

Report to GOLD:	Tuesday 5 th May 2020
Report to SLT:	Monday 11 th May 2020

GOLD and SLT Report - Transport Response to Covid19

Executive Summary

In response to the Covid19 emergency and to manage the recovery and transport concerns in a post Covid19 context, this paper addresses a revised approach to delivering on existing policy concerns across Transport, Climate Change, Health and Wellbeing and the Economy. In this setting, there is also significant uncertainty with Transport for London's delivery programme and ongoing funding, therefore a reprioritisation to bring forward schemes that address long term Healthy Streets, Low Traffic and Liveable Neighbourhoods have been brought to the fore.

Immediate action has been identified in Phase 1 and 2 of the delivery plan that seeks to address concerns during lockdown around physical distancing, footway constraints and road space, while supporting the community to adhere to government guidance. Delivery and sites identified in these phases have already been implemented and will continue to be brought forward at pace (days and weeks).

Phases 3 and 4 of the delivery plan, seeks to manage the recovery concerns of returning to high traffic volumes and compromised air quality, while also addressing pre-existing issues and policy drivers on climate emergency, air quality, congestion, through traffic, travel demand and enabling better sustainable journeys. Areas for Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and Healthy Streets will be brought forward and implemented at a quicker pace with trials identified in weeks and then delivered as we begin to ease restrictions and enter recovery.

1. Background

Hammersmith & Fulham's LIP3 sets out the Council's local implementation plan for the Mayor's Transport Strategy for London in the borough. It provides information and details on the projects and initiatives that will be required in order to deliver the objectives of the strategy

The public health emergency resulting from the Covid19 pandemic has transformed the context within which the Transport Strategy sits. The need to impose physical distancing measures in order to reduce virus transmission has brought into focus some of the limitations inherent in the way space is allocated on the public highway and in public spaces generally

The need for key workers to access workplaces safely when public transport services are significantly reduced, has highlighted in some places the current lack of quality routes for cycling and pavement width for pedestrians. In some instances, vulnerable people are unable to leave their homes, and many are now relying on the council to provide them with essential supplies. Local businesses are also struggling to survive and will need to find new ways to reach their customers to provide products and services, both during the pandemic and when lockdown measures are eased

Traffic volumes have significantly reduced and encouraged many people to turn to walking and cycling, this has also improved the air quality across London. However as reported by the police, instances of speeding have increased, therefore temporary and transition measures must also consider this challenge when increasing road space for cyclists and pedestrians and any accessibility needs where measures are introduced

