

## **Opposition Priority Business Low Traffic Neighbourhoods**

### **Executive Summary**

- The Fox Lane and Bowes Low Traffic Neighbourhood schemes were implemented this summer without consulting residents causing deep division in our community.
- The Opposition is concerned that the schemes have not delivered on their objectives of reducing congestion and air pollution.
- If the Bowes and Fox Lane LTNs are delivered both schemes need to be consulted on properly by Enfield Council [not just via an engagement programme] with a clear commitment that if residents do not support the LTNs they will not be implemented.

### **Recommendations**

- This Council will remove the Fox Lane and Bowes LTNs until a full consultation has taken place that demonstrates majority public support for them.
- This Council will never implement major traffic schemes like the LTNS that cause massive disruption to residents without consultation first with residents, businesses and other stakeholders.
- The ANPR cameras are removed forthwith.
- Air quality data will be collected before and after implementing any LTN or similar scheme and if there is a deterioration in air quality the scheme will be removed immediately.
- Given the poor signage and failure of the council to uphold the FPNs with the Adjudicator all FPNs to be revoked immediately.

### **Background**

- Low-traffic neighbourhoods are residential roads where motor traffic is limited or closed off completely. This obstructs or redirects “through traffic” or “rat running”, when cars use local streets as corridors to and from destinations outside the immediate area.
- The Labour Council chose to submit a bid for funding to implement LTNs in Fox Lane and Bowes earlier this year. The schemes were designed by Enfield Council.
- Local authorities did not have to submit schemes for funding. There were many authorities that did not take up the opportunity to implement LTNs including neighbouring Barnet.

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- LB Wandsworth and Redbridge chose to implement LTNs but after significant opposition to the schemes they were removed.

### **Impacts of the LTNs in Enfield**

#### **Air Quality**

- One of the aims of the schemes is to deliver modal shift which means people use alternative means of transport. The modal shift would therefore reduce car journeys and improve air quality.
- The air quality monitoring figures for the roads within the Bowes scheme are as follows:

##### **Bowes Primary NO2**

September 2020: 31.8ug/m3

October 2020: 26.7ug/m3

November 2020: 35.4ug/m3

##### **92 Warwick Road**

September 2020: 15.2ug/m3

October 2020: 19.6ug/m3

##### **134 Brownlow Road**

September 2020: 24.7ug/m3

October 2020: 28.4ug/m3

- The above data shows that in terms of reducing Nitrogen Dioxide the Bowes scheme has not delivered a significant difference and in fact there has been a deterioration in air quality in recent months.
- Traffic data collected for the Fox Lane Quieter Neighbourhood will be used to inform air quality monitoring. This is achieved by inputting the traffic volume data into a model to help understand the impact on air quality, which can be compared to the situation prior to the scheme using historical data collected. The analysis of this data has yet to be completed.

#### **Congestion**

- The schemes have pushed more vehicles on to neighbouring main roads since roads within the scheme are cut off to through traffic.
- These roads were already busy prior to the implementation of both schemes so an increase in vehicles has led to an increase in congestion.
- The tailbacks caused by the upsurge in traffic have created long queues of vehicles with their engines idling, potentially increasing the NO2 in areas adjacent to both schemes.
- Increased journey times have made the areas less accessible to residents and visitors to the detriment of local businesses

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### Concerns regarding Emergency Services

- The London Ambulance Service highlighted key concerns when it was contacted prior to the implementation of both the Bowes and Fox Lane schemes. One of the concerns was the use of bollards. A video on social media clearly showed a Paramedic struggling with unlocking a bollard and getting back into the ambulance to find an alternative route.
- The London Ambulance Service, Chairman admitted that journey times had increased and that the service was working with local authorities to try and solve the issue.
- The Metropolitan Police was not entirely-supportive of the LTNs when it was approached prior to the start of the schemes. FOI requests show that the

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police were concerned about the risk of severe congestion and disruption as well as the potential restriction of emergency services access.

- Closing roads with “bollards everywhere” prevents police from using vital backstreet shortcuts to catch criminals and save victims from crime “bleeding out” on the streets, a senior officer has warned. An email obtained under Freedom of Information reveals how the Metropolitan Police warned councils how their ability to tackle armed gangs and robbers on mopeds was being thwarted by road closures. The email was in response to the Hackney LTN but many of the views expressed by the officer apply equally to the Bowes and Fox Lane LTNs.
- There is also a document from the ambulance service that suggests that the London Ambulance Service only asked the council to keep the roads such as the Meadway open. Therefore, the council undertook by-itself the opportunity to install Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras that are issuing fines. This was not requested by any parties consulted.

### Fines

- Enfield Council has received over £1 million from fines.

