

Richmond Road Workshop 2

Findings Report

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Richmond Road Workshop 2

Background

In November 2016, the Council implemented width restrictions on Middleton Road to remove heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) from the street, improving it for walking and cycling as part of the wider 'Quietway route' through Hackney. This followed a public consultation with local residents, businesses and stakeholder groups on a range of options, in which local people most favoured the option for the width restrictions.

In December 2017, the Council held a public consultation in the London Fields area introducing a proposal for a School Streets scheme on Westgate Street with a bus gate at the Lansdowne Drive junction with Trederwen Road and a banned 'left turn' into Richmond Road from Mare Street. Those who responded to the consultation – both overall and within the local catchment area – were generally supportive of the proposals for the School Street scheme and banned 'left turn'. The scheme was implemented in Spring 2018 with operational times of 7am – 10am and 3pm – 7pm Monday to Saturday for the bus gate.

A number of other interventions have been introduced in recent years, including a School Streets scheme on Gayhurst Road and London Fields West Side, signal junction and footpath improvements at Queensbridge Road and Middleton Road and rearrangement of parking bays and upgrading of a zebra crossing with halo LED lights on Richmond Road.

The Council continues to work with local residents, businesses and stakeholder groups to identify further measures to address and improve traffic and air quality issues in the London Fields area. Richmond Road is a residential street in particular where traffic from non-local vehicles and HGVs is frequent, causes high levels of concern local pedestrians and cyclists as well as issues with air quality. The Council is committed to genuinely engaging with local people in order to identify workable solutions to make Richmond Road a safer, more pleasant and healthier environment for residents and road users.

The aim of the first event was to:

- Engage with residents, local businesses and community groups to listen to their experiences of using Richmond Road
- Hear feedback on the interventions implemented in the London Fields area in recent years.
- Gather ideas and suggestions for reducing traffic on Richmond Road and improving the environment for walking and cycling
- Use feedback from the first event and following workshops to shape the schemes that are developed

Following the first workshop, participants ideas and contributions were collated into a report and distributed to participants. The findings and recommendations for interventions in the area from the first workshop informed the discussion points for the second workshop.

The aim of the second event was to:

- Review the various issues, challenges and potential interventions proposed by the participants at the previous event
- Test which interventions were popular with participants
- Provide clarity on next steps

Interventions Options

During the first workshop, participants were asked to discuss and share their ideas for improving the conditions for walking and cycling and reducing the impact of vehicular traffic on Richmond Road. At the end of this session each table was asked to share their top three suggested improvements with other participants. It was these recommendations - listed below - that officers have taken forward as potential inventions to discuss at the second workshop.

These are represented in no particular order.

Intervention Options
Introduce intervention off Kingsland, Queensbridge and Englefield Roads such as with restrictions/banned turns
Similar measures similar to Waltham Forest strategic closures to limit rat-running traffic
Priority movements in Richmond Road similar to that of Lansdowne Drive
Road pricing or banning non-local through traffic but allowing local traffic
Improve existing crossing points for cyclists and pedestrians
Sync traffic lights to allow for quicker movements through the area
Richmond Road one-way street, change directions at different times of the day

About the event

The second Richmond Road workshop was held in the Assembly Halls in Hackney Town Hall on 11 July 2019 from 7.00-9.00pm with registration opening at 18.30. The venue location was chosen due to its proximity to Richmond Road and the surrounding area. The event was organised and run by the Consultation and Streetscene teams at Hackney Council.

The event was introduced by Dan Beagle, Senior Consultation and Engagement Officer with a presentation by Andrew Cunningham, Head of Streetscene. See Appendix X

Participants were pre-assigned onto eight tables, consisting of a mix of different types of road users on Richmond Road (e.g. pedestrians, cyclists, bus users and drivers) to ensure a range of voices were heard during the discussions.

Local ward Councillors were invited to the event to listen to the various discussions. Councillor Pluviez from London Fields Ward attended the event.

The participants

Invitations to the event were issued to participants of the previous Richmond Road workshop (November 2018) and those who wanted to be kept updated about future events.

An online form was set up via the Citizen Space portal, with the URL published in the letter, for respondents to register their interest.