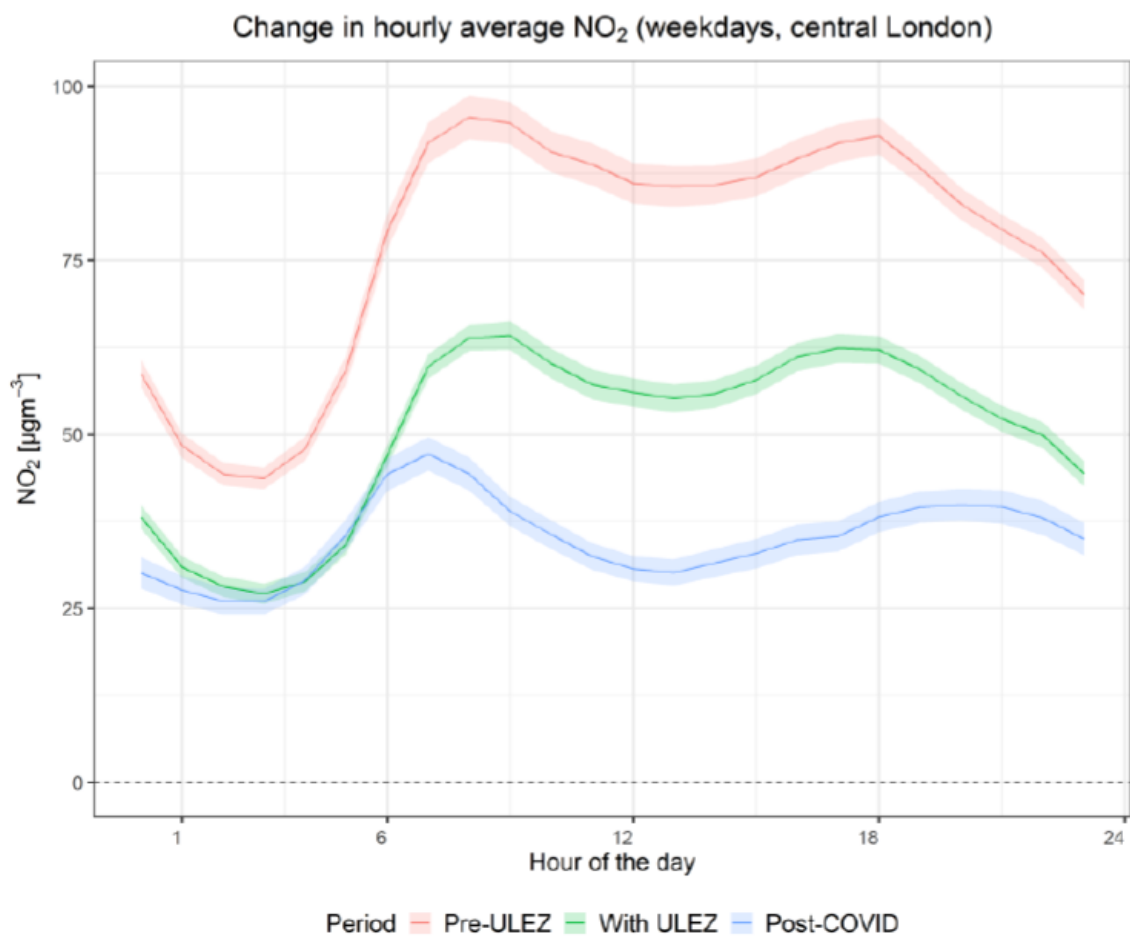
Measures suitable to address many of the issues are identified in the Transport Strategy, but the need to act at pace is apparent, with immediate action required in some cases

While many policy areas may seek a return to the pre-Covid19 status quo, for transport and environmental objectives this is not the case. The Transport Strategy had long sought to encourage behaviour change, enable people to make better journey choices and change their mode of transport. Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and Healthy Streets has been a core theme and driver for the Transport Strategy and a key interdisciplinary element of the Council's policy themes in Economy, Health, Wellbeing, Climate Change and the drive to achieve net zero by 2030

Therefore, when planning our response to the current situation a key consideration should be avoiding a return to pre-existing traffic volumes. This will require constraining traffic, together with measures to further promote and enable sustainable forms of travel

2. Air Quality and Traffic Volumes pre and during Covid19

Figure below shows the change in hourly average NO₂ at all sites in central London, from the period January – April. The red line shows the hourly trends in NO₂ in central London from 1 January 2017 – 20 April 2017 (before changes associated with the central ULEZ took full effect). The green line shows the hourly trends in NO₂ in central London from 1 January – 15 March 2020, with the ULEZ in place. The blue line shows the hourly trends in NO₂ in central London from 16 March – 20 April 2020, since the Covid19 pandemic.



In 2020, before the Covid19 outbreak, hourly average NO₂ at all sites in central London had already reduced by over one third (35 per cent) compared to the same period in 2017. Since 16 March 2020 there has been an additional reduction of 26 per cent. The reduction is even higher at roadside sites.

In LBHF Daily average NO₂ has reduced by around 40 per cent at Air Quality Monitoring roadside sites in Hammersmith Town Centre and Shepherds Bush Town Centre.