	Palmerston Road N22	Warwick Road N11	Fox Lane N13	Meadway N14	Conway Road N13
<b>PCNs</b>	112	8337	5897	19561	173
<b>Appeals</b>	11	2254	1589	6369	19
<b>Revenue</b>	£4,402	£293,930	£228,410	£723,125	£5,330

- There was little communication about the implementation of the scheme. Drivers who had used the roads for years where the cameras were placed had no knowledge that they had been installed. The cameras are placed on very high posts much taller than speeding cameras and are easily missed.
- The signage informing motorists that some no through roads within LTNs have cameras has not been clear especially at the top of Meadway, Southgate junction with the A1004.
- A significant proportion of the fines are being issued to drivers contravening the rules at night, but the Administration has not looked to modify them so that they can receive preferable comments back in the consultation.
- Speaking to residents it is clear that the type of signage implemented on our ‘**School Streets**’ is something that would bring more clarity and understanding for those motorists in the area. The image below is a clear example of a no motorist zone and the times are displayed in an efficient manner that is easier to understand. It also makes it clear that only authorised

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vehicles are allowed passage through. Therefore, if this is so similar in enforcement, why haven't the councils sought to install this sign but instead to make it clear these restrictions apply **'At Any Time'** and motorists would be aware this is a restricted zone at any time unless you are authorised.



- The council have in some instances failed to hold up its penalties when cases have been sent to the adjudicator. In some cases, the council have not even responded to the adjudicators request meaning penalties have been waived due to lacking evidence from the council. Given this is the case, shouldn't Enfield Council look to change its design and signage immediately as it clearly cannot defend the argument?
- An enforcement vehicle has been parked in Palmerston Road to catch people trying to do right turns where they were previously able. It is very confusing which roads are available to use to reach Green Lanes due to the LTN layout.

### Engine idling

- The congestion on nearby main roads to both schemes have caused more cars to be stationary with their engines idling during busy traffic periods.
- Shockingly, last month it came to light that an Enfield Council enforcement vehicle was parked up with its engine running for long periods of time. The Deputy Leader of the Council has confirmed this in an email to a resident.
- Engine idling is not just limited to the council vehicles. It is clear on social media that roads such as High Street, Winchmore Hill Road, Wynchgate, Bourne Hill, Alderman's Hill, Cannon Hill and Green Lanes have all been caught out as the traffic is simply pushed to the side roads. This is not what the LTN was intended to do- increase congestion and increase side-roads congestion.

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- In addition, the council have failed to put in provisions to monitor the increased congestion in the surrounding areas along the boundaries of LTNs. There are zero research mechanisms in place to monitor the changes in traffic around LTNs.
- The council has also failed to monitor air quality standards. In an email to officers Cllr. Stephanos Ioannou echoed his concern that Southgate's air quality was being monitored by the nearest filter on Bowes Road. This is shocking and will of course produce inaccurate data.
- Furthermore, the council have insisted on placing an LTN and monitoring the scheme whilst car usage is down overall in England and particularly in London. Given this issue the council cannot be serious in soon concluding and analysing the data from the consultation when motorist levels have been down- the argument is skewed.

### **Opposition against schemes**

- A petition was submitted to Enfield Council from residents who are against the Bowes LTN. The lead petitioner was Mr Roland Hewes. The petition was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21st October 2020. The public believe the meeting was a total fiasco. Residents who viewed the meeting were annoyed that the valid points raised by Mr Hewes had not been fully answered and the concerns of people were dismissed. As a consequence, the lead petitioner has lodged a complaint about how the meeting was handled especially the voting. Please see link to part of the OSC meeting. <https://youtu.be/vTNEIG3ZssM>
- Protests have been held against the Bowes scheme. These protests have been covered by television and radio journalists.
- Cllr Maria Alexandrou collected a petition supported by 1500 people against the Fox Lane LTNs.
- A campaign action group called One Community Against Fox Lane LTN has been established.

### **Dividing the Community**

- The Bowes and Fox Lane LTNs have divided our community. Residents who live within the schemes have put posters up in their windows saying don't fence me in. People who are in favour have posters advertising the schemes.
- Other boroughs across London have either suspended or halted and removed entirely their schemes. Redbridge and Wandsworth have removed their LTNs. Enfield should follow suit as clearly there is a negative opposition forming to these plans.

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### **Conclusion**

- Whilst the intention behind LTNs of reducing congestion and air pollution is laudable, the failure to consult residents on both the Fox Lane and Bowes LTNs was a mistake which has brought the Council into disrepute and undermined public support for any such proposals and divided communities.
- The failure to listen to the emergency services reservations about the schemes has seen increased journey times for emergency vehicles, especially ambulances.
- There has been a very significant increase in congestion on other roads for example around Southgate Underground Station, in Palmers Green and along Brownlow Road which consequently has increased journey times, pollution and been detrimental to local residents, visitors to Enfield and local businesses.
- Air Pollution figures for the Bowes LTN demonstrate that the LTN has not delivered on one of its key objections, increasing damage to the lungs of residents, especially those suffering from respiratory disease.
- The Fox Lane and Bowes LTNs should therefore be suspended immediately.
- The Council should therefore adopt the recommendations above.