

## **Statement of Case**

**James Murray**

### **Background.**

My submission is based on a lifetime of living and working in Bloomsbury. I have lived in Gower Street (one block north of Bedford Square) for 50 years. I have operated as a hotelier in Gower Street, vehicle fleet management in Store Street and Ridgmount Street, auxiliary vehicle security and electrical services in The Colonnade (4 units) off Russell Square and as an Interior designer in Alfred Place over the past 50 years. During all this time I have regularly driven, cycled and walked through the area and I have an intimate knowledge of the way the area works in terms of navigating around and through it.

### **Experience as a driver.**

The day Camden introduced the Tavistock ETO changed the dynamics of how people navigate through the area, especially by motor vehicle. In my opinion this was not for the better, rather it added to the time it takes to navigate from East to West by motor vehicle. Serious congestion is the result of the ETO.

Exiting the Bloomsbury area to travel East or West has not significantly changed and is acceptable in my opinion.

However, entering and/ or passing through the area from the East (anywhere East of Judd Street and Woburn Place) to West (Gower Street or Tottenham Court Road or to cross to the North of Euston Road) is in my opinion unreasonable.

To try and avoid the Tavistock ETO by using the route south of the British Museum via Bloomsbury Street and St Giles Circus is considerably worse. The only other alternative is to travel north to Euston Road but this only adds to the congestion of vehicles travelling along Woburn Place who are heading north.

Drivers with knowledge of the area will invariably use Endsleigh Gardens and Gordon Street to find their way East (via Gower Street or Euston Road) or North (Euston Station/ Camden), but will, to their cost, find themselves in an unbearable and frustratingly long traffic jam.

Navigating the route from East to West as above takes far longer than previous to the introduction of the ETO, sometimes 30 minutes or more to get from Woburn Place to Gower Street and is seriously congested most of the time.

I believe concerns that the trial was causing taxi/ minicab passengers to miss trains from Euston, Kings Cross and St Pancras International is justified. Tourists and anyone who does not live or work in the area will have no idea of how much extra time they must allow for their driver to get to the destination on time.

I believe the ETO does not achieve the benefits that Camden Council claim.

### **Is there another solution?**

Tavistock Place and Torrington Place are wide streets and I consider that if the cycle lanes were removed and 2-way carriageway reintroduced for motor vehicles with these streets designated as a 'shared space' this could work to the benefit of both cyclists and motor vehicle users.

Shared space works to great effect elsewhere and I wonder why Camden have not tried it.

The ETO has caused underutilised cycle lanes for most of the day and night that take up valuable road space that could be better utilised. A 'shared space' would reverse the congestion caused by the ETO. A shared space would naturally encourage both drivers and cyclists to reduce speed and I believe both drivers and cyclists would learn better respect for one another on a route that is shared in this way.

James Murray

13/09/2017

