

London Streetspace Programme (Harrow) Pedestrian Space Measures Review - November 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 pedestrian space measures. These schemes are implemented at locations such as shopping parades or transport hubs where the width of the footway is insufficient to maintain the required social distancing specified by the government and where higher levels of pedestrian activity are expected.

The schemes consist of temporary pedestrian barriers to reallocate carriageway space to pedestrians by suspending sections of carriageway for vehicle access. This provides more space for pedestrians to use. At shopping parades these are located in service roads and have reduced space for car parking. The pedestrian space measures have been implemented in 9 locations in the borough, three have now been removed (shaded), and 6 remain. The list of schemes is shown in the table below:

PS-01	Station Road, Harrow - Civic Centre, shops
PS-02	Harrow and Wealdstone Station
PS-07	Streatfield Road, Queensbury - shops
PS-08	Honeypot Lane, Canons Park - shops
PS-09	Northolt Road, Northolt - shops
PS-10	Kenton Road, Kenton - shops
PS-11	Kenton Lane, Belmont - shops
PS-12	High Road, Harrow Weald – shops / bus stop
PS-13	Porlock Avenue, West Harrow – shops / / school / bus stop

Methodology

At the special meeting of TARSAP on 10th August it was recommended and subsequently agreed by the Deputy Leader on the 19th August that a review of the pedestrian 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:

- Incidence of the virus in the area (public health data) and current Government social distancing requirements
- Pedestrian activity (measured by counts)
- Physical constraints (footway widths)
- Business impact (engagement and assessment)

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.

Incidence of the virus and Government guidance

The national position has shown a decrease in the number of infections reported daily from a high of 25,000 per day at the start of November to approximately 15,000 per day in late November which shows that the second wave of the virus is starting to recede as a consequence of the lockdown that commenced on 5th November.

The data for Harrow shown below gives the local position which is following the national trend towards a decrease in infections. The incidence rate peaked last week and has started to show a slight decrease. In terms of the number of cases, there has been a reduction of about 60 cases per week across the borough. This is the impact of lockdown, but it must be noted that the rates are still very high and a return to social mixing will lead to a rapid rise in cases. The rate in older adults remains high and the testing rate has been increasing.

Latest COVID-19 figures in Harrow	
Report date: 25th November 2020.	
Data range: 16th November 2020 to 22nd November 2020	
Positive cases in the last week in Harrow	429
Testing rate per 100,000	351.6
Test positivity rate	8.1
Incidence rate (all ages) in the last 7 days per 100,000	170.8
Incidence rate (aged 60 and over) in the last week per 100,000	119.5
Test and Trace cases (cumulative) % complete	82
Test and Trace contacts (cumulative) % complete	60

From 2nd December when lockdown ends there will be a return to the tier system of restrictions. Councils in England have been placed on "medium", "high" or "very high" alert with different levels of restrictions required. London is in the "high alert" tier 2 level.

From 2nd December when lockdown ends the tiered system of restrictions will return. Councils in England have been placed on "medium", "high" or "very high" alert with different levels of restrictions required. London is in the "high alert" tier 2 level.

Tier 2 restrictions include no mixing of households indoors, including pubs and restaurants, and the "rule of six" applies outdoors including private gardens and public spaces. Businesses and venues can continue to operate, in a COVID-Secure manner, pubs and bars must close, unless operating as restaurants. Hospitality venues can only serve alcohol with substantial meals, early closure (11pm) applies to most venues.

