

School Streets Expansion Programme (Phase 3) – Statement of Reasons

Background

The Lambeth Labour Party Manifesto set out an ambition to promote more School Street schemes and states: “We will also provide support to make the journey to school safer such as more School Streets”.

This proposal aligns with the Lambeth Council Transport Strategy guiding principles to make the borough’s transport networks safe, efficient, inclusive, sustainable, and healthy. One of the guiding policies in the Transport Strategy, as listed under the heading ‘Active and Safe’ is summarised; thus, “focus on people rather than traffic and enable people to travel safely and live healthier, more enjoyable lives”. The implementation of “school road closures” (‘School Streets’ - the policy underpinning the proposal in this report), is recommended within the Strategy under the ‘Active and Safe’ heading as a means of enabling, “walking and cycling to school, particularly where car use is high, to reduce motor traffic, tackle health issues and improve air quality.”

The proposal also aligns with Lambeth’s Climate Action Plan which sets out a vision and 20 goals for our borough to become net zero compatible and climate resilient by 2030. The Air Quality goal seeks to “break the association between inner-London living and poor air quality” and encourages residents to leave the car at home.

There are currently 24 School Streets in Lambeth and a suitability report has been used to identify 32 new School Street schemes that have been demonstrated as viable.

In Phase 3, the five new School Streets will be on Studley Road (Allen Edwards); Mountearl Gardens and Mount Nod Road (Dunraven Primary / Livity School); Woodfield Rd and Dingley Lane (Henry Cavendish); Minet Rd (Loughborough); Mandrell Rd, Strathleven Rd, Lambert Rd (Sudbourne).

School street exemptions are available to residents, businesses, and Blue Badge holders who live/work within a school street or require access to the school during its hours of operation.

Objectives

The new School Streets proposal aims to deliver the following improvements:

- reduce road danger and create a safer and more pleasant environment around each school;
- discourage travelling to school by car in cases where alternative means of travel are available;
- encourage walking, scooting, and cycling to school, thereby achieving positive health outcomes for the school community; and,
- reduce children’s exposure to air pollution as well as reducing the levels of air pollution in the vicinity of the school. This is because children are sensitive receptors and at a heightened risk of negative health outcomes due to exposure to air pollution.

Use of Experiment Order

The scheme will be introduced by means of an Experimental Traffic Order (ETO) and will involve the introduction of timed pedestrian and cycle zones, with exemptions, on streets outside of school gates and occasionally on streets in close proximity to school gates.

The aim to deter through traffic (whilst retaining access for residents, business and blue badge holders who need access to the street) and encouraging modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport.

The decision to use an ETO allows for the impact of the School Street to be measured against the schemes objective and changes to be made if considered necessary.

Measures of Success

1. A reduction in the level of vehicle traffic that passes in front of the school gates
2. Improvement in the current perception of danger and discomfort and improved air quality.
3. Modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport by children of the school.