

## **London Streetspace Programme (Harrow)**

### **Low Traffic Neighbourhoods Review - October 2020**

#### **Introduction**

We are making a real difference to our environment to encourage our residents to improve their health through active travel – all while reducing the chance of people catching Covid-19.

The Street spaces initiative will allow more space for people to safely walk or cycle in Harrow amid the coronavirus pandemic. Temporary cycle lanes and wider pavements and areas with reduced traffic flow are among the changes being made in many parts of the borough, thanks to Harrow Council working with TfL and Dft.

In May the Secretary of State for Transport issued statutory guidance under Section 18 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 to all highway authorities in England and the Secretary of State, Grant Shapps, describes the moment as:

*“a once in a generation opportunity to deliver a lasting transformative change in how we make short journeys in our towns and cities. According to the National Travel Survey, in 2017-18 over 40% of urban journeys were under 2 miles – perfectly suited to walking and cycling.”*

The guidance says that local authorities in areas with high levels of public transport use should take measures to reallocate road space to people walking and cycling to encourage active travel and enable social distancing due to the impact of social distancing on public transport capacity.

The Harrow Street Spaces programme took forward the government directive via Transport for London to deliver a range of active travel schemes including low traffic neighbourhoods. These schemes are implemented at locations where residential estates experience problems with through traffic creating environmental problems with road safety, pollution and nuisance.

The schemes consist of introducing modal filters to prevent through vehicular traffic using the residential estates as shortcuts to create safer conditions for pedestrians and cyclists and improve environmental conditions for residents. The Low Traffic Neighbourhoods have been implemented in 4 locations in the borough and the list of schemes is shown in the table below:

<b>LTN-02</b>	Pinner View area, Headstone South
<b>LTN-03</b>	Francis Road area, Greenhill
<b>LTN-04</b>	Vaughan Road area, West Harrow
<b>LTN-06</b>	Southfield Park area, North Harrow

#### **Methodology**

At the special meeting of TARSAP on 10<sup>th</sup> August it was recommended and subsequently agreed by the Deputy Leader on the 19<sup>th</sup> August that a review of the schemes would be conducted on a monthly basis to test the need for the measures to address the health crisis. The methodology to be used to assess the need for the schemes will take account of the following information:

- Pedestrian / cycling / vehicle activity (measured by counts)

- Emergency services comments
- Bus services comments (TfL)
- Officer observations regarding operational performance
- Residents feedback

All of these factors will be reviewed, and a course of action recommended in this report.

The recommendation will be reviewed by the Portfolio Holder – Environment and Corporate Director – Community and the future of the schemes decided.

### **Current situation with the pandemic**

The national position has shown a large increase in the number of infections reported daily to nearly 20,000 per day in late October which is the highest level recorded since the start of the pandemic. The rate is higher than that recorded earlier in the year mainly due to the significantly higher testing capacity now available. The rates for patients in hospital, patients in ventilator beds and deaths within 28 days of a positive test have also significantly increased. The rate of infection has spiked sharply since the beginning of September and the country is now considered to be in a second wave of infection.

As a consequence, the government brought in a new tiered system of alert levels and restrictions in mid-October which is to be applied depending on the local circumstances and Councils in England have been placed on "medium", "high" or "very high" alert with different levels of restrictions required. London was put on high alert from 17<sup>th</sup> October and the additional restrictions include no mixing of households indoors, including pubs and restaurants, and the "rule of six" now only applies outdoors including private gardens and public spaces. This is additional to the existing 10pm curfew for pubs and restaurants and restriction to offering table service only. However, this will be superseded by a national lockdown announced by the government on 30<sup>th</sup> October that will take effect from 5<sup>th</sup> November. The lockdown restrictions will cease all non-essential travel and close all non-essential businesses including leisure and hospitality but will not affect construction or manufacturing or schools.

In Harrow the local position is reflecting the national trend with the 7-day average of laboratory confirmed cases showing a consistent increase over the same period of time. This has risen from about 10 per day at the beginning of September to about 40 per day in mid-October. In the week ending 11<sup>th</sup> October there were 291 new cases which is an incidence rate of about 116 per 100,000 population.