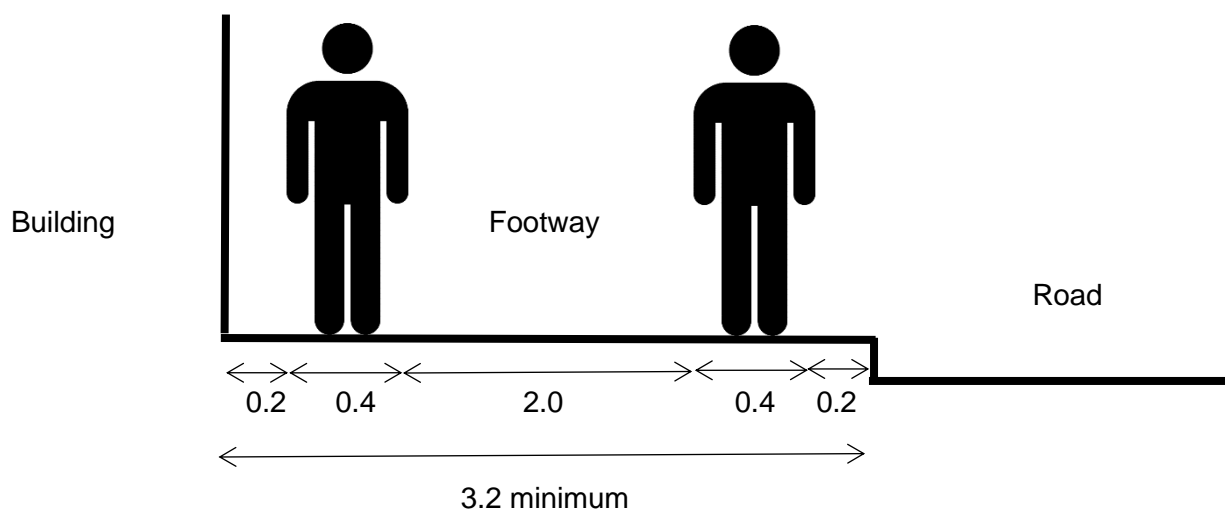
On 16th December London was put into the "very high" tier 3 alert level. The additional restrictions mean that the "rule of six" applies outdoors in some outdoor public places only, hospitality businesses, pubs, restaurants, hotels, entertainment venues must close travel is allowed for essential reasons only but must stay within tier 3 areas.

Physical constraints

The current government guidance remains to keep 2 metres apart with relaxations to 1 metre plus other mitigations permitted where 2 metres is not possible. The use of masks / face coverings is compulsory in shops. Fines for first offences concerning masks or gatherings is £200 and for those breaking self-isolation rules, up to £10,000. COVID-secure guidelines are legal obligations in retail, leisure and tourism and office workers will be asked to work from home unless they need to travel to work.

All the pedestrian sites chosen were selected on the basis that the footways were not wide enough for pedestrians to be able to adhere to the 2m rule when people pass each other. The provision of more space therefore allows people to pass each other safely at busy periods. During the health crisis these locations will still be areas where there will be concentrations of people from time to time and require 2 metres distancing to be observed effectively between people of different households.

The footway space requirements to enable social distancing safely are as shown below (dimensions in metres).



The footway widths at the sites are set out below in the table.

Ref	Location	Footway widths
PS-01	Station Road, Harrow - Civic Centre, shops	The footways adjacent to the two inset parking areas vary between 2.3 and 2.6 metres wide.
PS-02	Harrow and Wealdstone Station	The footway between the cycle racks and taxi rank is 3.4metres wide, this is located close to the station entrance in a high footfall area.
PS-07	Streatfield Road, Queensbury - shops	The footways adjacent to the shops vary between 2.2 and 2.7 metres wide.
PS-08	Honeypot Lane, Canons Park - shops	The footways adjacent to the shops vary between 2.3 and 2.5 metres wide.
PS-09	Northolt Road, Northolt - shops	The footways adjacent to the shops vary between 2.4 and 2.6 metres wide.
PS-10	Kenton Road, Kenton - shops	The footways adjacent to the shops vary between 2.5 and 2.7 metres wide.
PS-11	Kenton Lane, Belmont - shops	The footways adjacent to the shops vary between 2.0 and 2.3 metres wide.
PS-12	High Road, Harrow Weald – shops, bus stop	The footways between the shop forecourts and bus stop layby vary between 1.2 and 2.2 metres wide.
PS-13	Porlock Avenue, West Harrow – shops, school, bus stop	The footways adjacent to the bus stop layby vary between 2.0 and 3.4 metres wide, this is a high footfall area next to Whitmore School.

Providing additional space is particularly important in the current circumstances when infection levels across the country are still high across all age groups and where social distancing is the main strategy to slow the spread of the virus. Schools have remained open during lockdown and the tier 2 restrictions and children are being encouraged to walk or cycle to school and this is likely to increase the risks on the school journey particularly at shopping areas and transport hubs.

Pedestrian Activity

Pedestrian activity counts are being regularly undertaken at the sites to estimate the amount of pedestrian footfall. Pedestrian counts are taken at a particular point in the scheme where most activity takes place 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 main period of business activity. Surveys are undertaken by recording CCTV footage during the period of observation and later analysed by the survey company at their premises. The dates for data collection are as follows:

- June 11th & 13th - PS01, PS02, PS12 & PS13.
- June 26th & 27th - PS07, PS08, PS09, PS10 & PS11.
- August 6th & 8th.
- September 3rd & 5th.
- October 15th & 17th
- November 12th & 14th - PS01, PS02, PS09, PS11, PS12 & PS13.

