and afternoon picking their children from the school. It is total chaos.
- 2.3.8 A respondent indicated that semi-segregated cycle lane is a good as it will prevent vehicles from parking and blocking the cycle lane, which is safer for cyclists.
- 2.3.9 A comment was made asking why a loading bay been placed next to the park and asked about the proposed parking restrictions on the section of Swan Mead that runs parallel to Webb Street. *

* In response, a loading bay is proposed next to the park as it will be opposite the new service access into the redeveloped school. Scheme designers have directly consulted the school and architects who have confirmed that there will be no vehicular access onto the new school site. Therefore a loading bay is required on Webb Street to cater for deliveries to the school.

There are no current plans to alter the existing kerbside parking controls along the section of Swan Mead that runs parallel to Webb Street.

- 2.3.7 A concern was raised that the no entry signage at the junction of Webb Street and Swan Mead is confusing and asked how residents living in Arundel Buildings receive deliveries and access the car park.*

* In response, the no entry signage will prevent vehicles travelling westbound along Webb Street from the Swan Mead junction. Access to Arundel Buildings and the car park area can be made by turning into Webb Street from Tower Bridge Road. Due to the Webb Street being a no through road to the east of Swan Mead, this section of Webb Street will remain two-way so that vehicles can enter and exit both car park areas. Vehicles will be able to exit Webb Street via Swan Mead which leads out onto Tower Bridge Road.

- 2.3.8 A comment was made that the removal of the metal barrier around the park is good because it is ugly. However the chain-link fence doesn't look durable and is likely to get damaged. *

* In response, the type of fence proposed has been used successfully in other parts of the borough, particularly Dulwich. The posts are made from metal and are highly durable and easier to maintain than other wooden varieties. The base of the posts will be set in concrete to ensure they are difficult to dislodge.

2.3.9 Analysis of the additional comments from respondents that objected to the scheme highlighted the following concerns:

An objection was received highlighting that the scheme will cost tax payers too much and cyclists are being given too many concessions. *

* In response, the proposed measures along the Quietway route align with the council's emerging cycling strategy and the Mayor's Vision for Cycling. The Mayor has commitment to invest total of £913m over the next 10 years in cycling safety and infrastructure development to significantly increase the modal share in cycling as a safe, healthy and sustainable form of transport in London.

The London boroughs will play a central role in delivering this vision, by helping to develop, fund and deliver better and safer routes for cycling.

The council welcomes significant investment from Transport for London to take forward the Quietway programme that will not only significantly upgrade a number of existing cycle routes, but also make considerable improvements to the streetscape for the benefits of all road users and local residents.

All measures will have significant benefit to not only cyclists, but also local residents and pedestrians. The proposals will significantly upgrade the street environment at this location and provide a viable solution to the current traffic management conflicts associated with the Grange Primary School.

An objection was received stating that Swan Mead Estate is already infested with drug dealers and is causing residents and children security problems. The proposed project will attract more strangers to the estate aggravating the situation further. *

* In response, the scheme is not designed to create a unique destination that will attract non-local people to the estate and surrounding streets. There is no evidence to suggest that the implementation of the scheme will increase antisocial behaviour or cause security issues for local residents and children. The proposed measures have the simple objectives of improving the quality of the streetscape for local residents, improving road safety and enhancing accessibility for vulnerable road user groups.

If there is an existing antisocial behaviour problem, then such issues should be discussed with the local Tenants and Residents Association and then representations made to local community forums and housing office to investigate potential solutions and working in partnership with the local neighbourhood police teams to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

A number of objections were received opposing the removal of existing parking bays in Webb Street. *

* In response, the existing parking bays at the western end of Webb Street are required to be removed to allow for the implementation of the contra-flow cycle

lane. In order to implement this important safety feature for cyclists, the southern kerbline of Webb Street must be clear of parked vehicles, which currently constrain carriageway width and potentially block sightlines for pedestrians crossing outside the school.

If left in-situ, the parking bays would also be directly opposite the new school pedestrian entrance once the redevelopment works have taken place. As a complimentary measure, the school has requested the introduction of both traffic calming and a formal pedestrian crossing location across Webb Street to improve safety and enhance access into the school. In order to introduce a raised carriageway table and pedestrian crossing point adjacent to the new school pedestrian entrance, the parking bays are required to be removed.

It is also noted that the adjacent residential dwellings on the southern side of Webb Street have formal off-street parking facilities in Bushbaby Close. Therefore the impact of removing the parking bays in Webb Street should have minimal impact on local parking provision.

A respondent objected to the Quietway route going through the estate and past the school. 'It's a rat run, there will be accidents and I will hold you responsible.' *

* In response, the proposed Quietway route is already used by cyclists, as it offers the most direct east / west route in the area, allowing cyclists to by-pass main roads where the chance of conflict with other modes of transport is greater. The route through the Harold Estate and Webb Street allows cyclists to traverse roads with low traffic volumes, which complies with the principles of the Quietway programme and is more attractive to less confident cyclists.

