**University of London**

**Proof of Evidence in Support of The Camden (Torrington Place to Tavistock Place) (Prescribed Routes, Waiting and Loading Restrictions and Parking Places) Traffic Order [2017].**

**Planning Inspectorate Reference: DPI/X5210/17/8**

1. The University of London wishes to publicly state its support for the Camden (Torrington Place to Tavistock Place) (Prescribed Routes, Waiting and Loading Restrictions and Parking Places) Traffic Order [2017].

2. The University has conducted two staff travel surveys, a short survey specific to the proposed order and conducted a transport and movement study as part of a master plan study for the Bloomsbury precinct which offer evidence detailed below for why the University is supporting the proposed Traffic Order. The University also refers to qualitative evidence that supports the positive effect the experimental traffic order has had and that any initial concerns over logistics and business operations have not materialised.

3. **Transport & Movement Study – June 2015**

4. The study was undertaken by Urban Flow a London based transport planning and traffic engineering consultants to assist the University's architects BDP prepare a master plan for the Bloomsbury precinct. The results of the study were made publicly available in two consultation events hosted at Senate House on the 11th August 2015 and 11th November 2015.

5. The whole document is made available as an appendix to this, although we have tried to highlight the most relevant findings in this summary.

**Method:**

6. Video cameras were installed at 15 locations to provide coverage of the site boundaries, 5 of which were in locations relevant to the proposed traffic order. The video survey took place from Wednesday 20th May 2015 to midnight Saturday 23rd of May 2015. **It should be noted that this study took place before the experimental traffic order took place.**

**Analysis:**

7. <u>Byng Place Key Observations & Issues:</u>

Key Observations:

- Cyclists often ride at speed and very purposefully in the shared space area (especially at peak hour) which discourages pedestrians in crossing – pedestrians tend to walk on shared space's nominal 'footway' space and cross at either end only.
- The 'shared space' on Byng Place underperforms with segregation remaining between the different types of users, particularly cyclists as they ride at high speed through the area and pedestrians as they have no reason to change footway.

- There is also issue with cyclists riding on the road instead of the segregated cycle lane as they can't reach the segregated cycle lane when coming from the adjacent streets (like Woburn Square, Torrington Square or Malet Street).

Key Issues:

- Underperforming shared space
- Vehicle, cyclist and pedestrian conflicts.

Observed Flows:

A substantial flow of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles travel through this area with 2,176 pedestrians, 932 cyclists and 532 vehicles travelling through the area at peak times.

Approximately 25% of cyclists riding through the area during peak period cycle on the carriageway alongside general traffic rather than within the shared pedestrian/cyclist area.

Very few pedestrians were seen crossing Byng Place.

8. Torrington Place Key Observations & Issues:

The Torrington Place / Malet St junction is an area of intense activity between all users, and quite hazardous too owing to the variety of users and the constrained street environments. Malet Street (north) however is a lightly trafficked road mainly used by service vehicles.

Key Observations:

- Cyclists ride very purposefully and at speed with pedestrians needing to take particular care when crossing – in addition to watching for motorised traffic.
- Cyclists have difficulties in joining the cycle lane on Malet St due to the segregated cycle lane on Torrington Place and the intense vehicle traffic.
- A small number of vehicles enter Malet Street from the north despite the 'No Entry' signing.
- Traffic is slow-moving at peak times, with the zebra crossing helping to regulate the flow of vehicles.
- Pedestrian flows increased when the UCL gate was open.
- There are a substantial number of service vehicles parking at the north-end of Malet Street (e.g. DPD, Royal Mail, etc.).
- The cycle parking stands are very well used with pedestrians needing to walk around the stands to cross Malet Street – on Saturday however, the cycle stands are less well used and traffic volumes lower – pedestrians can then cross the road more freely.
- Service vehicles tend not to park on the provided inset loading pads on Malet Street (north) but elsewhere on the road, often obstructing use of the cycle lane.

Key Issues:

- Intense pedestrian / cyclist / vehicle activity at peak times
- Slow moving traffic at peak hours
- Cyclists have difficulties in joining the cycle lane from/to Malet St

9. Tavistock Square & Gordon Square Key Observations & Issues

Key Observations:

- Vehicle and cyclist traffic is substantial and consequently, pedestrians rely on the zebra crossing and refuges to cross the road.