### **Pedestrian / cycling / vehicle activity (measured by counts)**

Pedestrian and cycle activity counts and vehicle volume counts are being regularly undertaken at the sites. The pedestrian and cycle counts are taken at a mid-point in the scheme and repeat counts are undertaken at the same points for consistency. Both a weekday and weekend day are surveyed between 7am and 7pm to cover the busy periods. Surveys are undertaken by recording CCTV footage during the period of observation and later analysed by the survey company at their premises. Automatic traffic counters have also been used at each site to monitor traffic flows over the period of a week and calculate the average volume of daily vehicular traffic flow. The dates for data collection are as follows:

CCTV counts

- June 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>
- October 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>

Automatic traffic counters

- July 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>
- October 12<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>

The surveys were undertaken at the following locations as follows:

- Victor Road by Harrow View (LTN-02)
- Kingsfield Avenue / Pinner View (LTN-02)
- Pinner View by Canterbury Road (LTN-02)
- Pinner View by Bolton Road (LTN-02)
- Gloucester Road by Station Road (LTN-02)
- Canterbury Road by Durham Road (LTN-02)
- Francis Road by Elmgrove Crescent (LTN-03)
- Vaughan Road by Bouverie Road (LTN-04)
- Blenheim Road by Bladon Gardens (LTN-04)
- Southfield Park by Pinner Road (LTN-06)

The table below gives details of all the pedestrian, cycle and vehicle counts undertaken at the points of closure. Vehicle counts are not done after the roads are closed because vehicles are restricted.

**Weekday 7am - 7pm**

Site location	LTN-02 Pinner View area			LTN-03 Francis Road area			LTN-04 Vaughan Road area			LTN-06 Southfield Park		
User type	Pedestrians	Cyclists	Vehicles	Pedestrians	Cyclists	Vehicles	Pedestrians	Cyclists	Vehicles	Pedestrians	Cyclists	Vehicles
June	1975	356	6728	346	64	1113	1497	316	2547	480	52	2799
October	3482	464	zero	611	108	zero	3536	338	zero	956	72	zero

**Weekend 7am - 7pm**

Site location	LTN-02 Pinner View area			LTN-03 Francis Road area			LTN-04 Vaughan Road area			LTN-06 Southfield Park		
User type	Pedestrians	Cyclists	Vehicles	Pedestrians	Cyclists	Vehicles	Pedestrians	Cyclists	Vehicles	Pedestrians	Cyclists	Vehicles
June	2361	988	6274	293	120	972	1814	768	2297	529	164	2400
October	2526	564	zero	343	80	zero	1859	334	zero	450	88	zero

Zero- this is because of the measures being in place and therefore preventing through traffic

There are in excess of 10,000 vehicles per day that were using residential streets to make journeys which are now restricted. It is estimated that local journeys by residents with a

destination within the low traffic neighbourhoods accounts for only about 30% of that total. In Southfield Park for example flows have reduced from about 2799 down to 780 which is only 28% of the original traffic volume. This equates to journeys made by residents living in the road.

The number of pedestrians has generally increased in the week and at the weekend. The number cyclists travelling during the week has also increased since the summer. The increases may be linked to a variety of reasons including exercise and walking to work, local amenities, shops and transport hubs.

The number of cyclists travelling at the weekend has declined since the summer and because usage at the weekend is generally more recreational in nature it may be influenced by more favourable weather conditions in the summer than in the autumn.

### **Manor Way and Priory Way issues**

The two streets parallel with Southfield Park (Manor Way and Priory Way) between Parkside Way and Headstone Lane have experienced some additional traffic as a consequence of the introduction of the low traffic neighbourhood because no measures had been introduced in these streets at the same time. The table below shows the vehicle flows recorded.

<b>LTN</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>June Weekday</b>	<b>June Weekend</b>	<b>October Weekday</b>	<b>October Weekend</b>
LTN-06 Southfield Park	Southfield Park	2799	2400	780	653
	Priory Way	1507	1359	1864	1208
	Manor Way	701	580	1324	953

This indicates that during the week vehicle flows have increased in Priory Way by 24% and in Manor Way by 88%. At the weekend the difference is lower.