Road transport accounts for around half of London's NOx emissions and a third of PM emissions. Since the beginning of March road traffic in London has reduced by around 50 per cent London wide. Figure below shows the percentage reduction in vehicle kilometres travelled in 2020 compared to the comparable day in 2019. Please note, the central London ULEZ, which was introduced in April 2019, had already reduced traffic in the central zone by approximately 10 per cent. Departure from usual travel behaviour began around Monday 16 March, when the UK Government strongly recommended social distancing and home working where possible.



3. Key principles

Key principles for the Transport Strategy response in the emergent Covid19 context are as follows;

3.1. Compliance with government guidance

Social and physical distancing is the main method being deployed to reduce virus transmission. The need for distancing is likely to continue well into the recovery period and when lockdown measures are eased. The use of road space is the main physical element in enabling compliance with guidance

3.2. Essential journeys to be made safely and sustainably

Key workers, including those providing health and social care, still need to travel during the lockdown period. As restrictions ease, wider groups are likely to begin travelling and therefore the number of trips will increase. Journeys on public transport and road need to be managed to ensure safety and to maintain low levels of private motor vehicle traffic and greater walking and cycling journeys

3.3. Support vulnerable people

People identified as particularly vulnerable to Covid19 require support and the council has already organised help through Project Shield and CAN (Community Aid Network), with deliveries of essential supplies being co-ordinated across the borough. The requirement is likely to continue for some time and planning is currently taking place to make more deliveries by bike. Any changes to footways or kerbside, such as parking suspensions or segregation, will also need to consider the need for access to vulnerable households and essential services

3.4. Support the local economy

Markets and other shopping areas that rely on footfall and customer contact may find it particularly difficult to adapt as restrictions ease and businesses re-open. Ensuring that provision is made to enable people to walk or cycle to key areas of economic activity or transport interchanges will be important to supporting businesses. New considerations for sustainable last mile deliveries and consolidating freight to make fewer trips will be important to sustaining a healthy local economy

3.5. Planning for the immediate, a transition period and the long term

Immediate actions to protect public health through enabling physical distancing and better use of road space is an essential start. Beyond this we need consideration on how to manage the transport network as restrictions are eased, and through the recovery period to the long term. A phased approach to our response, will allow expediated action, much of which has already been underway such as temporary

measures on King Street, Uxbridge Road and the River Walk. Appropriate measures to transition to when schools or education establishments are reopened and measures that constrain traffic for the long term must also be enabled

3.6. Governance and Policy

Any measures, particularly changes to the highway, must be carefully considered and sit within the existing policy framework, including our approach to road danger reduction and the Covid19 public health context. As emergency powers will be used, with reduced ability and timescales for consultation, the Council's actions must be clear and transparent to stakeholders and build on implementing the existing policy suite

4. Interventions and measures

4.1. Reallocating road space and footway widening

Many locations in the borough have footways that do not have capacity to enable physical distancing. Depending on road layout it may be possible to create additional space for walking at these locations. It will be necessary to prioritise locations, for example on routes to open spaces during the lockdown period and in town centres when restrictions are eased

The Council's Transport and Highway officers have in-depth knowledge of areas with high demand and feedback from road users and the community will inform further changes. The context of each area, such as proximity to open space, schools, shopping areas, transport hubs, or leisure and commuter routes, will need to be considered when designing and implementing changes

Temporary changes have been implemented in specific areas such as King Street, Uxbridge Road and the river walk which included temporary widening of footways, queueing over Hammersmith Bridge and marshalling. Revisiting some of these sites will be needed to incorporate provision for cycling or to expand on temporary footway measures. Additional locations in the borough that are problematic such as North End Road and Hammersmith Road will also require intervention

4.2. Transport for London - Network, Transport Hubs and Bus Routes

All traffic signals and the bus network in the borough are managed by TfL and they have an important role to play in meeting our Covid19 response objectives. TfL are currently focussed on maintaining essential services safely but have indicated the pre-Covid19 delivery programme will require an overhaul. The Council will therefore work with the GLA and TfL to reprioritise our transport programme and bring forward measures that will benefit our residents for the near and long term

