Written evidence submitted by an individual who wishes to remain anonymous (BSB27)

This submission regards cycling lane provision near bus stop boarders and bypasses which I see are under discussion.

I have cycled in London since I moved here over twenty years ago. For many years cycling in London was mainly the preserve of young men. The more recent proliferation of cycle lanes appears to have done much to increase the numbers and diversity of cyclists.

To start with I will state some basic points that I believe are uncontroversial and uncontested. I will not bother with links as affirming studies are innumerable and easily found: -

- Protected cycle infrastructure is associated with an increase in diversity of cyclists
- Active travel and exercise (of which cycling is one form) are associated with improved physical and mental health
- Cycling is an efficient and cheap method of travel
- Without good quality protected cycle infrastructure many people will not cycle and this will be detrimental on their ability and options to travel for work, exercise and pleasure.

For the reasons above high quality cycle infrastructure (of which cycle lanes are a large part) are immediately important for cities and in the longer term less urban areas.

I am concerned that in the longer term this bill will be used by various parties to attempt to cancel all bus stop boarders and bypasses.
Bus stop bypasses and to an extent boarders are required for high quality cycle lanes. Without them many cyclists will be discouraged from cycling. Those that are not discouraged will be forced to cycle with cars, buses and HGVs. This will inevitably result in deaths and serious injuries.

Cyclists, especially young or timid should not cycle with buses. In terms of distance travelled TFL found – see “Cycling action plan 2” - that buses kill cyclists at approximately thirteen times the rate of cars.

Risk of motor vehicle being involved in cycling fatalities and serious injuries by share of traffic (vehicle kilometre)		
Risk of motor vehicles being involved in cycling fatalities (relative to share of traffic in vehicle kilometre):		
Motorcycles		0.98
Cars and taxis		0.40
Buses and coaches		5.35
LGV		1.09
HGV		12.92
Risk of motor vehicles being involved in cycling serious injuries (relative to share of traffic in vehicle kilometre):		
Motorcycles		1.94
Cars and taxis		1.01
Buses and coaches		2.00
LGV		0.79
HGV		0.48

Novice and younger cyclists are easily startled by traffic. This results in deaths and injuries. See this story from the metro.

Boy, 11, killed cycling home 'after veering into path of bus when driver beeped'

Luke Alsford

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Comments

Lucas Ashton was cycling home from his granddad's house (Picture: MEN Media/SWNS)

An 11-year-old boy died after swerving into the path of a bus 'when the driver beeped and startled him', an inquest was told.

In more recent years with the increase in high quality cycle lanes I have seen a large increase in children, parents and workers cycling to their destinations. As previously touched upon cycling has many beneficial outcomes, additional ones being predictability of journey times and ease of trip chaining. An example would be people dropping their children at school then cycling to work or a transport hub and perhaps via the shops on the way home. This would almost inevitably be quicker than multiple bus journeys or walking. It also reduces journey time risk. As someone on parent whatsapp groups it is not uncommon to see requests to assist with child pick up as the parent is delayed by traffic or tube/train issues. Giving more people the opportunity to cycle reduces this risk.

In Walthamstow cycle lanes were put along two A road – Forest road and Lea Bridge Road. This more than doubled the number of cyclists on Forest Road (623 – 1629) and doubled the number on Lea Bridge Road 1300 - 2691 (DFT counts.)

Year	Count method	Pedal cycles
2024	Estimated using AADF from previous year on this link	1481
2023	Estimated using AADF from previous year on this link	1544
2022	Manual count	1629
2021	Estimated using AADF from previous year on this link	721
2020	Estimated using AADF from previous year on this link	965
2019	Estimated using AADF from previous year on this link	754
2018	Manual count	623

Year	Count method	Pedal cycles
2024	Estimated using AADF from previous year on this link	3158
2023	Estimated using AADF from previous year on this link	2826
2022	Estimated using AADF from previous year on this link	2756
2021	Manual count	2691
2020	Estimated using AADF from previous year on this link	1488
2019	Estimated using AADF from previous year on this link	1203
2018	Estimated using AADF from previous year on this link	1284
2017	Manual count	1300

With the cycle lanes it is common to see children cycling to school. Before them this was not the case.

There are many buses cars and HGVs on this road with morning congestion. It is not reasonable to expect children or adults to cycle with these.

Active and independent travel for children instils good habits, reduces their dependency on their parents for transport and encourages independence and a reduction in car journeys from carers ferrying them around. A reduction in the future number of quality cycle lanes will have a chilling effect on the ability of children and other groups to travel short to medium distances cheaply and easily.

With regards to safety, TFL have reviewed bus stop bypasses and found them to be safe.

Reviewing the results

This review has shown that the risk of pedestrians being injured at bus stop bypasses is very low. There were five pedestrian casualties involving cyclists and one involving an e-scooter rider on bus stop bypasses over a three-year period. One of these casualties appears to have happened on the zebra crossing, where the user must give way to the pedestrian. To put this in context, 11,400 pedestrians were injured in collisions with motor vehicle drivers over the same timeframe.

https://content.tfl.gov.uk/bus-stop-bypass-safety-review-2024.pdf
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There are of course some injuries. It would be naïve to expect there to be no injuries where people interact. It would put cycle lanes in the peculiar position of being the only transport infrastructure in which their could be no incidents.

I am also concerned by the current recommendation not to install any bus stop boarders. Especially if it foreshadows further guidance. It seems overly prescriptive. There is a secondary school near me by the crossroads of busy A and B roads. It is serviced by a cycle lane that would not be possible without some boarder style bus stops. It would not be reasonable to prevent this cycle lane from being installed and used by school children; instead requiring them to cycle on an A road in rush hour if they so dared.

Another example is this bus stop boarder on Woodford New Road.

The cycle lane is used by cyclists heading out of London into Epping Forest and is quite popular. I requested from TFL the frequency of use for boarding at this bus stop. It was fewer than nine people a day. Requiring this to be a full bus stop bypass would incur extra cost in construction, be a worse experience for cycle lane users and essentially inconsequential for the experience of bus users.

At a personal level my family use a cycle lane with bus stop bypasses nearly daily. Not having it available to us would present significant difficulties. We use it to take our children to separate schools and nurseries which are sufficiently separated it would make the morning and evening drop off/pick up/commute run almost impossible. I am able to efficiently perform two drop offs and continue to work. My wife is able to cycle from the station and perform the pickups. Attempting to perform this by bus would take much longer due to the walks and waiting time – ignoring the fact that at the second drop off it iused to be common for the buses not to stop due to being full, forcing a twenty minute walk to the station. With the number of children I now see being accompanied by parents on bikes I am sure this sort of situation is not uncommon.

Finally, I welcome attempts to standardise designs as much as possible and the situations they should generally be used in. This helps everyone. With this done though I suggest extensive consultations should be stopped. The public are not traffic engineers, consultations are expensive and I suspect they rarely bring in novel points. They should be short and provide people and groups the opportunity to raise 'real' issues rather than the typical clichés.
Excessive consultations slow down change and reduce the ability of councils to fund this change.

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