The Council has received a large volume of correspondence from residents of Manor Way and Priory Way about the increase in vehicles using their roads which is negatively affecting them. Whilst the actual vehicular flows are still relatively small, they have a disproportionate impact due to the level of on-street parking and narrow width of the roads. There is therefore a need to mitigate this by introducing some measures to restrict this traffic. Many residents have suggested introducing closures in the same way as for Southfield Park whilst others have asked for measures in Southfield Park to be removed. As this is an on-going trial and there is an expectation that schemes should not affect neighbouring roads it is suggested that measures to restrict motor vehicles entering from Parkside Way should be introduced in Manor Way and Priory Way.

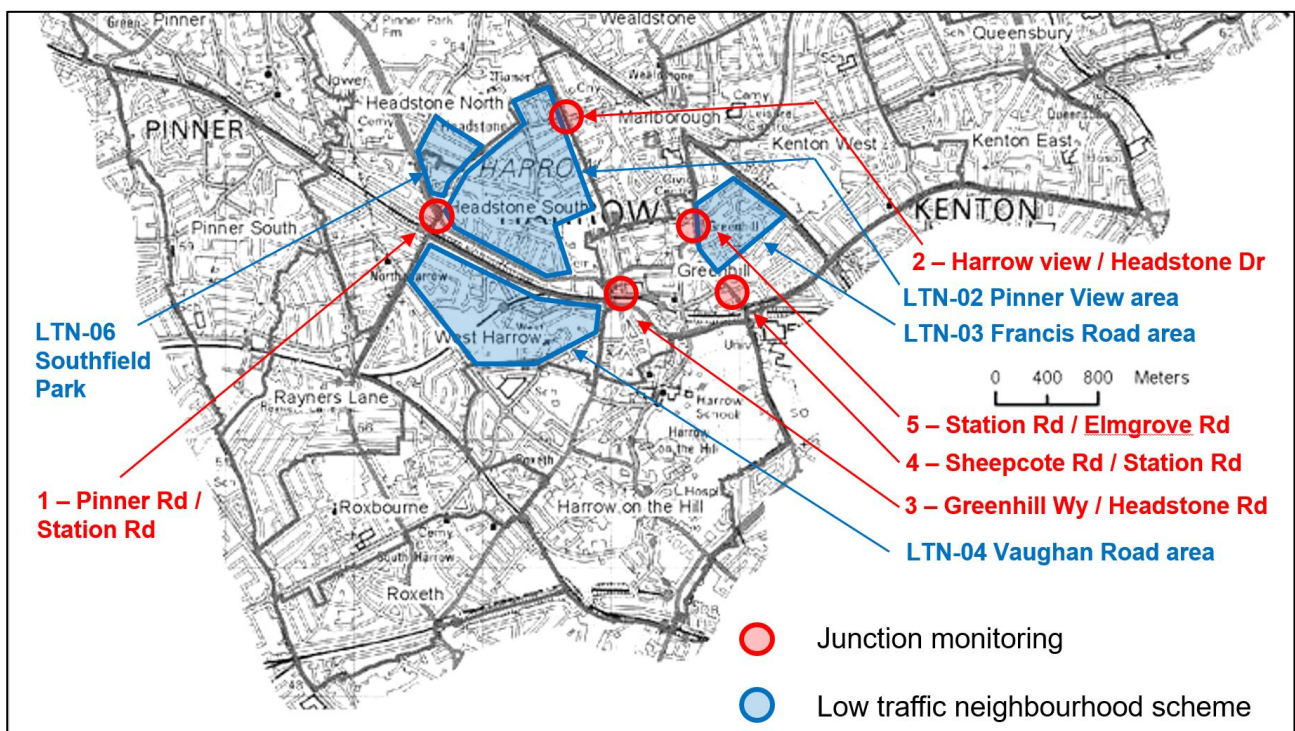
The use of physical closures in these two roads will not be practical due to the need to maintain access for emergency services and waste collection services, therefore, it is suggested that a signed motor vehicle restriction at the Parkside Way end of both roads be introduced and enforced using CCTV cameras. The Headstone Lane end of the roads is considered to provide easier access overall to the network for residents whereas the Parkside Way corridor normally experiences more delays. Appendix 1 sets out details of the proposal.

The proposals would be taken forward as an experimental traffic management order and residents consulted on the proposals in advance. It would take approximately 4-6 weeks to introduce the scheme.

### Queue length surveys

As a consequence of introducing the low traffic neighbourhoods some displacement of through journeys onto main roads was anticipated.

