

London Cycling Campaign response to Richmond Low Traffic Neighbourhood in East Sheen

23 September 2019

<https://haveyoursay.citizenspace.com/richmond/ecs/east-sheen/consult> *view/*

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:

- The principle of reducing motor traffic dominance, including through motor traffic, as well as increasing walking and cycling for the health and wellbeing of residents in this area is very welcome.
- Through motor traffic using Richmond Park, via Sheen Gate, is one of the worst issues in this area, and it is vital that this scheme is not considered in isolation, but as part of a process to reduce or remove through motor traffic using the park and consider the area holistically – including enabling more walking and cycling and mitigating impacts of the Hammersmith Bridge closure.
- This is particularly vital considering the possibility that the present proposals could see motor traffic concentrating on a more limited number of roads in the area that are not fundamentally “main” roads, particularly Sheen Lane (the B351). We would support further schemes being rapidly advanced by The Royal Parks and/or Richmond Council to limit through motor traffic using Sheen Lane, such as “School Streets”, “bus gates” etc. We would particularly support monitoring and rapid advancement of schemes to mitigate any negative impact on Sheen Lane still evident after traffic patterns settle.
- Similarly we would also support further schemes in Sheen north of the Upper Richmond Road (A205) to reduce through motor traffic there, although it is unlikely that the current proposals would result in any new through motor traffic in that area. And we would support bringing forward plans to reduce motor traffic on Upper Richmond Road itself to provide more space for walking and cycling. To the east of these proposals, TfL's Strategic Cycling Analysis highlights the road as along the alignment of one of its highest potential corridors for cycling (to/from Putney and Wandsworth).

Specific points about this scheme:

- This 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.
- “Low Traffic Neighbourhood” (LTN) schemes, most notably 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 delivering a plan that fulfils the principles behind these proposals, and delivers benefits for the broader community, rather than listening to any vocal minority that emerges during the consultation process.
- The aim of consultation in this case should be to refine how specific scheme options will fulfil principles established on baseline data and resident perception surveys etc., but it should not effectively be a referendum on whether the project proceeds or not. Nor should it result in a scheme being allowed to move forward that will fail to deliver against established principles, borough policy and the Mayor’s Transport Strategy objectives.
- Monitoring, both before and after implementation, of air quality, motor traffic volumes and speeds, cycling and walking volumes and footfall and retail vacancy rates of 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.
- We also would support a “Controlled Parking Zone” (CPZ) implementation in the area. CPZs create space for other uses on our roads, help reduce the dominance of motor traffic on our streets, and discourage those from outside the area from using this area as a convenient location to park for onward journeys, avoiding parking charges elsewhere etc.

- Of the options proposed, option 1 is most supported as it removes more of the through motor vehicle routes in the area. However there is a risk even this option will not completely remove through traffic (bar on Sheen Lane), so more may need to be done on Christchurch Road etc.

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.