Measures to include;

Temporary footway widening at pinch points where the TLRN runs near the town centre or shopping centres, and footfall is expected to be high when current restrictions are lifted e.g. Hammersmith Broadway, Fulham Town Centre, White City, Shepherd's Bush. Similarly, at transport hubs such as rail or underground stations and bus stop boarding areas

The creation of temporary cycle lanes on key routes where space allows, or where this will be beneficial to key workers accessing healthcare facilities e.g. King Street, Hammersmith Road, Uxbridge Road and Shepherd Bush Green

Extending bus lane operational hours or considering temporary re-routing of buses, particularly where cycle flows are high or road width is narrow

Re-phasing of traffic signals to reduce wait time for pedestrians, particularly where footway crowding may be an issue e.g. in town centres such as Hammersmith Broadway or in the vicinity of Westfield

4.3. Low Traffic and Low Emission Neighbourhoods

Low traffic and low emission neighbourhoods are in various phases of development and it is proposed to expediate the work in bringing forward trial or experimental measures. This will also help to address road danger and limit a return to increased traffic volumes and improve air quality to support the climate change emergency.

Areas where high through traffic existed pre-Covid19 or near the proximity of major attractors will be prioritised for example South Fulham, North End Road Market and the Brackenbury Area. Other neighbourhoods within the proximity of Hammersmith Broadway, the Town Centre, Shepherds Bush Green and Westfield will also be developed and brought forward for trial or experimental measures.

4.4. Healthy Streets

Following emergence out of the recovery phase and into the long term, the healthy streets principles remains a key driver for long term cleaner, healthier and safer neighbourhoods. Residential roads, areas near schools and open spaces can be re prioritised to constrain through traffic and enhance the public realm through the implementation of Home Zones or School Streets. Neighbourhoods and streets can be further enhanced through the introduction of greening, or dwell spaces and Sustainable Urban Drainage.

Major schemes such as the Safer Cycle Pathway, Uxbridge Road and Shepherds Bush will be developed with the Healthy Streets perspective and the approach applied to neighbourhoods to maximise the potential for limiting vehicular traffic and enhancing the cycle, walking and public realm profile of the area.

Healthy Streets Indicators



Figure 1: Healthy Streets Indicators

5. Delivery approach

Several phases have been identified to enable delivery and the key context identified. Measures considered to be particularly appropriate to each phase are listed. A list of sites and areas identified for phased delivery can also be referred to in Appendix A.

Phases 1 and 2 are an immediate and urgent response to the current situation and aspects and sites not already implemented will be delivered in a matter of days and weeks.

Phases 3 and 4 are an expediated work programme brought forward to be delivered at pace. These will be defined and concluded over a few weeks and be prepared for trials as soon as restrictions are eased.

5.1. Phase 1 - Short term, lockdown (days/weeks).

Situational Identifiers	Measures and Interventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Majority of people stay at home• Traffic volumes are low• Enable key workers to travel safely• General travel is discouraged• Enable physical distancing• Space for exercise needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of temporary barriers to create additional road space for pedestrians at key locations (where no traffic order required)• Making streets access only for motor vehicles so that road danger is reduced and there is more space for walking and cycling• Footway markings to indicate queuing locations and separation at key locations• Request action from TfL at locations on their highway network• Use cycle training provider for essential deliveries for the vulnerable• Source provider of bike loans for key workers

5.2. Phase 2 - Near term, lockdown restrictions eased (weeks)

Situational Identifiers	Measures and Interventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of people stay at home • More trips are being made • Traffic is moderate • Physical distancing still required • People avoiding public transport • Focus on employment and shopping centers, town centers and transport hubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further footway widening • Introduce cycle lanes and access only restrictions at certain locations • Consider road space at priority locations to create high quality links into employment areas and town centers. • Revisit and transition existing sites and explore temporary orders. • Bring forward some elements of Low Traffic Neighborhoods (LTNs) areas • Explore application of local and last mile delivery service