The table below gives details of all the pedestrian counts undertaken.

Weekday 7am - 7pm both directions

Site Location	Station Road	H & W Station	Streatfield Rd north parade	Streatfield Rd south parade	Honeypt Lane	Northolt Road	Kenton Road	Kenton Lane	High Road	Porlock Avenue
Site Ref	PS01	PS02	PS07	PS07	PS08	PS09	PS10	PS11	PS12	PS13
June	1564	1508	1823	1865	541	1021	1744	1215	603	467
August	1946	2283	1844	1927	475	1220	1537	1209	690	730
September	2026	2515	2152	2576	682	1257	1626	1403	954	1531
October	2067	3284	2389	2679	780	1006	1872	1378	1031	2845
November	1740	2871	N/A	N/A	N/A	1445	N/A	1490	930	3092

Saturday 7am – 7pm both directions

Site Location	Station Road	H & W Station	Streatfield Rd north parade	Streatfield Rd south parade	Honeypt Lane	Northolt Road	Kenton Road	Kenton Lane	High Road	Porlock Avenue
Site Ref	PS01	PS02	PS 07	PS07	PS08	PS 09	PS10	PS11	PS12	PS13
June	1539	1471	2110	1911	390	937	1606	1212	608	413
August	1917	1925	1978	1940	412	1545	1694	1546	633	544
September	2103	2172	2334	2407	353	1631	1823	1473	896	710
October	1916	2118	2189	2353	369	994	1634	1413	797	618
November	1103	1375	N/A	N/A	N/A	1406	N/A	1283	530	352

It is important to note the impact of the lockdown that took effect on 5th November. The latest surveys indicate that pedestrian activity has varied at all the pedestrian sites and the main points to note are:

- PS01 & PS12 – closure of non-essential retail has reduced pedestrian activity at shops
- PS02 - Restrictions on non-essential travel has reduced pedestrian activity by the station
- PS09 – increases in pedestrian activity likely due to a number of supermarkets located in this part of Northolt Road
- PS11 – increase in pedestrian activity in the week due to supermarket in this location.
- PS13 – Increase in pedestrian activity due to travel to school by Whitmore High School

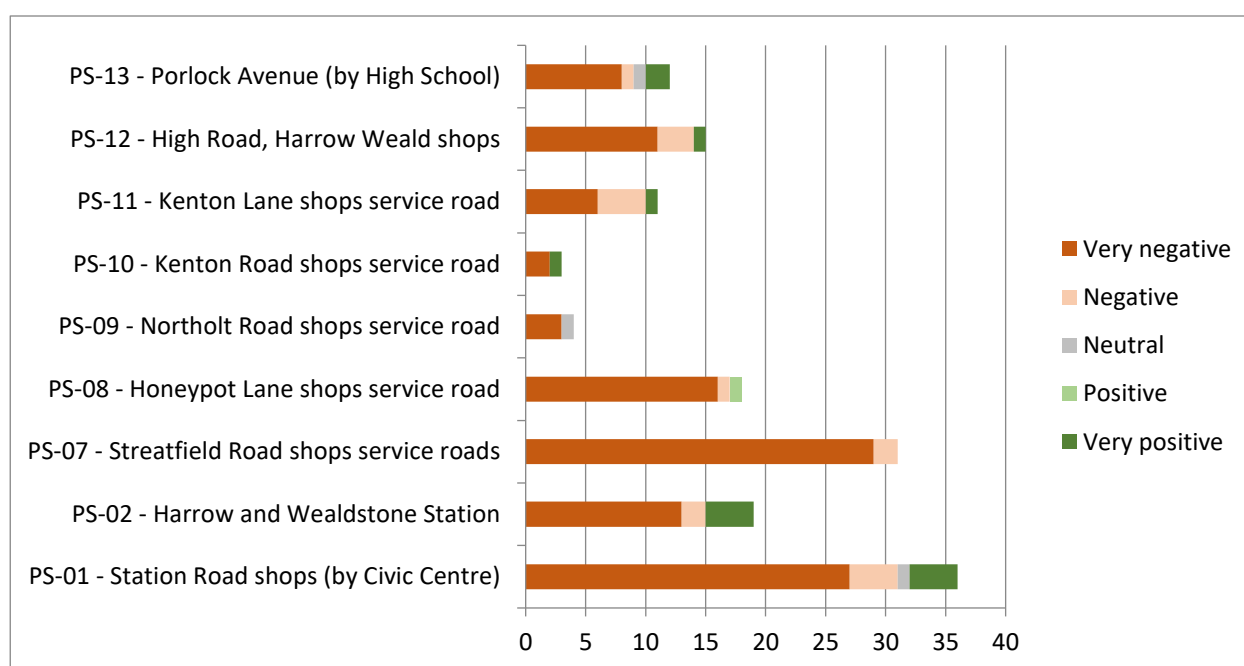
The return to the “high alert” tier 2 level will mean non-essential travel and retail shopping can recommence as allowed by the restrictions with a likely increase in pedestrian activity.

