

Southwark Cyclists' response to QW14 consultation – Tower Bridge to Rotherhithe section

This consultation response is on behalf of Southwark Cyclists, the local branch of the London Cycling Campaign.

We are generally supportive of this proposal. We have outlined specific concerns below, mostly regarding changes of priority at certain junctions, and width and surfacing requirements for inclusive cycling.

General comments

For any cycling route, there are some general principles which should be considered, and which guide our response. These are: suitability for 8 year olds; suitability for 80 year olds; suitability for disabled cyclists; suitability for cargo trikes; safety from motor vehicles; safety at night; and whether the route connects useful destinations in a direct fashion.

Whilst Jamaica Road isn't part of the consultation, it is very important that the interface between TfL's section of the route and Southwark's is done well. This junction, and the transitions to the route either side, will make or break Quietway 14.

More bike parking is needed for destinations throughout this route, including (but not limited to) The Angel pub, the Brunel Museum, and Canada Water station.

We are happy that this route doesn't use isolated park or canal paths, and will be usable at night.

We are happy that this route connects local destinations including homes, schools and stations in a relatively direct fashion, and will be a useful part of the local network, forming a good complement to parallel routes nearby.

We look forward to seeing how the eastern end of this route will be connected to Canada Water station (including any interventions on Surrey Quays Road), and to the planned walking and cycling bridge to Canary Wharf; these elements are not mentioned in the consultation.

Tanner Street

Regarding the stepped track, we want to check that it will be wide enough for non-standard cycles (e.g. cargo trikes, adapted wheelchairs). If not, how easy is it for these users to use the pavement / road instead?

Does the square on the drawings indicate that a lamppost or other obstacle will be left in the middle of the stepped track? This is very dangerous if so!

George Row

The priority of Wolseley Street, George Row and Chambers Street should be changed so that they form a continuous route. If traffic on George Row has to give way to traffic from Wolseley Street and Chambers Street, this will slow speeds without the need for speed bumps.

This could also be done at the junction of Dockhead and Parker's Row, where no interventions are currently planned. Northbound traffic on Parker's Row would give way to eastbound cyclists and other vehicles coming from Dockhead; and to westbound cyclists and other vehicles entering Dockhead.

Bevington Street

Is there a reason that the route uses Bevington Street, rather than Loftie Street? Turning north into Loftie Street requires no checks for traffic from the south, unlike turning into Bevington. As on George Row, the Quietway on Bermondsey Wall East could then have priority at the junction with Bevington Street and Fountain Green Square, simplifying navigation and reducing the number of junction turns required.

Bermondsey Wall East – proposed closure

We think that the closure would be better further east on Bermondsey Wall East, for example just past West Lane. This would prevent drivers from using Cherry Garden Street or West Lane as shortcuts, and therefore hopefully reduce speeds on this section of Bermondsey Wall East (which can be quite dangerous as motor vehicles speed round the blind corner from Cherry Garden St into BWE).

Kings's Stairs Gardens

As specified in Chapter 3 of the London Cycle Design Standards, a gap of at least 1.5 metres is needed for cycle access; anything smaller than this will inevitably exclude some people using adapted wheelchairs, cargo trikes, trailers, etc. Please bear in mind the Equalities Act (2010).

The western bollards could be moved further west, so that cars do not park outside The Angel and block the cycle route.

Will there be a dropped kerb to provide access to Fulford Street? The image shows cyclists on the pavement, where we would expect them to be using the road.

Cottle Way

We think that bollards are unnecessary on Cottle Way.

We reiterate the point about inclusive access: bollards which make a route too narrow exclude some people and endanger the rest, who may collide with them. Please remember children, people with shopping bags on their handlebars, etc. Design forgiving routes that work for everyone, rather than expecting all users to have perfect bike handling skills.

Regarding the eastern railings, we would like to see these removed: even widened, they will prevent long wheelbase bikes (tandems, trailers) from using the route. They will be impassable by cyclists arriving from both directions at once i.e. the high-use scenario we are aiming for.

Any barrier designed to physically prevent all moped or scooter access will exclude some cyclists. We strongly urge you to look for alternative solutions.

We are concerned about the corduroy paving: aligning the grooves with the direction of cycle traffic means that they can catch wheels or make them slip when it is wet.

St Marychurch Street

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When the cobbles are relayed, the surface should be smooth enough for people who are cycling with spinal injuries etc, and cannot suffer jolting. (As well as for general comfort, elderly cyclists, people with headaches, etc etc.)

Railway Avenue

If pedestrian and cycle flows are (predicted to become) high enough to necessitate segregation – which we are not convinced about at this particular location - then the design should make this intuitive and harmonious. Currently, the cycle track swaps from the west side of the path north of Brunel road, to the east side on the south. We would like to see cycle track remain on the same side throughout. The crossing should be widened by moving the eastbound traffic's stop line further west, and turned into a parallel crossing. If the cycle track were on the east side, this would improve pedestrian desire lines to Rotherhithe station. The currently proposed arrangement is designed to make cyclists and pedestrians cross paths whilst crossing a road, which is both unnecessary and a bad idea!

Again, we are against unnecessary bollards which introduce an additional hazard into the path of cyclists, except where there is a known problem with cars/vans encroaching.

Swan Road

Again, the Quietway should have priority at the junction of Albion Street and Swan Road, with southbound traffic on Swan Road giving way to vehicles/cycles from the west.

We are concerned by the possibility of 'dooring' on this stretch, given that unlike Fulford Road, parking will be retained.

Is there a known issue with speeding at this location? We would prefer no speed bumps if there isn't. If speed bumps are necessary, please use full-width sinusoidal ones, which are suitable for trikes and other wide wheel-base cycles.