- The Gordon Square, Bedford Way, Tavistock Square junction is very busy during peak periods.
- The zebra crossing assists in regulating traffic flow and also cyclists exiting Woburn Square.
- The intense use of the zebra crossing contributes to moving traffic and at times, a more fluid traffic flow than may otherwise be the case.
- The cycle lane is so busy at peak hours that some cyclists appear to prefer to cycle on the carriageway alongside general traffic.
- Cyclists from Woburn Square have difficulties in accessing the segregated cycle lane owing to the high traffic volumes.
- Very few vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists pass through the Woburn Square / Gordon Square junction.

Key Issues:

- Segregated cycle lane – access, use and effectiveness issues
- Pedestrians crossing the road with difficulty

10. **Findings from Relevant Survey Results:**

**Staff Travel Survey 2013**

11. The University conducted a travel survey in 2013 which demonstrated that 3.66% of staff drove or shared a car as their main mode of travel (16 out of 437 responses). For comparison, 8.70% mainly cycled to work (38 out of 437).
12. The survey also helped count the number of times each mode of transport is used, even for those staff who use a combination of different modes for their commute (for instance, some staff have been known to drive to an underground station, then cycle to work from the underground station where they have exited) and for those who may use different modes of transport on different days. It was concluded that, even when including such cases, 4.75% of staff ever drive or share a car in their commute (out of a total count of 842 for all transport modes, "car" had 40 counts).

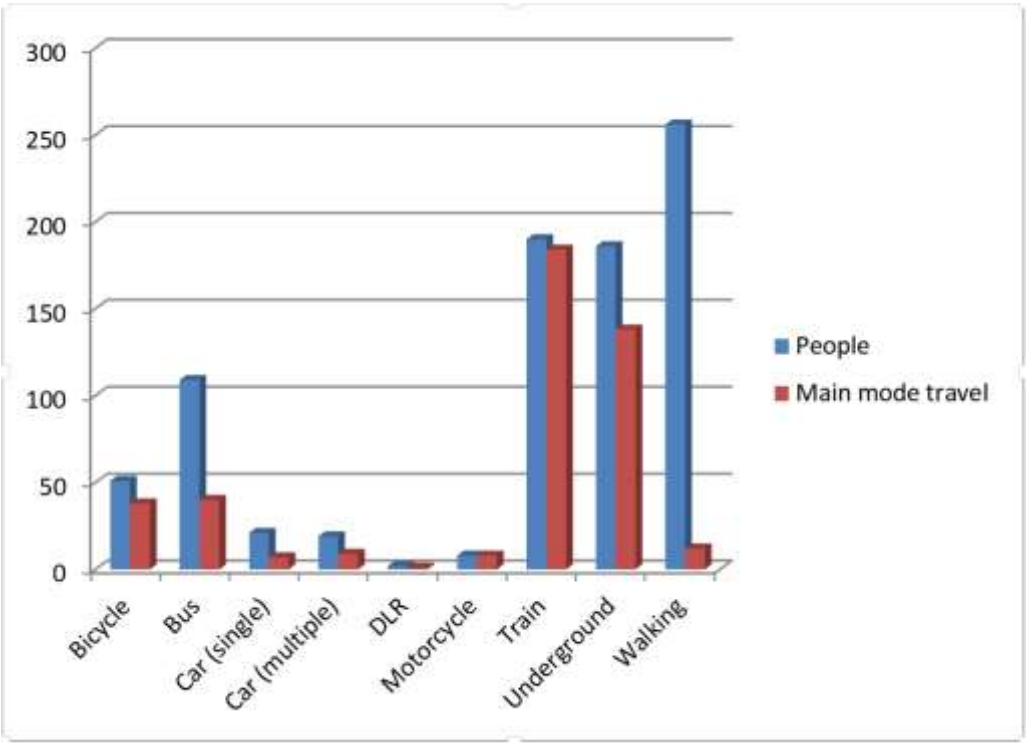


*Figure 1: Main modes of travel by staff.*

**Staff Travel Survey 2016**

13. A travel survey was also conducted in 2016, with the aim of gaining insight into which modes of transport staff use to travel to/from work. Out of a sample of 694 participants, 18 employees drive into the surrounding roads to get to work, therefore it can be concluded that 97.41% of staff will either benefit from or be unaffected by the changes in their daily commute.

