

Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forum response to Dartmouth Park Healthy Neighbourhood scheme

In principle, KTNF supports the idea of healthy streets with easier use of public transport, cycling and walking along with increased street furniture.

Engagement

However, KTNF believes the engagement period for this large area has been too short and in the middle of the key July and August holidays. The workshops were oversubscribed and left those who couldn't attend in the dark. The plans are complex and several people in the KTNF area say they can't understand them. Could we advise in the next consultation that workshop places are made available to everyone who wants to attend.

Lack of relevant data

There is no analysis of predicted traffic flows in the proposals, and we suggest that the three councils (including Haringey which is affected but seemingly not involved) all contribute to a more detailed study - as suggested by the Highgate Society. This would give an indication of how much congestion and pollution would be generated as a result of the plans (currently not available – and this could factor in future developments which will have a big impact on traffic flows, see below).

Studies are needed on timed restrictions regarding rush hour through-traffic and origin and destination data to assess external through-traffic.

Also, the proposed changes could be trialled in stages to assess how they stand up in real life conditions.

Camden Pedestrianisation and Murphy and Film Quarter

The effect of the Camden pedestrianisation plans will likely increase traffic flows in both Highgate and Fortress Roads which are both set to become narrower and this appears not to have been factored in.

Given it is now likely to be easier to obtain planning permission for homes following the proposed revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework, the plans need to answer the question: what will be the effect of years of construction activity at the Murphy site?

Coupled with this there are likely to be years of increased construction traffic activity generated by the Camden Film Quarter. This needs to be factored in before plans are finalised. Add to this the potential impact of traffic serving up to 1800 new homes and commercial space.

Also plans need to accommodate maintenance and services disruption, to avoid the problems encountered with the recent bridge reinforcement.

Pushing the Chetwynd Road problem further south

Residents in the lower red triangle – particularly in Lady Somerset, Burghley and Oakford roads -- will find it increasingly difficult to drive out of the area – with the only route to Fortress Road – queuing to get into the increasingly congested Highgate Road and to drive right around through Fortress Walk.

In relation to this, some of the proposed routes in the LTN will double journey times – and another argument to produce a more detailed study prior to finalising the plans. One solution would be camera enforced traffic filters which could allow resident permit holders to leave the area at the junction of Burghley Road to Dartmouth Park Hill. Given the westbound flow along Burghley Road is retained, then a speed limit needs to be imposed to stop speeding in this section of the road which has happened frequently in the past.

There is a general consensus in the red triangle area that the east and west cut-through problems of Chetwynd Road have been pushed further south.

As the Highgate Society points out, instead of co-design, it is one area which is affected, pitted against another area, each fighting their own corners.

Healthy Streets?

Given the likely traffic jams on Highgate Road and Fortress Road, and five schools in the area – will the plans create healthy streets? In relation to healthy streets – why is this initiative not coupled with incentivising electric cars, to reduce air pollution and noise. Also, more details could be outlined in the plans for street trees and benches as per the forthcoming Manual for Streets.

Parking

The new bus and cycle lanes on Fortress and Highgate Road will mean the post 6.30pm and weekend yellow-line parking will be removed, and Oakford, Burghley and Lady Somerset roads will become a large non-resident parking area. This will also affect local shops, retail outlets, pubs and restaurants negatively.

Thanks

Kentish Town Neighbourhood Forum