



Pedestrian London

Enhancing The Beauty and Livability Of London

Reshaping Roads and Space To Form A London
Fabric of Pedestrian Neighborhoods, Interlaced
with Efficient Traffic, And Bringing Us In Daily
Contact And Enjoyment With The Memorable Spots
Which Londoners All Cherish, Making These Places
The Main Focus Of The City.

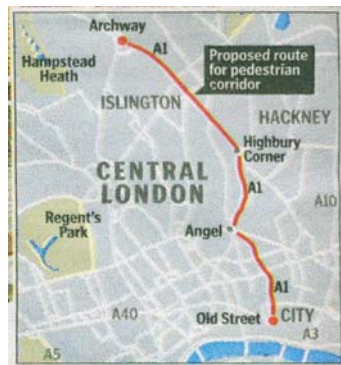
DRAFT OF A PRELIMINARY PLAN

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Introduction

There has been a growing awareness of the importance of pedestrian life in large cities, and a strong awareness of the damage to social life that has been done by the 20th-century dominance of cars, trucks, and buses. Since the establishment of the congestion-charge zone by Mayor Livingstone, in 2003, several pilot projects for pedestrianization have been put forward and are now under active study and development for implementation. These include Lord Rogers' proposal for Marylebone – Euston Road, a recent proposal for the rehabilitation and pedestrianization of the A1 from to the City,¹ the proposal for part time pedestrianization of the Victoria Embankment from x to x, and an improvement scheme for Sloan Square.



Plan for A1 being made pedestrian, announced June 3, 2005



The pedestrian center of York

During the last few years major rehabilitation of pedestrian life has been undertaken in a number of important cities throughout Europe, including Copenhagen, Vienna, and Florence, and in England and Scotland, including Cambridge, Chichester, Aberdeen, Nottingham, and York.²

In this paper, a summary and precursor of a longer study, we propose to demonstrate that Central London, **as a whole**, can be treated in a similar fashion, so that pedestrian life in London, the lifeblood of every city up until the mid-19th century, can now be re-introduced in a major way consistent with new technology, consistent with new understanding of urban systems.

After initial study, we have concluded that a network created by closing and/or modifying 20-30% of the existing roads and streets, and carefully re-distributing certain vehicular and pedestrian functions, throughout the streets of Central London, can re-establish a vigorous life in the city, which combines the best of pedestrian life and the best of vehicular movement, in a symbiotic way that will make the city more habitable, and at the same time contribute greatly to invigoration of its economic life.

The essential goal, is that vast though London is, it will be re-established as a great city of human scale and beauty, in which each part is intimate and pleasant in its own

terms, has its own character, in which pedestrian life for young and old is protected in each neighborhood, while rapid movement from neighborhood to neighborhood, shopping, commuting, commerce, are all made easier.

Most important of all, the fabric of the city, and the heart of these three hundred neighborhoods, will be composed on the memorable spots, and trees, and churches, bridges, views, memorable lanes, beautiful gardens, hidden mews and courtyards. Each place will be an adventure, each street a place with dignity, each garden colorful, each building quiet and graceful.

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PEDESTRIAN LONDON







This report, when completed, will contain the following elements:

- (1) A map showing a first sketch proposal of the streets to be modified and or closed to vehicle traffic.
- (2) A detailed street-by-street report on the streets proposed for closure or modification, describing the reasoning that led to the selection.
- (3) Finite element analysis of traffic flow, showing that this choice of pedestrian streets, will permit vehicular traffic flow to occur as smoothly as it does today.
- (4) A parking location plan, showing how strategic location of parking lots in key positions, will also alleviate congestion, and stimulate vigorous pedestrian flow in the newly created pedestrian streets.

Most important, and the key to this proposal, is the fact that the choice of streets to be given back to pedestrian life, are chosen because of their psychological and emotional importance. In short, the streets elevated to this status, have been chosen because they intensify our experience of the city, and they consolidate, and intensify, the love of London, because they protect the most important, and best loved places thus re-establishing London as one of the best loved cities in the world.

The Area Of Central London Under Discussion In This Report



Congestion Area

This report focuses on the so-called congestion area of Central London, as shown above. This first draft report, more specifically focuses on the eastern end of the congestion area, north of the river. If the first draft proposal is deemed worthy of further study, the method will later be extended to the full congestion charge area, and possibly, in the long run, to the areas surrounding this central area.