A total of 68 signed up with 43 attending. There were seven tables of participants, however, two tables were merged due a low turn out and participants were distributed through other tables.

Facilitation of table discussions

Communications and Consultation officers and Senior Streetscene officers led the facilitation of table discussions.

The role of the facilitator was clearly defined and communicated to ensure that everyone on the table had an opportunity to contribute to the discussion, and to lead discussions in a neutral manner.

Other Council officers from either the Streetscene team or the Communications and Consultation team acted as note takers, summarising and collating key points of discussions for each question for later analysis. Maps marked up by participants with written comments and post-it notes were collected at the end of the evening.

Overview of the agenda

Andrew Cunningham, Head of Streetscene, gave a presentation setting out the agenda, the aims of the event, current interventions in the area, and listed the ideas for future interventions discussed/raised at the previous event.

As with the previous event, participants began by introducing themselves to the rest of the table, sharing what street they lived on and how they used Richmond Road. They were then

given up to 35 minutes to discuss each question and were asked to agree and report back which two interventions from the previous session could be taken forward.

Facilitators were asked to reiterate the ideas and outline what these meant in practice and provide any further explanatory details.

Question 1: What are the pros and cons of the key ideas raised for Richmond Road from the first workshop?

Question 2: Given the pros and cons discussed, look specifically at the two interventions you would want to take forward.

Session Feedback: Each table voted on the ideas they discussed in Q2 and presents the most popular idea and breakdown of the vote back to the room

Feedback Analysis

This section captures and provides an analysis of the six table discussions. In order to process the qualitative data, the report writer has reviewed the notes from each table and identified common themes and comments that run through the participants' conversations.

It should be noted that not every table discussed each option, with some tables deciding to focus on either the positives or the negatives of each intervention.

What are the pros and cons of the key ideas raised for Richmond Road from the first workshop?

Introduce intervention off Kingsland, Queensbridge and Englefield Roads such as with restrictions/banned turns

Across the tables, participants discussed the positives of this intervention as a means of reducing the level of through traffic and stopping cars speeding down residential roads. It was also thought that this intervention could reduce the amount of larger vehicles using Richmond Road and would force them onto other more appropriate routes, such as Graham Road.

The participants wanted to see other types of interventions within this option were also discussed such as one way in/one way out routes for residents and speed control measures.

Discussions across some of the tables focused on how similar interventions have been used elsewhere and have been effective in reducing traffic levels. However, there was concern with this intervention and participants wanted to see a wider area treatment with other mitigating measures before banned turns were implemented. Largely, concerns about this approach were focused on displaced traffic and the effects this could have on the wider area. These comments also focused on air quality and traffic displacement onto Graham Road that could affect the bus routes/makes journeys longer.

A number of participants raised concerns with width restrictions for delivery vans, emergency

vehicles, etc.

Introduce measures similar to Waltham Forest strategic closures to limit rat-running traffic

Five of the six tables were positive towards this option, with participants believing it to be an ambitious traffic scheme that could be tailored for the area. Participants quoted studies that show more people walking as a result of the Walthamstow scheme which would benefit Hackney and improve air quality as a result of less traffic overall. Participants discussed that this option could be incorporated with other options, e.g. priority movements to make the scheme more workable. Participants particularly liked this option as it was easily communicated with tangible evidence from the Walthamstow scheme.

That said, many of the tables thought they needed to better understand what the 'Waltham Forest' approach actually means for Richmond Road as, comparatively, it is a smaller, more residential area. Questions were also raised across the tables that such a scheme would need to be an 'area wide' proposal otherwise it will only have a localised effect and shift the problem elsewhere onto the smaller, more residential roads.

Priority movements in Richmond Road similar to that of Lansdowne Drive

All six tables discussed this option, with most participants agreeing that priority movement interventions could be effective in slowing down traffic. Two tables specifically identified how the introduction of a bus gate had been successfully implemented in Lansdowne Drive.

However, there was skepticism across the tables that discussed this option as having little impact other than displacing traffic elsewhere. Participants quoted issues arising from the Lansdowne Drive as causing more traffic on Hackney Road and Dalston Lane.

