

Lewisham Cyclists' Response to London Borough of Lewisham Consultation on Local Implementation Plan 3 – October 2018

Dear Nick Harvey

We welcome the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) 3 consultation and support many of its principles and aims which are also reflected in the Cycle Strategy and priorities which we have identified with local people who want to get around safely and easily on bicycles. In particular we support plans to develop the A21 spine project; to create a series of Healthy Neighbourhoods, and to carry out other improvements to the network to make cycling and walking the natural choices to get around.

We are impressed with the range and ambition of the LIP, but note that funding is modest. Success will remain contingent on leveraging additional funding from TfL, developers, and other authorities, if capital schemes are to be realised, and targets achieved. We especially approve schemes that link local destinations, and promote active transport opportunities within healthy neighbourhoods. It is crucial that this integrated approach continues - unless schemes successfully deter traffic and increase participation in walking and/or cycling it is unlikely they will achieve targets to reduce car use, emissions and significantly improve air quality.

We welcome the target that 19% of residents should live within 400m of a LSCN (Lewisham Strategic Cycle Network) route by 2021 but note that is an ambitious five-fold increase on the current figure (4%). We hope that the Council recognise that delivering this objective needs a step-change in delivery rate of Quietway-type developments.

We wholly endorse the proposed Healthy Neighbourhood measures to reduce through traffic in residential 'cells' via point closures and modal filtering, especially where this joins up the network. We hope that these can be mapped in order to offer the optimum joining up of previously dislocated walking or cycling journeys.

Additionally, the existing LCN (London Cycle Network) routes should not be neglected as at modest cost this could be much improved through better signing, maintenance and more effective joining up. We would very much welcome any further opportunity to give detailed feedback based on our members' experiences, of how the network can be most effectively improved to achieve this target. The usefulness of these existing routes, which generally utilise back-streets, will potentially be enhanced by the Healthy Neighbourhoods initiative reducing traffic volumes and speeds on the roads concerned.

Elsewhere in the document you mention the need to strengthen east-west active travel connections and we would certainly support any initiatives to achieve that object.

Other points on cycling specific interventions are:

Crofton Park Corridor (P87) – in previous consultations on this proposal we have asked for specific segregated spaces for safe cycling along this busy corridor. As it stands we consider the scheme is unlikely to encourage more people cycling, and will not reduce the number of people driving. In particular our members are asking for the corridor to be safely linked with nearby Quietways and LCN routes, and to provide safe access by bicycle to local parks, library, shops, and schools. In our view the scheme is unlikely to deliver measurable improvements in active travel and should be re-designed and then go back for further public consultation.

Deptford Parks Liveable Neighbourhood (P88) - in contrast to the above, shows real potential to connect local destinations that are readily walked and/or cycled, and we are very supportive.

A21 Healthy Street (The 'Lewisham Spine') (P89) – we are very supportive of this scheme and congratulate the Council for passing a Motion in support of this scheme. Linking the forthcoming CS4 in Deptford to the South of the Borough in Downham will potentially bring many more cycle journeys within reach of significantly more residents. If this is achieved there is potential for cycling across the Borough to be transformed, and Lewisham would become a leader amongst London authorities. Targets on active participation, emissions reduction, and proximity to a strategic cycle network would likely be achieved. In addition Healthy Streets and neighbourhoods would significantly add to the quality of life of all residents bordering the A21 corridor, including the new development opportunities around Catford.

Healthy Neighbourhoods (P90) – we are very supportive of these and consider it essential that they deliver against the key defined principles. The Deptford Parks scheme is one model that could be used as a basis for other schemes that are driven by community support, and offer a joined up approach for local active journeys.

However more modest interventions with a few point closures can also quickly make dramatic improvements to local neighbourhoods with other interventions e.g. public realm developments, following on in time.

The plan to do two or three neighbourhoods per year is very exciting and has the potential to quickly provide a step-change in the local environment in the areas that are thus treated.

We very much support the principle of trialling School Superzones, although understanding these would need to be accompanied by educational promotions, and safe routes to schools.

We have a number of volunteer members who would be very happy to assist these at any stage in their development, including identification of routes and leading parent/child rides if that is needed.

Local Pedestrian Improvement (P91) – we would ask for improvements to the public realm near Lewisham Shopping Centre to be extended to include improved access for people on bicycles into the town centre. Currently this is poor and we would like to give more detailed feedback once outline plans are drawn up.

Local Cycling Improvements (P92) – we are very supportive of all these initiatives.

Contraflow cycle routes (P92) – One-way streets have dislocated a number of optimal cycle routes and are often a major barrier to cycling e.g. to schools. We have already provided Council Officers with a number of priority one-way streets for conversion into two-way cycling and will welcome the earliest opportunity to discuss these and other potential conversions.

Cycle Parking (P92) - We are always happy to provide views/locations on suitable cycle parking facilities. On bike hangers we would like to see the scheme accelerated if further funding becomes available, and urge the Council to be proactive in terms of reducing car parking spaces in line with the MTS.

Improved cycle routes (P93) - We are also very supportive of improved cycle connectivity including bridges across railways and paths through greenspaces.

Lewisham's principle Quietways are very popular and we strongly support the development of further Quietways, particularly completely new alignments that open up new active travel opportunities in the Borough.

Air Quality and Noise (P93) - As people on bicycles we are all too aware of air quality, and support anything the Council can do within its powers to reduce toxic emissions. Encouraging more people to walk and/or cycle clearly has the benefit of improving their health, but also reduces emissions for the benefit of everyone. We believe the Council must take a more proactive approach to deter drivers, and will add our support for any scheme that reduces traffic blight and rat running in local communities.

Complementary projects (P96) – We are glad to hear that Creekside is going to be improved but believe the road should be filtered to remove unnecessary through traffic – we are not aware if this is part of the current plans or not?

At Bell Green we have previously given our views on the gyratory and the need to connect up the Waterlink Way better with the shopping centre. We have also commented on the need for a better crossing with Southend Lane. Further to that we believe that in the medium term the Bell Green / Sydenham Road gyratory should be 'un-scrambled' as it is very hazardous for cyclists and pedestrians and creates severe dislocation in the area.

In conclusion, with the above caveats we are supportive of LIP 3 and will be happy to provide further information as needed.

Jane Davis (Lewisham Cyclists Co-Ordinator)

23/10/2018