

Draft Mayor's Transport Strategy 2017

London Borough of Barnet: Main Themes Summary Discussion Paper

Introduction

The draft Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) 2017 document seeks to create a step-change in the way people move around London as a whole, with the focus being on policy change rather than on hard measures. The document focuses heavily on reducing car-use, and the reasons for this in relation to improving health and facilitating growth are strongly argued. The document is currently out for consultation and London boroughs are invited to comment and respond.

This strategy is the third MTS, and will be published during a period where the Council is also about to begin the development of its own long term Transport Strategy. Alongside this, the Council is already working on key sustainable and inclusive travel initiatives, including improving local electric vehicle charging infrastructure and expanding the availability of car club services. This progress and the proposals, policies and strategic direction of the final MTS will be important considerations for the development of the Council's own strategy. Moreover, the MTS requires boroughs to provide traffic reduction strategies to meet targets, and Transport for London (TfL) will monitor progress through the Local Implementation Plan (LIP) process. For these reasons, it is vital that the Council's response to the draft MTS consultation clearly outlines those aspects of the strategy it welcomes, and those the Council feels require further clarification and reconsideration.

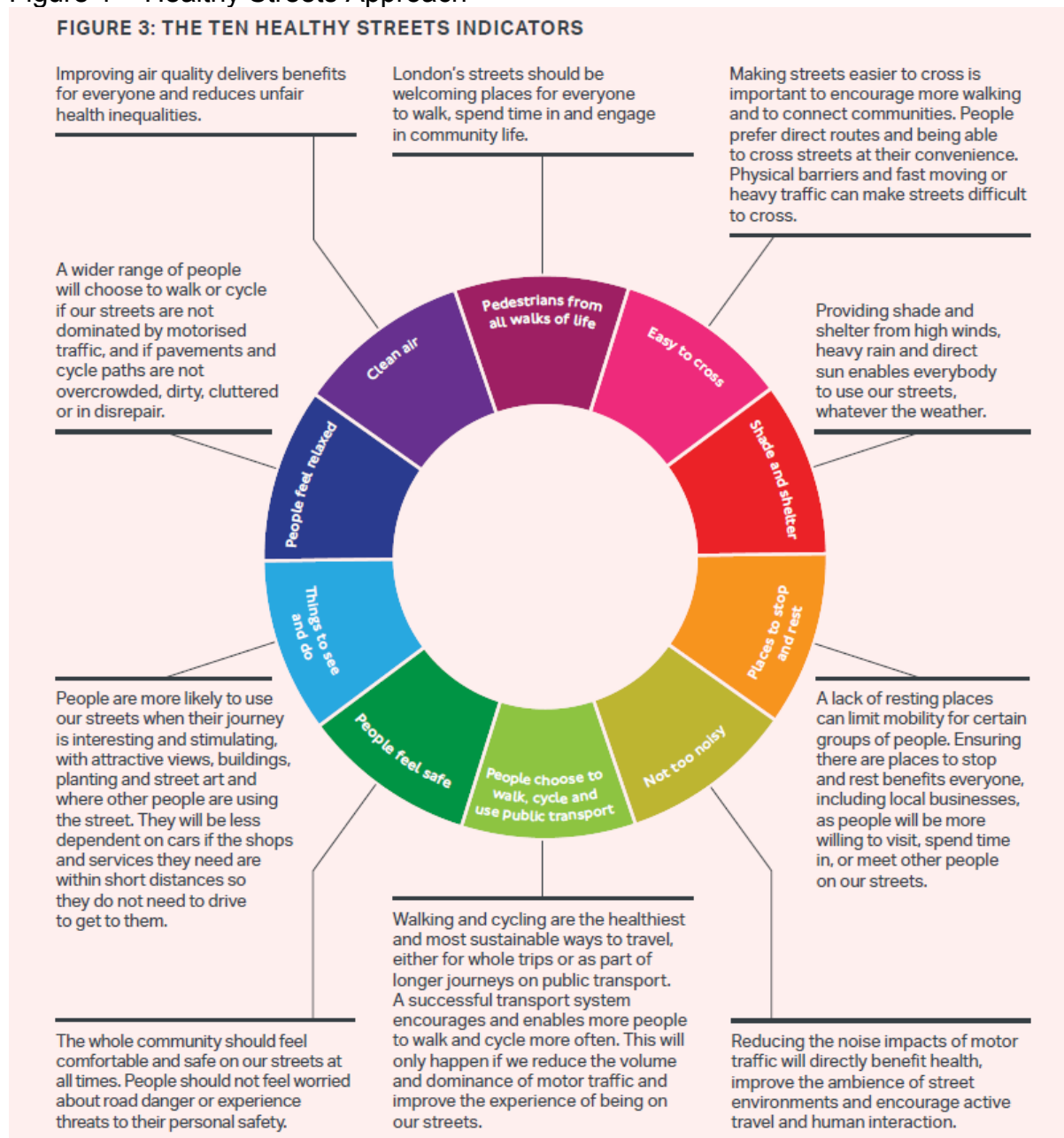
Environment Committee is invited to discuss the key areas for consideration, as they relate to the Council's MTS consultation response. A full response will be presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 10th October 2017 for agreement ahead of submission to the Mayor's Office. Outlined below are the key areas for consideration for Barnet as the Council prepares its full response alongside some initial observations from the Long Term Transport Strategy Member Steering Group and Environment Officers.