5.3. Phase 3 - Medium term, restrictions lifted (weeks / months)

Situational Identifiers	Measures and Interventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay at home for the vulnerable • Trips levels increasing • Education trips resume • Footfall is moderate but traffic increasing • People avoiding public transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further reallocating of footways and road space with parking suspensions where required in areas of high footfall • Engage TfL to consider interim bus priority measures and greater pedestrian priority at traffic signals. • Restrictions around schools and key attractors such as bus and rail

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical distancing still required • Focus on destinations, town centers, schools and transport hubs 	<p>stations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch temporary measures including South Fulham and North End Road
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5.4. Phase 4 – Recovery and long term (months +)

Situational Identifiers	Measures and Interventions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trips and travel returning to new 'normal' level • Physical distancing may still be required • Focus on maintaining 'new status quo' with lower levels of private car use, emissions and better air quality. • Focus on neighborhoods and supporting the local economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent re-allocation of road space to pedestrians. • Expand Low Traffic and Low Emission Neighborhood trials and incorporate Healthy Streets principles • New parking and kerbside strategy • Extend and establish local delivery service model and freight management for town centers

5.5. Internal delivery and resource

The highways team have been able to promptly respond and roll out temporary and emergency measures at the river walk and Hammersmith Bridge, King Street and Uxbridge Road. This work will be further progressed in enhancing and introducing cycle lanes at specific sites in the borough.

For subsequent phases, Transport and Highways are being realigned to focus on reprofiling the LIP programme and bringing forward relevant Low Traffic and Low Emission Neighbourhoods. For some schemes it could mean an element of de-scoping and developing the most appropriate aspects of existing schemes.

The major schemes portfolio is also being progressed, however with a view to ensure that for the long term, pre-Covid19 traffic volumes do not return and that long term healthier streets are the eventual outcome.

A joint team will be assembled to co-ordinate activity and ensure consistent focus. The initial emphasis will be on measures that can be delivered within days, such as footway widening at key locations expected to have high footfall such as food retail locations and routes to parks and open spaces. This will be subsequently followed up with the introduction of cycle lanes on key commuter routes and then teams and individuals assigned to specific low traffic schemes.

Resources are limited and this work will be prioritised ahead of other work tasks as necessary. This may result in changes to the planned work programme / business as usual.

6. Funding

In order to bring forward existing planned projects such as Low Traffic or Liveable Neighbourhood, continued TfL funding has been expected.

Due to TfL's financial concerns in the context of Covid19, the LIP allocation for the 2020/21 financial year is no longer guaranteed. In dialogue with TfL it is apparent that schemes that reallocate road space and enhance footways and cycle lanes will be prioritised for continued funding. The uncertainty around TfL's funding is a key risk to the boroughs funding profile, if Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and Healthy Streets projects are brought forward, there is a high probability of maintaining funding for taking these schemes forward. TfL have indicated that £45m will be available for funding between all London boroughs in order to reallocate space as an immediate response to Covid19, and to launch trial and experimental schemes that bring forward low traffic and low emission neighbourhoods.

The costs for initial works focusing on temporary footway widening (Phase 1 and Phase 2 at Appendix A) including layout design, materials, implementation and maintenance is expected to be rechargeable to TfL. The average cost for this profile of work is estimated at £4k per km per week.

There are significant sources of funds from capital and major schemes for enhancing pedestrian, cycle lanes and bus prioritisation and it is expected that this funding will remain to support schemes identified in Phases 3 and 4 with any LIP reprioritisation being made available to bring forward projects for trial and delivery.

7. Legal considerations

Urgent measures such as narrowing / reducing traffic lanes to increase footway space do not require a traffic order and can be implemented under existing highway powers. In some cases, a temporary order may be required if footways are closed or lanes or roads are closed. Any changes affecting parking, loading or traffic movements also require a traffic order.