THE RULES OF THE GAME

Definition of a Pedestrian Braid

A pedestrian braid is a complex structure defined as a pedestrian network which is continuously embedded and interlaced in a network of vehicular roads and parking in such a way that the pedestrian network retains its emotional, cultural and physical integrity, while the vehicular network permits unimpaired movement of vehicles through the area, and unimpaired access of vehicles to all buildings in the area.

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Structural Characteristics of a Pedestrian Braid

The following features dominate:

- Statistically, about 20% of the links in the system are pedestrian, and about 80% are vehicular.
- The city is essentially pedestrian: it is made of a series of local areas, in which pedestrian movement is simple and pleasant.
- The streets and ways chosen for pedestrian movement, are those which are focused on and guided by the most beautiful places, centers, trees and monuments.
- The pedestrian network is interlocked with the vehicular system, but not mixed with it.

- Beauty and inspiration of each place
- View to parts of the network and key centers beyond
- Connectivity to other chosen streets
- Connection to some green place, lawn, garden, or trees.

- Parking is not provided at the place where people want to be, but at some distance away from it, so that a brisk walk takes you to the place you want to be.
- For each parking lot, something magnetic (a beautiful center to walk towards) draws pedestrians from the parking along the main pedestrian thoroughfare.

- Each pedestrian space and each pedestrian street are made and constructed so that they create a cunning and tantalizing view of some beautiful part of some other nearby space. It is this choice of pedestrian spaces, that creates a network that can exist in the geometry of the city, and in the imagination.
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- Continuous interaction between cars and pedestrians, so that access is unimpaired, and the cars contribute to a vigorous pedestrian life, while maintaining the flows needed to maintain and stimulate the urban economy.³
- Of course the choice of pedestrian streets must be done in a balanced way, so that it is as practical as possible, and leaves a useful and effective traffic system.
- However, in spite of this highly important consideration, the priority of judgment must go to choice of those pedestrian areas and streets, which, by their nature uplift the spirit and create joy for the people walking.

Our Principles For Choosing Streets To Be Pedestrian

The Following Principles Are To Be Applied, Step By Step, To Each Road, Street, Lane, Alley, Square, Road Intersection, Park, Parking Area, Courtyard, As A Candidate For Being Included In The Pedestrian Network.

- Beauty and inspiration of each place
- View to parts of the network and key centers beyond
- Connectivity to other chosen streets
- Connection to some green place, lawn, garden, or trees.

The Following Principles Are To Be Applied To The Size, Distribution, Location And Construction Of Car Parks Or Parking Garages.

- Parking is not provided at the place where people want to be, but at some distance away from it, so that a brisk walk takes you to the place you want to be.
- For each parking lot, something magnetic (a beautiful center to walk towards) draws pedestrians from the parking along the main pedestrian thoroughfare.

Connections To Nearby Major And Minor Centers

- Each pedestrian space and each pedestrian street are made and constructed so that they create a cunning and tantalizing view of some beautiful part of some other nearby space. It is this choice of pedestrian spaces, that creates a network that can exist in the geometry of the city, and in the imagination.
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Balance And Interpenetration Of Vehicle Movement And Pedestrian Movement

- Continuous interaction between cars and pedestrians, so that access is unimpaired, and the cars contribute to a vigorous pedestrian life, while maintaining the flows needed to maintain and stimulate the urban economy.⁴

- Of course the choice of pedestrian streets must be done in a balanced way, so that it is as practical as possible, and leaves a useful and effective traffic system.
- However, in spite of this highly important consideration, the priority of judgment must go to choice of those pedestrian areas and streets, which, by their nature uplift the spirit and create joy for the people walking.

A Stepwise Procedure For Transforming The Existing Road Network in Central London Into a Coherent Pedestrian Braid Extending Throughout Central London

District 1

Central London, NorthEast: The City

Detailed Diagnosis and Recommendations

Street by Street



Present Condition, 2005

The Northeast area showing roads and pedestrian areas as they are today

Note: Please note that many of the smallest pedestrian lanes and alleys shown as thin yellow lines in the map above, though vital to pedestrian life, are not typically shown in conventional road maps.

It should also be noted that some pedestrian precincts, recently built, are well intended, but not effective, since the space they contain is not beautiful or helpful to the emotional character of pedestrian life.

Cowcross Street and Smithfield Market



Smithfields market, looking from the end of Cowcross Street.



Cowcross Street, looking from Smithfields market.

Section 1 Discussion of reasons why this is a good choice. What are the feelings. Where does good quality come from. Why will it appeal to the heart of Londoners and others.

Section 2 Photos and diagrams showing extent of the desirable part in detail, and showing special quality and special views.