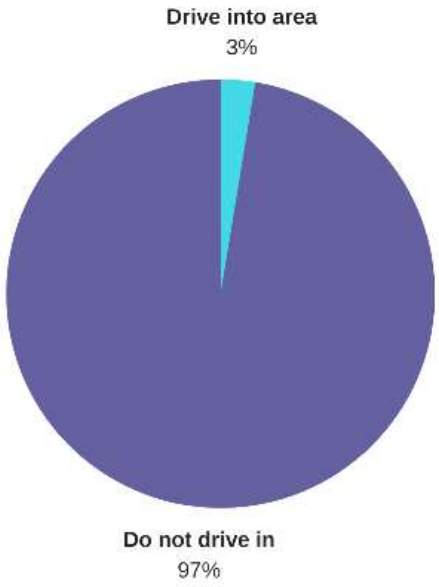


*Figure 2: Proportion of staff who drive into surrounding roads.*

**Staff Travel & Cycling Survey 2017**

14. The September 2017 Travel & Cycling survey, which had 210 responses, has results which suggest a favourable view of the staff and general public towards the Camden Traffic Order.

A) 10.5% of staff currently mainly cycle to work (an increase from 8.70% since 2013), and 1% drive (a decrease from 3.66%);

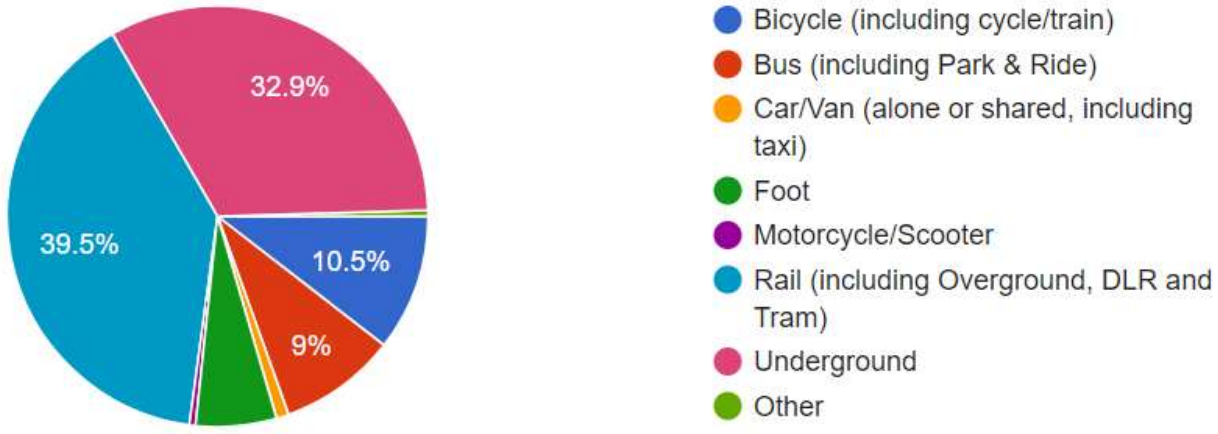


*Figure 3: 'What is the main mode of transport you use to travel to work?'*

B) 38.1% of participants have confirmed that various improvements and services would encourage them to cycle to work (multiple choice question – value of 38.1% was deducted by subtracting the values of "Nothing – it's too far to cycle" and "Nothing – not interested/not able to" from 100%);

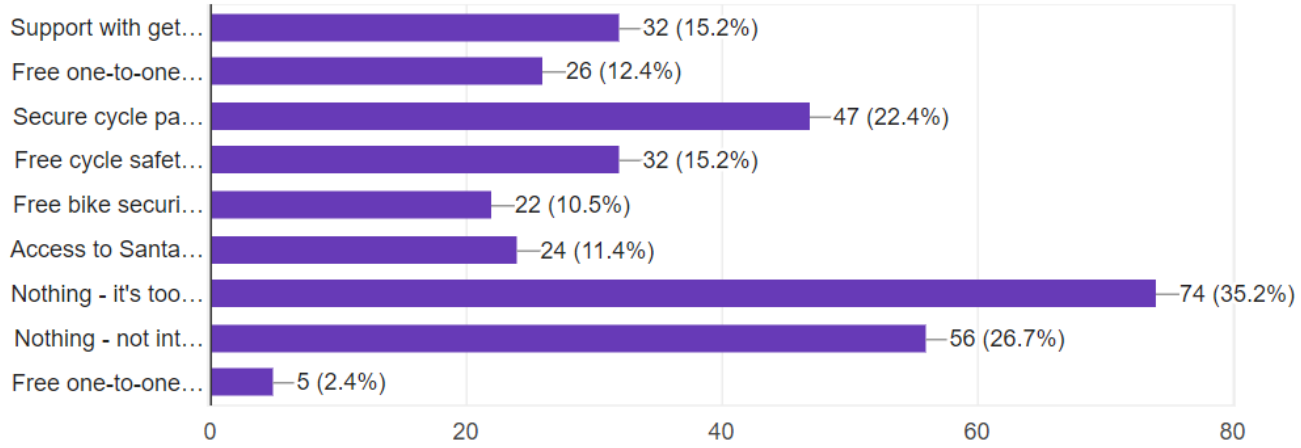


*Figure 4: 'What could encourage you to cycle more as part of your commute?'*

C) 85.7% of respondents support the proposed road layout;