As both Webb Street and the access road through the Harold Estate are no through roads, there is not an existing issue with rat running traffic. The measures proposed as part of this scheme introduce a clear separation of pedestrians and cyclists in order to remove existing conflict zones, such as the area between the access road and Webb Street. The introduction of the segregated cycle track and contra-flow cycle lane will actually improve safety and reduce the propensity for collisions. In addition, the proposed traffic management changes in Webb Street, complimented by the introduction of raised carriageway traffic calming features, will simplify the operation of Webb Street and remove head on conflict currently experienced with two-way traffic movement.

An objection was received that highlighted putting in a cycle lane through could increase the crime rate around here and this is not what we want. *

* In response, there is no evidence to suggest that introducing cycling infrastructure and improving the streetscape has an adverse impact on crime rates in the area. It must be noted that installing infrastructure such as new lighting (such as the new lighting units proposed adjacent to the cycle track and footway between the estate access road and Webb Street), could actually assist with reducing crime rates, by improving safety and security at night.

An objection stated that ‘Quietways will become Speedways’ when everything is geared to moving cyclists off the main roads. Commuting starts early and increased noise will ensue. Removing parking will result in more illegal parking on the pavement outside Arundel Buildings. *

* In response, as discussed above, the route is already an existing thoroughfare for both pedestrians and cyclists and there is no anticipated immediate traffic volume increase as a result of implementing the scheme.

The proposals are simply to improve accessibility for existing pedestrians and cyclists, as well as considerably enhancing the streetscape. Whilst the council has the objective to increase cycling levels across the borough, this change will be gradual and not adversely impact on the quality of the environment of the Harold Estate or Webb Street. Cycling also does not affect ambient noise levels or create pollution.

As this is an existing route used by cyclists and with the number of cyclists anticipated to increase year on year, it is likely that the potential for conflict between pedestrians and cyclists will increase over time if cyclists continue to share the existing footway between the estate access road and Webb Street and a segregated cycle track is not introduced. Introducing separate footways for pedestrians will ensure that there is no conflict with cyclists, who will be confined to the cycle track and carriageway. Raised carriageway tables on Webb Street will also assist with curtailing traffic speeds, including cyclists.

The proposed tree planting along the kerbline of the footway adjacent to Arundel Buildings and proposed double yellow line parking controls, will prevent footway parking and obstructive parking on the carriageway. If vehicles are found to illegally park at this location, especially during school drop off and pick up times, then the area can be targeted with enforcement.

A number of objections received highlighted that there must be a barrier against cyclists and motorbikes and putting a cycle lane in front of the Arundel Buildings car park entrance is dangerous. *

* In response, the proposed cycle track linking the estate access road and Webb Street will address existing accessibility and safety issues with cyclists and pedestrians using the same narrow footway.

As detailed previously, as part of the scheme post implementation process, the council and Transport for London will closely monitor the scheme, which will be likely through temporary CCTV to ascertain if there are any adverse impacts.

Currently cyclists using the footway between the estate access road and Webb Street emerge onto the northern footway of Webb Street, adjacent to Arundel Buildings car park entrance and visibility is impeded by an existing brick wall. This has safety implications for all road users including pedestrians, motorists and cyclists.

As part of the scheme design process, this existing issue was identified and has been addressed. The new cycle track allows cyclists travelling westbound on the cycle track towards Webb Street to be guided to the section of carriageway adjacent to the southern kerbline of Webb Street (away from the entrance into the car park). The alignment of the cycle track will ensure that drivers leaving the

car park will be able to identify an approaching cyclist as far back as the beginning of the cycle track at the access road. Proposed double yellow line parking controls at this location will also ensure that the carriageway is free from obstruction and visibility is maintained at all times. Therefore the proposal clearly improves visibility and safety for all road users, minimising the risk of conflict.

All proposals will be subject to a full road safety audit which will ascertain if there are any adverse safety implications associated with the changes in highway layout.

An objection was received stating that there can be no further landscaping or lighting outside Arundel Buildings due to proximity to bedroom windows and the measures are likely to attract public use of the footway. *

* In response, there are no new lighting columns on the footway directly adjacent to Arundel Buildings. The new lighting columns proposed are adjacent to the new segregated cycle track and footway linking the estate access road with Webb Street. These units are away from the building structure and shielded from the building by existing trees. Therefore there they will have no adverse impact on Arundel Buildings.

The pedestrian footway adjacent to Arundel Buildings is located on public highway and is therefore a designated public thoroughfare. There is no evidence to suggest that the volume of pedestrians traversing this footway will dramatically increase as a result of the proposed streetscape improvements. The upgraded footway is clearly beneficial to pedestrians and will match the other upgraded footway sections of Webb Street to provide visual continuity.