The plan below shows junctions on the main road network in close proximity to the low traffic neighbourhoods that are being monitored to assess any potential impact. Queue length surveys have been undertaken in order to assess any changes in congestion and delay.



The dates for data collection are as follows:

#### CCTV counts

- July 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> and August 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>
- October 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>

The surveys were undertaken at the following locations as follows:

- A404 Pinner Road / Station Road
- Headstone Drive / Harrow View / Headstone Gardens
- Greenhill Way / Headstone Road
- A409 Sheepcote Road / Station Road
- A409 Station Road / Elmgrove Road / Hindes Road

The table below gives details of the surveys.

Junction Maximum queue lengths (all vehicles / all arms)		July / August Weekday 2020	July / August Weekend 2020	October Weekday 2020	October Weekend 2020	Weekday change	Weekend change
<b>1 - A404 Pinner Road / Station Road</b>	AM	84	66	178	84	112%	27%
	Inter peak	120	148	163	198	36%	34%
	PM	145	116	198	181	37%	56%
<b>2 - Headstone Drive / Harrow View / Headstone Gardens</b>	AM	97	99	202	127	108%	28%
	Inter peak	132	129	162	172	23%	33%
	PM	175	152	200	165	14%	9%
<b>3 - Greenhill Way / Headstone Road</b>	AM	87	60	99	85	14%	42%
	Inter peak	100	120	108	107	8%	-11%
	PM	139	113	126	129	-9%	14%
<b>4 - A409 Sheeppcote Road / Station Road</b>	AM	43	29	69	42	60%	45%
	Inter peak	56	57	57	70	2%	23%
	PM	69	53	68	71	-1%	34%
<b>5 - A409 Station Road / Elmgrove Road / Hindes Road</b>	AM	96	63	105	73	9%	16%
	Inter peak	93	98	76	95	-18%	-3%
	PM	126	111	120	95	-5%	-14%

The queue lengths recorded in July and August are marginally lower than prior to the start of the pandemic. The October surveys clearly show an impact on sites 1 and 2, particularly in the morning peak, and schemes LTN-02 and LTN-06 will have caused the greatest impact on these junctions. However, these LTNs had only been in operation for 1-2 weeks when the October surveys were undertaken and so there has been insufficient time for travel patterns to adjust and for flows to regularise. The surveys do show clearly the initial impact of the measures immediately after they were implemented. It is likely that these impacts will reduce over time as travel patterns change.

### Emergency services comments

The Metropolitan Police, Fire & Rescue Service and Ambulance service have been contacted to seek their views about the impact of the low traffic neighbourhood schemes on their respective services. No operational issues have been highlighted.

### TfL bus services comments

Transport for London oversee the commissioning and operation of bus services in London and they have been contacted to seek their views about the impact of the low traffic neighbourhood schemes on bus services. No operational issues have been highlighted.

## Officer observations regarding operational performance

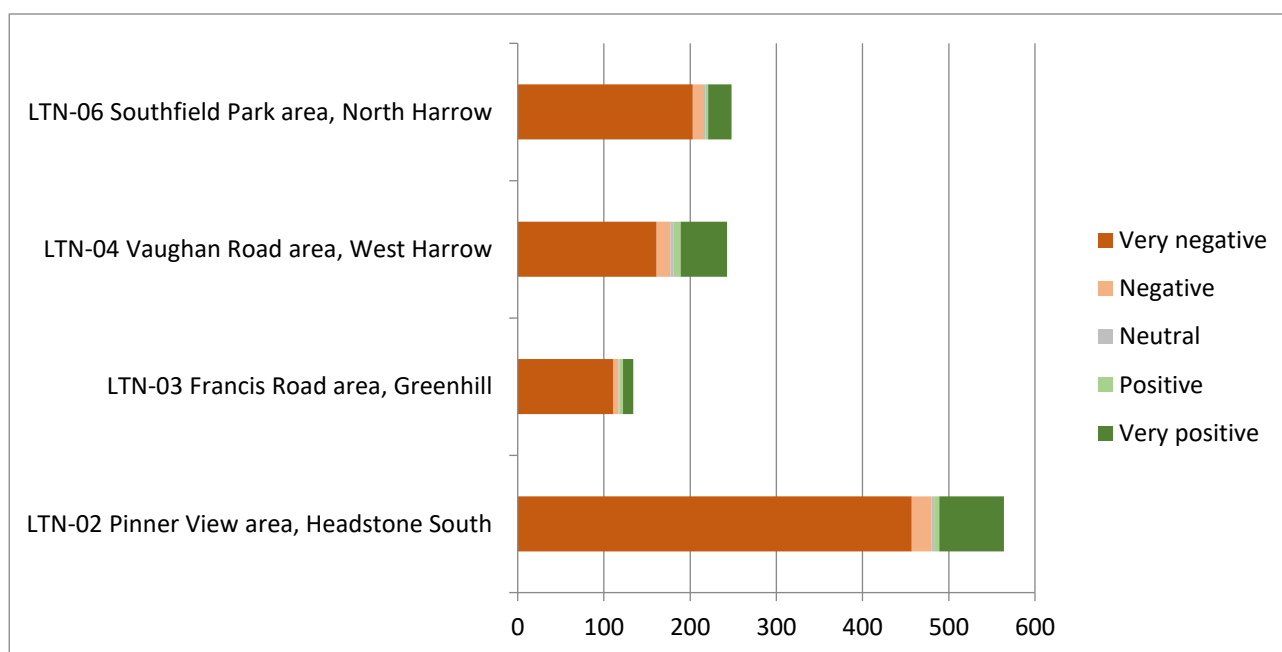
Officers have undertaken on-site observations periodically to check on the operation of the schemes.