It is recommended that temporary, experimental, permanent or borough-wide traffic orders are made in order to cover a range of interventions, depending on the purpose.

New guidance issued by the Department for Transport on advertising Traffic Regulation Orders during Covid19 will be followed.

8. Stakeholder engagement

Where existing working groups, residents' associations, WAGs or residents' commissions are in place, they will be engaged with proposed changes in the area along with ward councillors.

The Council will continue to meet legal requirements relating to statutory consultation and will engage key local stakeholders. Although in some cases, it will be necessary to accelerate the process for Phase 1 and 2 as it is an emergency response to Covid19. For schemes brought forward in Phase 3 and 4, communications with members and the public will continue and where possible street trials and experimental measures will be used as part of an ongoing engagement process. Emergency services will also be informed and consulted with as part of the statutory process.

9. Governance

The Strategic Director for Environment will oversee and agree the response in consultation with The Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Environment.

The Chief Officer for Public Realm will be responsible for delegated decisions relating to programme scope. The Assistant Director for Highways and Environment Special Projects will be responsible for urgent and immediate roll-out under existing emergency provisions and the Head of Transport will be responsible for delegated decisions relating to Traffic Regulation Orders, project development and implementation.

Appendix A: Priority interventions by street / area

Schemes Underway (Phase 1 and 2)

As an urgent and immediate response to Covid19 we have utilised temporary barriers to widen footways and introduced queuing to enable physical distancing at the following locations;

- King Street (implemented)
- Hammersmith Road (implemented)
- Uxbridge Road (implemented)
- River walk and Hammersmith Bridge (implemented)

We are also exploring the possibilities for North End Road which remains challenging due to the width of the carriageway.

In addition, we are also aiming to revisit the above locations to further enhance the temporary measures by adding cycle lanes on the key thoroughfares such as the route of the Safer Cycle Pathway, Uxbridge Road and Shepherds Bush Green. In some roads, access only restrictions can be introduced such as the approaches to the river walk or in locations that are residential or have schools in the vicinity.

Make access only;

- Approaches to river walk – w/c 6th June
- Residential streets that experience high through traffic
- King Street – (TBC)

Introduce segregated Cycle Lanes;

- King Street – w/c 18th May
- Hammersmith Road – w/c 18th May
- Uxbridge Road – w/c 1st June
- Shepherds Bush Green – w/c 1st June
- Wood Lane – w/c 1st June

Potential Schemes (Phase 3 and 4)

In addition to implementing the schemes mentioned above, significant development work is being undertaken to bring forward low traffic neighbourhoods quickly in order to define concepts and secure funding for trial and experimental schemes. It is envisaged that such schemes will embrace the healthy streets principles and be key enablers to more cycle and walking as we emerge from the Covid19 crisis into a 'new normal'.

These schemes would introduce interim measures such as the use of non-permanent segregation materials like rubber kerbing or planters to mark out new road space, temporary traffic signal changes and road and junction reprioritisation in order to constrain the return to greater volumes of vehicular traffic.

Key trial schemes to be brought forward are;

- Safer Cycle Pathway and A4
- Uxbridge Road and Shepherd Bush Green
- Wood Lane

In addition to the major scheme areas this will also involve redefining neighbourhoods in the borough.

Low traffic neighbourhoods defined and to be defined across Hammersmith and Fulham;

- South Fulham
- North End Road
- Brackenbury and Grove Area
- Cathnor Park
- All other neighbourhoods (to be defined and concepts brought forward)

Each area or corridor will also include areas of high volume and footfall around;

- Schools
- Rail Stations
- Transport Hubs
- Areas of high economic or leisure activity

In addition to healthy streets principles, these areas will be further enhanced by the introduction of School Streets or Home Zones where appropriate.

Figure 1 – Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (under development)