Public engagement

An engagement portal was setup at the beginning of October to facilitate the receipt of public comments on all of the on-going streetspace schemes trials. A summary of the feedback for pedestrian space 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:

- Businesses indicating difficulties for customers / visitors to park near the shops.
- Businesses indicating difficulties with receiving deliveries.
- Expressing the view that the measures are unnecessary and are not convinced that they contribute to improving public health.
- Many generally derogatory comments that were not substantiated with any reasons.



Assessment

In October three schemes were removed at PS-07 Streatfield Road, PS-08 Honeypot Lane and PS-10 Kenton Road. The temporary measures were replaced by an advisory one way system marked on the footway and by signs erected reinforcing the “hands, face and space” message.

The following assessment takes account of the other sites and all the different factors and suggests an action for each of the sites as shown in the table below.

Ref	Location	Assessment
PS-01	Station Road, Harrow - Civic Centre, shops	Pedestrian flows have reduced during lockdown, restrictions on parking affect access to shops and may affect trade for businesses, remove temporary measures and introduce a temporary advisory one way on the footway to support the local economy.
PS-02	Harrow and Wealdstone Station	Pedestrian flows have decreased slightly during lockdown but there is still significant public transport usage. Space for taxis pick up and drop off is maintained. The measures should be retained.
PS-09	Northolt Road, Northolt - shops	Pedestrian flow in this area has increased possibly due to supermarkets being a focus for trade during lockdown.

		Restrictions on parking affect access to shops and may affect trade for businesses, remove temporary measures and introduce a temporary advisory one way on the footway to support the local economy.
PS-11	Kenton Lane, Belmont - shops	Pedestrian flow in this area has increased in the week possibly due to the supermarkets being a focus for trade during lockdown. Restrictions on parking affect access to shops and may affect trade for businesses, remove temporary measures and introduce a temporary advisory one way on the footway to support the local economy.
PS-12	High Road, Harrow Weald – shops, bus stop	The footway width is very narrow at 1.2 metres and therefore a permanent widening of the footway and relocation of the bus stop should be considered as a long term solution. The temporary measures can be removed after amendments are completed and a temporary advisory one way on the footway introduced. This will help to support the local economy.
PS-13	Porlock Avenue, West Harrow – shops, school, bus stop	More people are using the bus stop and footway during the week and pedestrian flows have increased due to the school. The measures should be retained.

Options

Detailed below are the options for consideration:

- That the pedestrian space measures at transport hubs by PS-02 Harrow & Wealdstone Station and PS-13 Porlock Avenue are retained until the next review is undertaken.
- That the pedestrian space measures by shopping areas at PS-01 Station Road, PS-09 Northolt Road and PS-11 Kenton Lane are removed and an alternative advisory one-way scheme on the footways be introduced to reduce social contact.
- That in respect of PS-12 High Road, Harrow Weald a permanent widening of the sub-standard footway from 1.2m to 2.0m and relocation of the bus stop should be undertaken.
- That the temporary measures at PS-12 High Road, Harrow Weald be removed when the permanent amendments are completed and a temporary advisory one way introduced on the footway to reduce social contact.
- The next review of the schemes is undertaken before the end of December.

Decision

The pedestrian space measures at transport hubs by PS-02 Harrow & Wealdstone Station and PS-13 Porlock Avenue are retained until the next review is undertaken. The next review of the schemes will be undertaken before the end of December.

The pedestrian space measures by shopping areas at PS-01 Station Road, PS-09 Northolt Road and PS-11 Kenton Lane are removed and an alternative advisory one-way scheme on the footways be introduced to reduce social contact.

A permanent widening of the footway and relocation of the bus stop is undertaken at site PS-12 High Road, Harrow Weald and the temporary measures removed when the footway widening is completed and a temporary advisory one way introduced on the footway to reduce social contact.