Covid-19 Transport Strategy Programme

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods Monitoring Strategy

Lambeth

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– Low Traffic Neighbourhoods Monitoring Strategy

Covid-19 has caused major disruption and change to almost every part of our lives in Lambeth, and travel and transport is no exception. Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, space on London's public transport has been reduced by as much as 80% to maintain social distancing, meaning millions of journeys everyday which need to be made in some other way.

Most people in Lambeth do not own a car and now need to walk, including with mobility aids, cycle, including use of adapted cycles, or scoot, instead of taking a bus or tube. If the people in Lambeth and further afield who do own a car now start to use it more frequently, we risk our roads grinding to a halt, with toxic air quality and more injuries and deaths caused by accidents on the road. Disabled people in particular may be deterred from using public transport due to capacity constraints and the need to socially distance, and also from walking and cycling due to increased road danger.

Starting in May 2020, the Council responded to this transport crisis with an emergency transport response plan. The plan built on our existing Lambeth Transport Strategy, released following borough-wide consultation in 2019. The Strategy identified the parts of the borough which were most in need of new measures to reduce road danger and increase sustainable travel. The ideas we agreed included low-traffic neighbourhoods, school streets and improved walking and cycling infrastructure.

These measures reflect statutory guidance issued by the Government in response to Covid-19, requiring us to re-allocate road space to support more walking and cycling.

We have used the evidence base, planning and learning from our Transport Strategy to inform our emergency response, together with specific Covid-19 considerations, such as the need for social distancing and the impact on public transport capacity.

As well as consulting widely on the Transport Strategy, we had already carried out significant engagement with local communities in several of our LTN areas, including in Brixton and Streatham, and have now implemented schemes in five neighbourhoods. We have engaged with local stakeholders and businesses wherever possible prior to implementation. Emergency Services have been consulted on every measure and our designs specifically take account of their needs. This engagement process has led to carefully considered measures being implemented, but we have had to move quickly, and we know that we will not get everything right first time. We will carry out further public consultation before considering whether trial schemes should be made permanent or not.

Now that many of our temporary low-traffic neighbourhoods, school streets and other emergency schemes are in place, the emergency transport programme is entering the next phase as we move schemes to a trial basis. We will work closely with the local community to make improvements based on data and feedback. Our Monitoring Strategy is an important part of this. It sets out how we measure the impact of the projects that we have introduced so that we have the right data to make improvements and inform the choices we make.

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Low Traffic Neighbourhood objectives

Low traffic neighbourhoods are a key part of our Covid-19 response, as well as Lambeth's longer-term Transport Strategy. The main objectives of the LTN programme are to achieve:

• A reduction in through motor traffic within LTN areas; and

• An overall reduction of motor vehicle movements across the area, when considering boundary roads and the inner area together

A broad range of factors beyond the LTNs themselves influence traffic patterns across a wider area and the time frame over which we would expect to see traffic levels reducing. These factors include street works, bridge closures, changes by neighbouring boroughs/ Transport for London and evolving Covid-19 related restrictions at the London and national scale. These factors must be analysed to understand the specific benefits and impacts of an LTN.

Once traffic patterns have settled down, there are a wide range of other potential benefits associated with traffic reduction that we will monitor, including:

Traffic
• Reduction in speeds
• Reduction in collisions

Air quality
• Reduced emissions across the area
• Reduction in NO2 and Particulate Matter (PM10) and concentrations

Active travel, economy and placemaking
• Increased levels of walking and cycling within and through LTN areas
• Economic benefits arising

Equalities
• Realisation of positive equalities impacts identified in the scheme's Equality Impact Assessment (and minimisation of any negative impacts identified through the project).

Some potential benefits, such as a reduction in the number of collisions, need to be measured over a

longer period and therefore we will need to monitor these for longer than the LTN trial period.

Our monitoring will also identify potential dis-benefits of the LTN schemes, these may include:
• Increased traffic on boundary roads
• Increased traffic in neighbouring residential areas

The impact on these roads will be included as part of the LTN traffic and air quality monitoring.