There have been incidents where vehicles have tried to bypass the points of closure by driving on the footway which is a hazard to pedestrians and to move barriers where these have been put in temporarily to stop such behaviour. Physical measures have been taken to stop such action such as rearranging the positioning of planters and implementing bollards. In some cases, bollards that have been put up have been knocked down to allow vehicle through and the current policy is to undertake an immediate repair as soon as it is reported. It is expected that such actions will reduce when the perpetrators realise that action will always be taken to rectify the situation.

Some issues with vehicles getting caught out by the restrictions have been highlighted and the prominence and extent of warning signing has been identified as insufficient early on since the schemes were implemented. Additional signing has therefore been implemented to highlight the points of closures and restricted access to residential estates. All restrictions have been uploaded onto the *one.network* portal which feeds the information to the satellite navigation companies and will help motorists to avoid restrictions.

## Residents feedback

An engagement portal was setup at the beginning of October to facilitate the receipt of public comments for all of the on-going streetspace schemes trials. A summary of the feedback for low traffic neighbourhood schemes in October can be seen in the table below.



The engagement feedback indicates a continuing level of unpopularity amongst the community towards these schemes. A more detailed analysis of the free comments received highlighted the following common issues:

- The measures were considered more positive by cyclists although they represent a smaller proportion of the responses received (5%).
- The largest group of responses was from residents (60%) and motorists (20%) that expressed more negative sentiments.
- Many views indicated that there is increased congestion and queuing at busy times on the main road network.
- Many views indicated that the restricted access to residential estates is inconvenient and increases journey times.
- A proportion of residents clearly support the measures and the benefits for public health, active travel, road safety and for children.
- There were many generally derogatory comments that were not substantiated with any reasons.

Most comments are a reaction to changes that affect lifestyles that rely heavily on using the private car and it is expected that making changes is something that will happen over a longer period of time. This is the experience of other London boroughs that have introduced similar schemes. The initial reaction to the schemes is understandably more negative as a consequence.

The introduction of a lockdown from the 5<sup>th</sup> November with restrictions on all non-essential travel is likely to significantly reduce any pressures on the road network from congestion and delay that have been reported by the public.

The next review period will be in November and a report will be prepared by the end of the month for consideration.

## **Recommendations**

It is therefore recommended that:

- That the situation with congestion and delay caused by LTNs on the main road network is considered and the following options are available:
  - That the low traffic neighbourhood schemes are retained until the next review is undertaken.
- That the situation with the congestion and delay caused by the roadworks and the temporary removal of some of the road closures in the LTNs is considered and the following options are available:
  - Put back the road closures in the LTNs when the roadworks is finished.
  - Keep open the road closures in the LTNs until further community engagement has been undertaken on alternative scheme options.

## **Decision:**

That the situation with the congestion and delay caused by the roadworks and the temporary removal of some of the road closures in the LTNs is approved and the following option is approved.

Keep open the road closures in the LTNs until further community engagement has been undertaken on alternative scheme options.