Smithfield market, as one sees it from the last few yards of Cowcross street

Section 3 Maybe a rough plan, or sketch of that street as it can be if pedestrianized.

Spitalfields Market and the View to St Pauls

Section 1 Discussion of reasons why this is a good choice. What are the feelings. Where does good quality come from. Why will it appear to the heart of Londoners and others.

Section 2 Photos and diagrams showing extent of the desirable part in detail, and showing special quality and special views.



Looking down xxx street towards St Pauls. An important walk, and view, which deserves to be enjoyed.

Section 3 Maybe a rough plan, or sketch of that street if it is pedestrianized.

Postman's Park and Little Britain

Section 1 Discussion of reasons why this is a good choice. What are the feelings. Where does good quality come from. Why will it appear to the heart of Londoners and others.

Section 2 Photos and diagrams showing extent of the desirable part in detail, and showing special quality and special views.



Postman's Park and Little Britain

St Anne and St Agnes: London Wall

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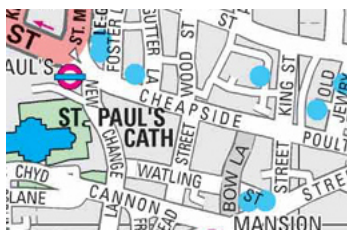
St Anne and St Agnes, and the London Wall

Cheapside



Cheapside , looking east

This magnificent and tranquil street, represents the best of London. Although it is presently used heavily at rush hour, the space is too important to be consumed in this fashion. It should be given back to Londoners.



*The yellow diagonal street on the right hand diagram shows Cheapside as reconstructed free of traffic.
The red ring road around the neighborhood can easily carry the traffic.*



Cheapside

To make this magnificent street open to pedestrian life, the Cheapside traffic can be re-routed around the outside of the Cheapside neighborhood, on the major roads marked in red on the above diagram. Traveling east (via the north), St Martin's, London Wall, and Gracechurch street; traveling west (to the south) Queen Victoria Street, Cannon Street and New Change.