What we expect to see and when

There is a growing body of evidence which can help us to understand the likely impacts of LTNs. For example, the first low traffic neighbourhood in Waltham Forest's 'mini-Holland' saw motor traffic levels fall by over half inside the residential area included and traffic reduction across a wider area when including adjacent main roads.

Low traffic neighbourhoods are part of a wider transport system and they do not work perfectly overnight. It is essential to evaluate low traffic neighbourhoods within the wider London travel context and be mindful that it takes time for travel behaviour to adjust and for the full range of benefits to be realised across the wider area.

LTNs will be monitored and assessed according to the stages described below to understand how they are performing and to make improvements. We also set out what changes in behaviour we could reasonably expect to see at each stage during the development of a low traffic neighbourhood.

Given the varied and uncertain way that Covid-19 is influencing travel behaviour, the stages below are not fixed and will be affected, to varying degrees, by how Covid-19 restrictions evolve. This will include taking account of the uncertainty of Covid-19 and how long and which restrictions the government may instruct must be kept in place.

Stage 1 – Initial adjustment:
Immediately post implementation and before enforcement begins a proportion of drivers may not respect the legal restrictions and still travel through LTN 'traffic filters' (these still need to be accessible for emergency service vehicles until we are advised

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otherwise, so physical barriers are largely avoided). Traffic across the wider area won't have fully adjusted at this point. We would expect to see higher traffic levels throughout the monitored area than intended by the objectives of the project.

Assessment should focus on identifying community issues and traffic problems to make specific design improvements where needed.

Stage 2 – Settling down:

During the 6 months following the start of the trial period we will conduct a full round of traffic, air quality and community feedback monitoring. At this stage we would expect to see a high level of compliance at traffic filter locations. This can give us an accurate reflection of how an LTN area is performing against the objectives, accounting for the effect of external factors.

At this stage traffic within and around the low traffic neighbourhood areas may be meeting the objectives of the project, or may need more time to settle down. If the monitoring review shows that an LTN project is achieving these objectives, then moving to a permanent scheme should be considered, balancing community feedback, including any objections received over this period and the consultation, with the monitoring data. Moving to a permanent scheme will enable the delivery of public realm improvements associated with the trial measures and across the LTN generally. On the other hand, the specific road network in a given area and the effect of external factors and local considerations may mean that an LTN project warrants more time and improvements before considering if it should be made permanent. The trial may also be cancelled at the end of this period, or during the following stage after further review.

Assessment should focus on identifying performance against the objectives, community issues and traffic problems to identify specific design improvements, including public realm improvements.

Stage 3 – Regular use:

Within 18 months of implementation the monitored area should see an overall reduction of motor vehicle movements, when considering boundary roads and the inner area together. We would expect to be developing and delivering public realm improvements that enhance the benefits of reduced traffic volumes. An LTN at this stage may be already

permanent or may be made permanent during this assessment stage.

Assessment at this stage should balance community feedback, including any objections received and the consultation, with objective data sources measuring performance against the programme objectives to consider if a given LTN should be made permanent (if it is not already).If a scheme is not made permanent within 18 months of the start of the trial period it will lapse.

What data will be used?

We will be monitoring a range of before and after data sets to assess the impact of our LTN programme. Data will be collected inside LTN areas as well as on the immediate boundary roads that surround an LTN area for the 3 assessment stages described above. Data collected includes:

• Traffic counts

• Traffic speeds

• Air quality modelling

• ANPR camera compliance levels

• Feedback via councillors, our online consultation platform and public enquiries

• Business engagement

We will be also be working with other organisations to monitor the effect, if any, on:

• Bus journey times

• Emergency service response times

This data will be compared with our initial baseline and calibrated against travel trends in the wider London area to understand the effect of the LTN in its wider practical context.

We will update the Equalities Impact Assessment for each LTN as the project evolves through the review stages described above, considering data and feedback to understand the benefits, impacts and adjustments required to ensure the best possible outcomes.

We will publish review reports, Equality Impact Assessments and data packs on our online consultation platform.