Participants also raised concerns that priority movements could cause intermittent acceleration/speeding between priority points and may increase air pollution when traffic stacks up during rush hour. A number of participants shared anecdotal evidence about issues relating to lorries and larger vehicles getting through narrow points and causing major traffic problems.

Road pricing or banning non-local through traffic but allowing local traffic

Where discussed, participants were in favour of this option as a '*tried and tested*' model for traffic management which has been effective in other parts of London. That said, many raised concerns that implementing the option at a localised level would be impractical and would prefer to see something rolled out across the borough to reduce overall levels of traffic.

Improve existing crossing points for cyclists and pedestrians

Five of the seven tables reviewed this option, considering it a simple intervention that would improve safety for residents, especially those with children. Specifically, participants noted that crossing at Eleanor Road would be the most effective intervention, however, there was a consensus that the overall impact of this option would be minimal and not resolve other issues along Richmond Road.

Sync traffic lights

Three tables discussed this option. Participants discussed how it could potentially create easier flows of traffic and less pollution by decreasing stop/start times on the road, although they identified that it may impact negatively on traffic issues on Mare Street.

The group considered this would only lead to small gains locally and is unlikely to deal with wider traffic issues.

Richmond Road becomes a one-way street, change directions at different times of the day

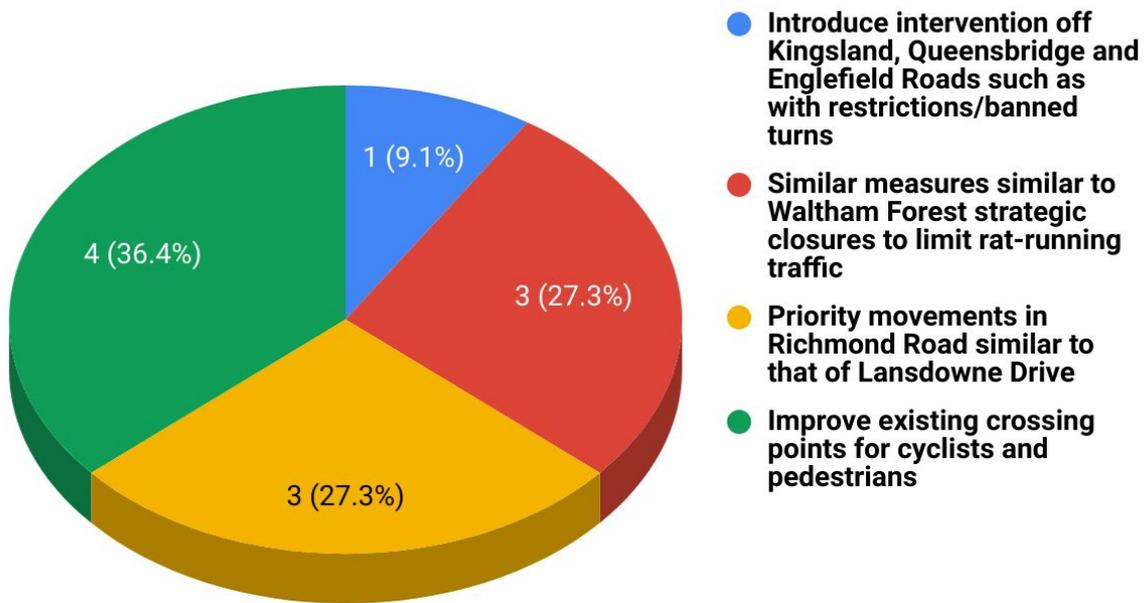
Across the tables, participants saw this proposal largely as an unworkable option with little benefits for all concerned.

2. Given the pros and cons discussed, look specifically at the two interventions you would want to take forward.

At the end of the session, each table was asked to vote on two options to take forward for further consideration.

Three options - Road pricing, one way traffic measures and syncing of traffic lights - did not receive any votes. One table (table 2) also voted for a further option - to introduce more quick wins such as introducing planters in car parking spaces to create chicanes.

The below chart represents this voting.



3. Next steps

This report will be issued to all those who signed up to attend the event and other interested parties. The next workshop will present our final ideas for the best workable interventions for Richmond Road before a concept design is drawn up by Streetscene officers for a non-statutory public consultation.