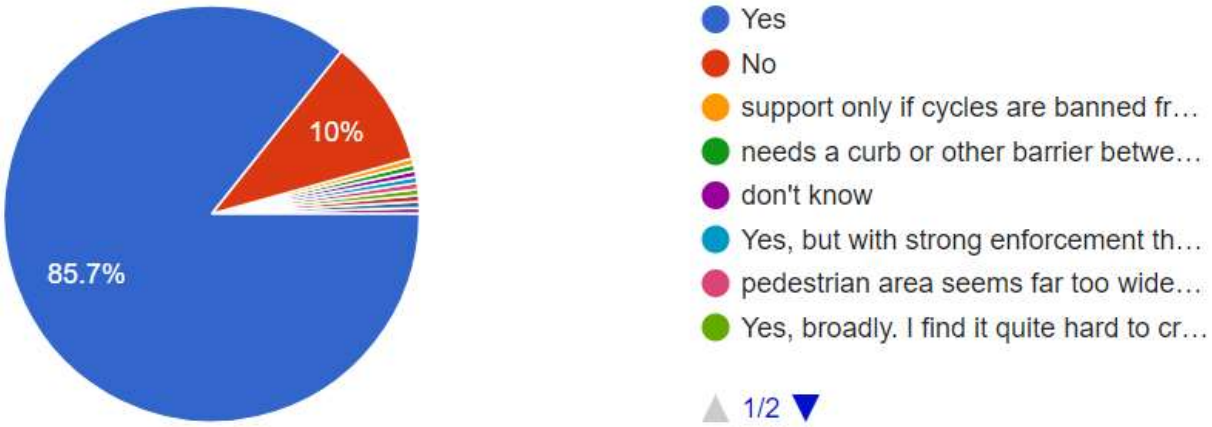


*Figure 5: 'Do you support that the proposed road layout is made permanent?'*

D) 92.9% confirmed that they never drive to work. Meanwhile, 6.2% occasionally drive, and 0.5% drive on a regular basis;

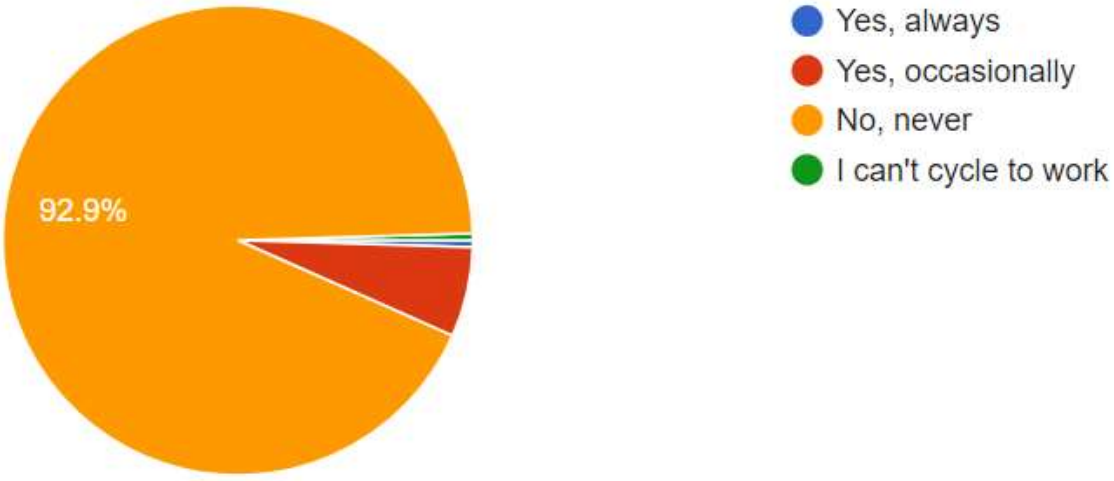


*Figure 6: 'Do you use the roads in the Torrington Place Tavistock Place corridor to DRIVE to work at the University of London?'*

E) 11% would start cycling, 8.1% would cycle more often, and 8.6% would continue to cycle and appreciate the improvements – totalling 27.7% who would benefit from the proposed layout.

