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Dear Leon,

North South Superhighway TFL consultation response

Thank you for extending the consultation deadline in order for us to properly assess some of the additional information recently provided by TfL in response to questions from officers.

Southwark wholly support the North South superhighway proposals and believe it will have a transformational effect on cycling within the borough. Southwark has similar aspirations to deliver enhanced facilities for cyclists, reflected in our draft Cycle Strategy and our commitment to the delivery of a range of cycling initiatives over the next two years.

The Council has been working with TfL since 2009 to develop a project to improve the streetscape along Blackfriars Road in tandem with a number of proposed redevelopment projects.

In 2013, TfL began to consult on their cycling strategy and introduced proposals for a two way cycle track along Blackfriars Road. From the outset, the council has been working to ensure that the scheme for Blackfriars Road delivers urban realm improvements for pedestrians as well as cyclists. In order to help match-fund the scheme, the council has committed £2.2m of section 106 funding to the project to ensure that the public realm benefits of the wider scheme are delivered. The design seeks to restore the historic Georgian boulevard, with high quality yorkstone paving along the entire route, with additional plane trees, and new street furniture and

lighting to create a real sense of place. St George's circus will be improved and will act as a gateway to Blackfriars Road, connecting to the Elephant and Castle.

In terms of route alignment, TfL have always maintained that the segregated cycle superhighway is routed from St George's Circus to the Elephant and Castle via Lambeth Road and St George's Road. Whilst we understand the reasons for doing this, due to the road widths, and the inability to deliver segregated facilities on London Road, the council considers that London Road is the desire line and most direct route which will be used by most cycle commuters. We have agreed with TfL to a plan and set of measures to improve the public realm and cycling facilities along London Road and our support for the implementation of the North South route is contingent on these measures being delivered at the same time.

We do however still have reservations about some elements of the existing proposals and the impact on other road users which have not yet been fully addressed.

As a key stakeholder we would like to continue to work with you over the coming months before the scheme is implemented to assess and mitigate several key issues set out below:

Pedestrian Facilities

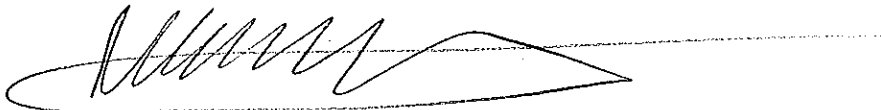
- In terms of existing controlled pedestrian crossing facilities, we would like to explore options at 3 locations to ensure that the proposed crossing times remain below the recommended maximum pedestrian waiting time usually set by TfL of 90 seconds (they are currently shown as 104 seconds).
- The existing pedestrian crossing adjacent to Meymott St will now have an uncontrolled section over the cycle track. This should be designed as a pedestrian priority crossing.
- Additional uncontrolled pedestrian crossings should be provided at a number of locations along Blackfriars Road to ensure east west pedestrian permeability is maintained. These crossings need to be safe and convenient. We have concerns with the latest proposals for flush crossing areas which have been suggested by TfL. Ultimately the design of such crossings is a matter for TfL as the Highway Authority for Blackfriars Road however in the absence of a formal safety audit of this proposal Southwark's view is that they are not safe
- TfL should continue to work with the Department for Transport to provide raised 'mini' zebra crossings along the cycle track at bus stop locations and other uncontrolled crossing locations to ensure vulnerable pedestrians have safe crossing options. This should not be solely at bus stops, such crossings need to be frequent enough to, for example, accommodate disabled drivers/passengers setting down and needing to safely access the western footway.

Impact on Southwark's Highway Network

- It is difficult to determine the impact on the highway network from this project in isolation as the modelling results demonstrate the impact from all 21 TFL schemes identified for construction prior to December 2016.
- Queue lengths along side roads on Blackfriars Road will have significant increases at Union Street and The Cut, also Stamford Street (TLRN), Southwark Street (TLRN). While Southwark is prepared to accept some impact on its highway network in order to deliver the 'step change' in cycling improvement, the existing impact is considered too high. Cycle timings at signalised junctions may have to alter to ensure there is a balance in delays on both TFL and Southwark's highway network. Given the increased queue lengths on these roads, Southwark seeks additional funding to mitigate the impact of these queues on vulnerable road users, especially cyclists on east-west movements and buses (for example segregated filter lanes on the approaches to Blackfriars Road).
- The VISSIM output is showing significant increases in journey times along Walworth Road and New Kent Road (TLRN). TFL should commit to ensuring bus journey times through Southwark are not negatively impacted by the combined TFL proposals (including North South cycle superhighway and the Northern Roundabout) and again, fund any necessary mitigation measures.
- The council is concerned about the increases in traffic flows which are predicted to occur along a number of Southwark roads including many which are being proposed as cycle Quietway routes and/or our proposed 'Southwark Spine' cycle route. TFL should commit to working with officers to limit this increase where possible and fund any mitigation measures which will be required as result of these flow changes.
- A number of junctions are being shown in modelling outputs as becoming saturated as a result of the combined proposals. TFL should commit to working with Southwark to deliver our shared cycling aspirations across the borough. This will need to include relaxation of their signal design standards at those locations where Southwark are proposing cycle improvements for Quietway and Spine cycling routes at a later date. Immediately this includes ensuring allowing early release for cyclists at the Webber St / Blackfriars Road junctions and Tower Bridge Road.
- Further information regarding impact on air quality as a result of increased congestion along arterial routes should be provided by TFL and if necessary, mitigation measures agreed with Southwark.

I am confident that my officers and I can work with TFL to ensure these issues can all be resolved and look forward to doing so and to the implementation of a mutually acceptable superhighway in 2016.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Williams', written over a horizontal dotted line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Mark Williams
Cabinet member for Regeneration, Planning and Transport

CC: Lucy Godfrey / Simon Mouncey