

London Cycling Campaign response to Hackney Walford Road area consultation

12 November 2019

<https://consultation.hackney.gov.uk/streetscene/walford-road-area/>

About the London Cycling Campaign

London Cycling Campaign (LCC) is a charity with more than 20,000 supporters of whom over 11,000 are fully paid-up members. We speak up on behalf of everyone who cycles or wants to cycle in Greater London; and we speak up for a greener, healthier, happier and better-connected capital.

This response was developed with input from LCC's borough groups.

General comments on this scheme:

- This scheme will reduce motor traffic dominance and through motor traffic in the area, increasing walking and cycling for the health and wellbeing of residents and those walking and cycling through, and is likely to reduce overall motor traffic levels significantly. As such it is supported.
- However, given some of the modelling results and concerns being raised, Hackney should monitor main roads after implementation, with a plan to mitigate any significant negative impacts of the scheme, or add to it further.
- We support the response of our local borough group.

Specific points about this scheme:

- Modal filters that rely simply on signage are likely to have a poor level of compliance. Currently no physical measures to prevent motor traffic driving through appear to be proposed (Detail drawings A-C). Bollards, planters and/or other street furniture with 1.5m gaps between should be used from building line to building line across filter locations (if camera enforcement is not proposed for these locations).
- Additional modal filtering should be strongly considered to ensure Dynevor Road does not retain through motor traffic also.
- The area is currently blighted by "through" motor traffic using primarily residential streets to avoid the main road network, creating significant barriers to walking and cycling and enabling far too many unnecessary car journeys, with resulting negative effects including noise and air pollution, inactivity, climate-changing emissions, collisions and injuries. This through traffic also directly impacts the cycle route running through the area, ensuring it does not work to its full potential.

- “Low Traffic Neighbourhood” (LTN) schemes, most notably elsewhere (and nearby) in Hackney and Waltham Forest, demonstrate that removing or strongly restricting through motor traffic from primarily residential neighbourhoods has major benefits for walking and cycling, and in many cases public transport, activity levels, pollution, community cohesion etc.
- These schemes reduce overall motor vehicle movements across an area, including the main roads, and encourage “mode shift”. And this tends to happen without significant negative impacts to existing main roads and the broader transport network in the medium to long term.
- As such, and alongside main road schemes (such as cycle tracks or other “road diets”), these schemes are a vital step towards enabling active travel and reducing the dominance of the motor car in the borough and across London. It is important the council remains firm on these plans and the principles behind them, and delivers benefits for the broader community, rather than listening to any vocal minority (often car owners) that emerges during the engagement and consultation process.
- It is also important that the council monitors any adverse impacts and mitigates them or adds to the scheme rapidly. Progress towards improving main roads and residential streets in London is never perfect and rarely holistic. It is vital then that councils, rather than reducing rate of progress on schemes on this basis, increases the rate of progress. To do this requires accepting schemes are often controversial and always imperfect, and despite this moving forward those schemes that are significantly progressive in removing overall motor traffic volumes and/or significantly increasing walking and cycling mode share rapidly.
- For this reason, monitoring, both before and after implementation, of air quality, motor traffic volumes and speeds, cycling and walking volumes and potentially even footfall and retail vacancy rates of nearby shops on nearby main roads and residential streets this scheme could impact, would be desirable, up to several years after the introduction of the scheme, sporadically. This would enable the borough and other London, and UK, transport bodies, councillors and officers etc. to build up a valuable evidence base on the results of introducing LTNs, and enable the borough to build schemes to mitigate any adverse impacts as well as reassure residents and shopkeepers of the benefits medium and long-term.
- In the near term, as well as a bus and cycle only scheme for Stoke Newington Church Street, further attention should be paid to Crossway also, to ensure it is improved for walking, cycling and public transport, and private motor car use along the road is either removed or restricted.
- Hackney Council should be commended on the thoroughness of its consultation materials on this area, and particularly on embedding traffic evaporation in its modelling approach.

General points about infrastructure schemes:

- The Mayor's Transport Strategy relies on a growth in cycle trips to keep London moving. This means infrastructure schemes must be designed to accommodate growth in cycling. Providing space for cycling is a more efficient use of road space than providing space for driving private motor vehicles, particularly for journeys of 5km or less. In terms of providing maximum efficiency for space and energy use, walking, cycling, then public transport are key.
- As demonstrated by the success of recent Cycle Superhighways and mini-Holland projects etc., people cycle when they feel safe. For cycling to become mainstream and enable all ages and abilities to cycle, a network of high-quality, direct routes separate from high volumes and/or speeds of motor vehicle traffic is required to/from all key destinations and residential areas in an area. Schemes should be planned, designed and implemented to maximise potential to increase journeys – with links to nearby amenities, residential centres, transport hubs considered from the outset.
- Spending money on cycling infrastructure has been shown to dramatically boost health outcomes in an area. Spending on cycling schemes outranks all other transport modes for return on investment according to a DfT study. Schemes which promote cycling meet TfL's "Healthy Streets" checklist. A healthy street is one where people choose to cycle.
- All schemes should be designed to enable people of all ages and abilities to cycle, including disabled people.
- Evidence from TfL and from many schemes in London, the UK and worldwide shows the economic benefits, including to businesses, to be found from enabling a wider range of people to cycle more. Further evidence shows how cycling schemes also benefit air quality and reduce climate changing emissions, as well as improving resident health outcomes and reducing inactivity, as mentioned above.
- LCC wants, as a condition of funding, all highway development designed to London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS), with a Cycling Level of Service (CLOS) rating of 70 or above, with all "critical issues" eliminated. Above 2,000 Passenger Car Unit (PCUs) motor vehicle movements per day, or 20mph motor traffic speeds, cycling should be physically separated from motor traffic.