

London Cycling Campaign response to Tower Hamlets Liveable Streets Brick Lane and Barkantine consultations

18 July 2019

<https://www.pclconsult.co.uk/liveablestreetsbarkantine> and
<https://www.pclconsult.co.uk/liveablestreetsbricklane/>

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.
- We support the response of our local borough group, which contains more specific detail.

Specific points about this scheme:

- Radical change for Brick Lane and the surrounding streets is long overdue. Motor vehicles should be banned from Brick Lane itself and potentially other nearby streets, with specific provision only for loading and servicing, and with that provision designed to vastly reduce the impact of associated motor traffic, parking (even for delivery, loading) etc.
- As well as other issues highlighted in our local group's response, these areas are 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 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.

- At this early stage, our recommendation is that a baseline set of core principles for the scheme, based on resident perception surveys, traffic volume and speed data and other sources (such as air quality monitors, business customer surveys, parking surveys), is created. Consultation should then refine how specific scheme options will fulfil the principles established, 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.
- TfL, London Cycling Campaign and other expert bodies have a wealth of evidence and expertise to help councils build the case among residents, businesses and stakeholders for Liveable Neighbourhood and/or low traffic neighbourhood schemes. But key to the delivery of most Liveable Neighbourhoods will be the willingness of political leaders and officers to lead their residents in a conversation about the principles and details of the scheme without allowing concerns raised or fear of change to derail delivering real benefits to the entire community.
- For more on LTNs, see: <https://lcc.org.uk/pages/low-traffic-neighbourhoods>. LCC looks forward to working with the council on this and other projects.
- 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 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.

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.