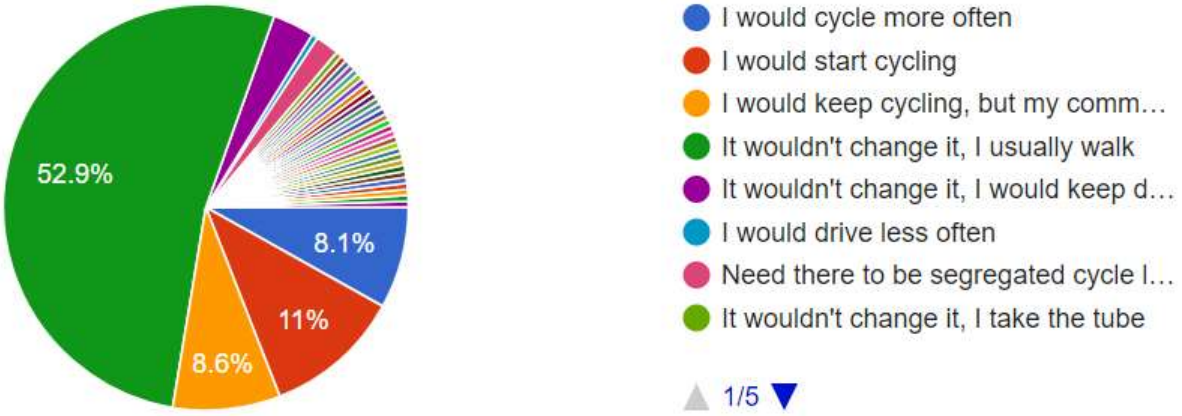


*Figure 7: 'If there were more segregated cycle lanes and less motor traffic in the Bloomsbury area, how would that affect your travel?'*

F) 67.1% are strongly concerned and 20% reasonably concerned about air quality and support changes that would bring improvements to the atmosphere.

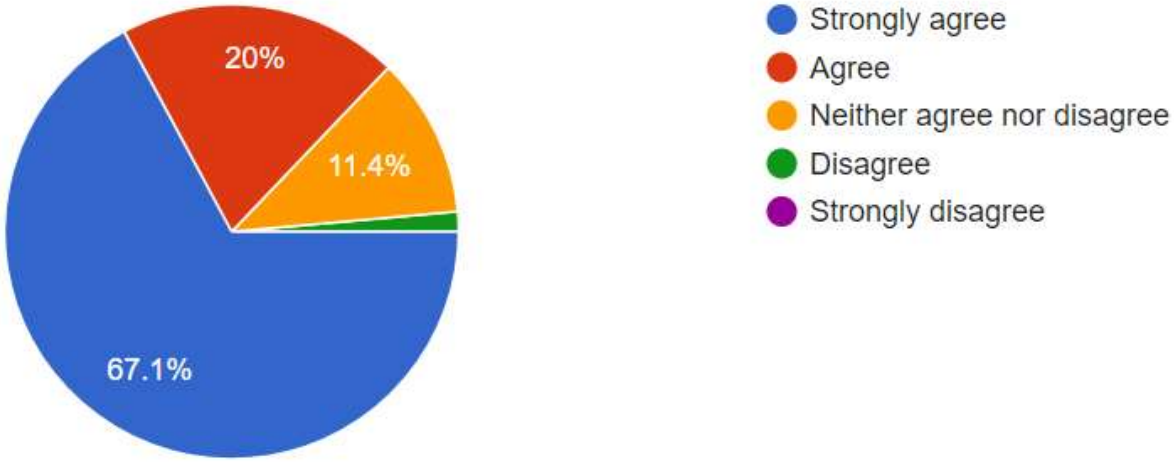


*Figure 8: 'Do you agree with the following statement? "I worry about poor air quality in central London and support changes that tackle this issue".'*

**Qualitative Evidence from the University of London Operations Team**

15. Before the proposed Tavistock Place / Torrington Place Traffic Order was trialled the University operations team had some concern that this may cause delays and disruption to deliveries and access to University properties in the Bloomsbury area and may negatively affect the operation of the Bloomsbury Farmers Market.

16. Discussions with Alan Train – Head of Facilities Services has confirmed, 'There have been no reported problems regarding access, deliveries or the operation of the Farmer's Market during the cycle lane trial.'

**Summary of Evidence**

17. Having reviewed the evidence we have available to us alongside documents that Camden Council have prepared in relation to the Traffic Order has given the University a clear and strong position in the support of the Traffic Order. The Traffic Order will have a wide ranging positive influence on the experience of students, staff and visitors to the University of London in Bloomsbury and fears of any negative impacts that the Traffic Order may have had on the University's operations have not materialised during the trial.