The trees proposed along the footway adjacent Arundel Buildings will significantly improve the streetscape and result in a more pleasant environment for local residents. The footway at this location is wide and the introduction of trees will not impede or obstruct pedestrian movement. As discussed earlier, the trees will also have the added benefit of potentially preventing footway parking at this location, which has been identified as a concern by local residents during school drop off and pick up times. It must also be noted that as the trees mature, they could potentially increase privacy for the adjacent flats in Arundel Buildings.

2.3.9 20% respondents did not submit a further comment.

2.4 Levels of Consensus

2.4.1 The following majority levels of agreement have been given in relation to the questions contained within the consultation document:

- 56% of respondents support the introduction of the Quietway cycle route proposals for Site G;
- 44% of respondents are opposed to the proposals.

2.5 Statutory Consultee Replies

2.5.1 Four statutory consultees provided a reply to the consultation.

- a) **Southwark Living Streets** replied indicating strong support for the scheme and that all the measures were excellent and were a great improvement for the environment, pedestrians and local residents.
- b) **Lambeth Cyclists** replied in support of the scheme and requested that cycle logos painted on the carriageway adjacent Swan Mead and on Webb Street should be in the centre of the lane and not the edge of the carriageway and there does not seem to be any passing places on Swan Mead without using the footway. *

* In response, the consultation plans are just indicative and as part of the detailed design process, all cycle logos proposed adjacent to junctions will be suitably positioned in the carriageway so that cycles do not traverse along the nearside kerb on approach to side road junctions and will be positioned in the centre of the running lane.

Cycle flows on Swan Mean leading to Webb Street are extremely low and traffic volume on both Webb Street and Swan Mead are also minimal. Therefore the risk of conflict is negligible. Widening Swan Mead will provide a carriageway width that will allow enough room for a car and cycle to pass in opposing directions without conflict.

This section of the scheme still has to undergo a road safety audit. If the audit report raises concerns the carriageway width of Swan Mead is not suitable for a contra-flow cycle lane, then other options will be considered including making it one way to all vehicles, including cyclists and investigating the feasibility of installing a cycle route through the adjacent park to link up with Webb Street.

- c) **Southwark Cyclists** replied indicating support for the scheme and that the proposed signalled crossing of Tower Bridge Road is very good and the one-way working of Webb Street completely eliminates the risk of left turning motor vehicle traffic exiting the side roads. It was also requested that all parking and loading in Webb Street should be removed as this breaks the contra-flow cycle lane which should extend the whole way to the Harold Estate. *

* In response, following discussions with the Head Teacher of the Grange Primary School and architects designing the redevelopment of the school, it is apparent that the development will be a car free site. As a result, a number of car spaces and a loading bay for deliveries to the school must be included on Webb Street. The parking bays and loading bay have been positioned opposite the commercial entrance into the school and will occupy an existing area of on-street parking. Therefore removal of these facilities is not an option. The scheme proposals remove a number of parking bays in the western section of Webb Street in order to introduce a contra-flow cycle lane past the school and on approach to Tower Bridge Road which will benefit cyclists and simplify traffic movement.

- d) **Sustrans** replied indicating support for the scheme and particularly liked the introduction of the contra-flow cycle lane along Webb Street. A request was made for the possibility of introducing artwork in the streetscape and further cycle parking. A comment was made that although double yellow lines are proposed in the contra-flow cycle lane, enforcement may be necessary. A concern was also raised regarding the benefit of introducing a raised table at the junction of Swan Mead as speeds are already low. *

* In response, Quietway funding can't be spent on public artworks that have not direct benefit to improve safety and access for cycling. It is suggested that the introduction of artworks could potentially be investigated as part of a community council funded scheme if there is strong community support for this type of proposal.

In addition to kerbside parking controls in the contra-flow cycle lane, the introduction of armadillo lane delineators will also assist with enforcement and prevention of vehicle encroachment into the contra-flow cycle lane.

A raised table has been introduced to improve pedestrian accessibility and safety at this junction. There are many elderly residents living on the neighbouring estate and parents with pushchairs accessing the primary school and therefore a raised junction table will enhance pedestrian accessibility and provide a level crossing point for pedestrians. The proposed one-way eastbound working of Webb Street will also lead to more traffic turning right from Webb Street to access Swan Mead, therefore increasing potential traffic volumes using this junction. The raised table will therefore act to slow traffic and improve safety. The raised table could also discourage indiscriminate parking which has been identified as a problem during school pick up and drop off times.

The council will investigate potential places to install further cycle parking as part of the scheme detailed design process.

2.5.2 No objections were received from Ward Members throughout the consultation period.

3.0 Recommendations

Due to the majority of respondents supporting the scheme and Southwark's on-going commitment to improve and promote cycling in the borough, it is recommended that the scheme proceed to implementation.

Appendices

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