Throgmorton Street



Throgmorton Street

Bow Lane and Watling Street





Watling Street at Bow Lane



Watling Street towards St Pauls

St Andrews Church, Creed Lane, and Carter Street



St Andrews church



Creed Lane and corner of Carter Lane



Carter Lane

New Broad Street

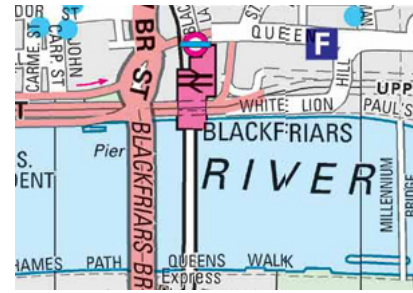


New Broad Street



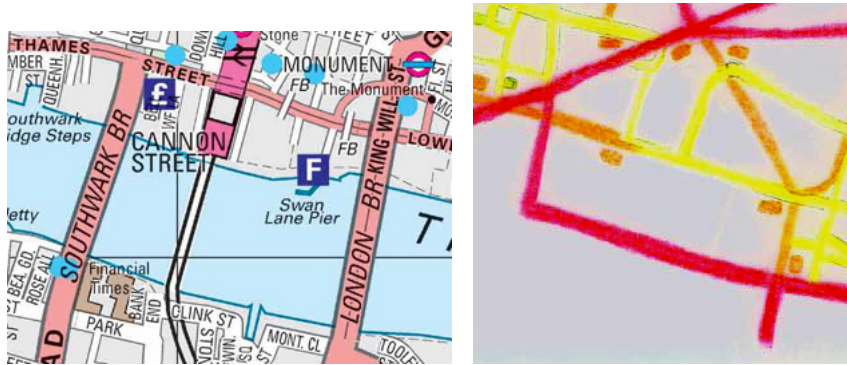
Peaceful cemetery on Old Street

White Lion Hill

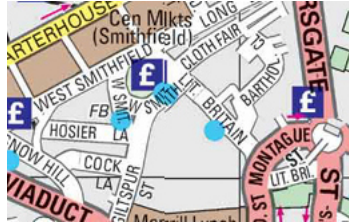


Thames footpath beside White Lion Hill

East of Cannon Street Station



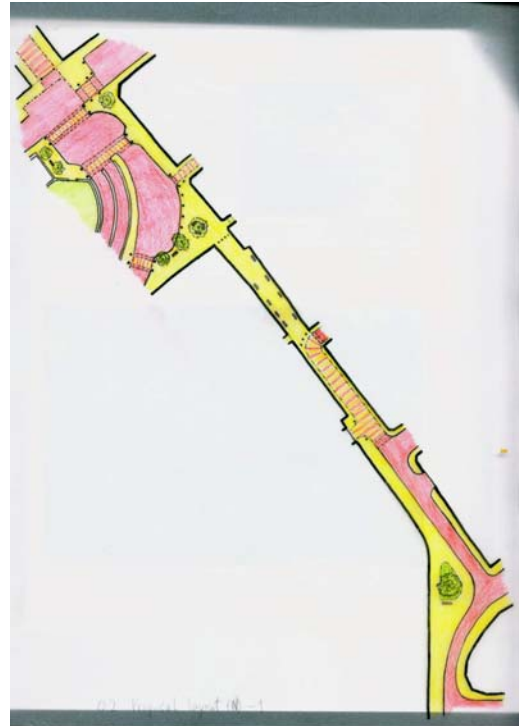
Little Britain



Little Britain, lower end. It is plainly visible here, that this is a place essentially pedestrian in nature, and should be configured to make the pedestrian quality dominant, while still allowing access for delivery vehicles, cars, and taxis.



Present state of Little Britain



Proposed improvements

The left hand drawing shows the present state of Little Britain, south-east of Smithfields. In the last five years, it has already been made partly pedestrian, and is pleasant and well used. However, there are subtleties which should be corrected and improved. In the right hand drawing, we see a slight change of the sidewalk around West Smithfield square; and at the southern end we also see the reduction in size of the flowerbed which is in place. Both these changes make the pedestrian space more pleasant and more comfortable – as space it is more positive.

The largest change is the middle section of the walk, which is now cobbled, to suggest access for vehicles, but a surface more plainly dedicated to pedestrian use.

Pedestrian Neighborhoods, and “Stars.”

Moving forward from identification of the passionate and heartfelt pedestrian centers which can nourish the human spirit, to the practical traffic analysis and reconstruction which will respect these “stars” of pedestrian life and form identifiable neighborhoods

In the first-phase analysis of London streets, we have focused on places that are inspiring to be in, enjoyable, and that help to maintain the emotional connection with the city.

In this phase, we have focused on streets individually, one by one, using as criteria, the issue of which streets are inspiring to be in, have the potential to make life worth living as you walk up and down them, which inspire memories, and anchor a person’s psych in the choice and care for a place.

As we have seen, the results of this analysis are surprising.

Some of the most recently built pedestrian precincts, such as the Barbican, the area west of the Tower, the pedestrian paths along the Embankment from Custom House Walk to Blackfriars (except for White Lion Hill just east of Blackfriars), and so forth, even though a great deal of money was spent, have little to offer the people, in the way of enjoyment, comfort, or pleasantness. That is, in large part, because they fail to nourish the existing structure, and substitute arbitrary or ill-conceived arrangements.

On the other hand, there are many unknown places which are already nearly beautiful, and need only a little work, to protect them, preserve them, and bring them out.

Then there are important major thoroughfares, long thought of as necessarily for cars and buses, yet are so inspiring to Londoners and visitors alike, that they deserve to be reclaimed for pedestrians, with alternative arrangements being made to handle necessary vehicle flows. Cheapside east of St Paul’s is one shining example. Piccadilly between St James’s and Piccadilly Circus, is another.

But handling these larger, and one might say major surgical operations, is harder than it may seem. For example, the recent effort to make Oxford Street more pedestrian has been a complete failure so far. It is still not pleasant. Traffic arrangements violate and complicate the situation, and there is no possibility of a comfortable walk, up and down, for thousands. As a result, traffic has been impeded, but pedestrian life has not been improved.

In addition, one could not really say that this section of Oxford Street is inspiring. It does not contain the atmosphere, or the buildings, or the spaces, which touch the heart. Making this a great street, is an enormous task, if it should be attempted at all.

Traffic Modeling and Micro-simulation

Street by Street^{5 6}

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- ¹ Evening Standard, Friday June 3 2005, page 15.
 - ² See the City of York website at <http://www.york.gov.uk/visiting/citycentre.html>.
 - ³ See Car Pedestrian Symbiosis, in *Houses Generated by Patterns*, Center for Environmental Structure, 1969.
 - ⁴ See Car Pedestrian Symbiosis, in *Houses Generated by Patterns*, Center for Environmental Structure, 1969.
 - ⁵ Vissim simulation package
 - ⁶ Paramics simulation package