Key areas for consideration

Healthy Streets

The draft MTS emphasises heavily the new Healthy Streets Approach for future transport schemes. The Healthy Streets Approach is central to the document, and is intended to make London a healthier, more sustainable, safer, more connected and more successful city. There are 10 Healthy Streets indicators, which are outlined in the following figure.

Figure 1 – Healthy Streets Approach



Good performance and improvements against each indicator means streets are appealing places to walk, cycle and spend time. Throughout the draft MTS, it is demonstrated how the Healthy Streets Approach is to be incorporated into all levels of policy making and delivery, and inform the design of street environments and networks, the public transport experience, and future development and regeneration schemes.

The Healthy Streets Approach demonstrates positive and ambitious thinking from a public health perspective. It is also of immediate significance to London boroughs, as all schemes seeking LIP funding should demonstrate that they meet the Healthy

Streets Approach. The Healthy Streets Approach is to be embedded into the upcoming London Plan. It is therefore essential that the Council has a clear impression of how the Healthy Streets Approach will shape local delivery, planning and development. However, to achieve this, Barnet needs more guidance than is otherwise provided in the draft MTS from the Mayor and TfL on what the Healthy Streets Approach looks like in day to day practice and how it can be delivered. It is also worth noting that Barnet is a diverse borough with differing streetscapes and areas of dense and sparse housing settlement. Therefore, the Healthy Streets approach is unlikely to become a “one size fits all” approach for Barnet and will instead need to be interpreted locally so that it is appropriate for specific environments in the borough.

Transport Mode Share

The draft MTS is explicit in that “the success of London’s future transport system relies on reducing Londoner’s dependency on cars in favour of walking, cycling and public transport use (p. 17).” Therefore, the headline aim within the draft MTS is that, by 2041, 80% of Londoner’s trips are to be made on foot, by cycle or public transport. The realisation of this aim will help reduce health and economic inequalities across London.

However, this target is arguably somewhat misleading and obscures the task at hand, particularly for a largely outer London borough like Barnet. Data included in the draft MTS (p. 277, figure 57) show that journeys within both central and inner London already meet or exceed the 80% target. All journeys between central and inner London, central and outer London, and central London and outside of London, also exceed the 80% target. The key areas for trips that require improvement to meet this target are only those within outer London, between inner and outer London, and between either outer or inner London to outside of London. In fact, by 2041, according to the draft MTS, trips within outer London and between outer London and outside of London will still not meet the 80% target. The headline target in the draft MTS is one that has already been broadly achieved in inner and central London, and the reduction of car dependency and a shift to walking, cycling and public transport remains a more pressing challenge for outer London and boroughs like Barnet. The final MTS should better reflect this and adopt headline targets for outer London trips, and for travel between inner and outer London, as well as outer London and outside of London.

Furthermore, it could be argued that this target of 80% is perhaps unachievable in Barnet without corresponding improvements in public transport for orbital travel routes for which some would argue the private car is currently the only viable means of transport.

Education

The Borough has large numbers of diverse schools, particularly faith schools with extended catchment areas – school travel planning doesn't adequately tackle the challenges in this situation and further measures may be needed. The final MTS should provide more of a focus on the needs of educational based trips.

The draft MTS (proposal 25, p. 91) makes a clear commitment to tackling air pollution hotspots, including those around schools by using the Mayor's Air Quality Fund and other funding. It was in fact noted at Full Council on April 4th 2017 that a study commissioned by the Mayor found the air around 15 Barnet schools to be polluted with NO₂ above the legal limit of 40 µg/m³. However, all schools but one were sited either on or around five TfL administered roads. Barnet should remind both TfL and the Mayor of this fact.

Traffic Reduction, Car Use and Parking Restraint

The draft MTS plans for a 15% reduction in car mode share for journeys within outer London including Barnet by 2041. The table below summaries the proposals in terms of car mode share %:

	Outside of London - Outer London	Within Outer London	Outer London - Inner London
2015	80% current	40% current	30% current
2041	70% proposed	25% proposed	10% proposed
Reduction %	-10%	-15%	-20%

Although there is no new London wide parking standard set out in the document it is clear that the next version of the London Plan due out for consultation November / December 2017 will seek to again tighten parking policy across London, as a result of the information and objectives presented within the draft MTS.

The London Borough of Barnet has its own parking standards which represent higher provision of parking than the existing London Plan. These standards are currently being reviewed, and the revised standards are expected to be available for discussion and adoption during October / November 2017. It is likely that the next iteration of the London Plan will further reduce parking standards for Outer London, which may not align with the Council's intentions.

The ambitions in the draft MTS in relation to reduced car use are only realistically deliverable in the context of introducing road user charging, yet the draft document does not provide enough explicit detail into the likely introduction of such a scheme. The draft MTS (proposals 19 and 21, p. 83) states that: "The Mayor will give consideration to the development of the next generation of road user charging systems", and that "TfL will work with those boroughs who wish to develop

appropriate traffic demand management measures, for example local (TfL or borough) road user charging or workplace parking levy scheme.” However, these proposals need greater clarification given the fundamental role this will need to play in delivery. The evidence base for the MTS requires road user charging to be introduced in order to achieve the mode shift that will enable the target of 80 per cent of all trips by 2041 to be made by walking, cycling or public transport. In terms of delivery, the Implementation Plan (pp. 271-275) schedules “Work with boroughs to develop traffic reduction strategies, including traffic reduction strategies” to run over the 2017-2020 and 2020-2030 periods. However, road user charging is not mentioned specifically in the Implementation Plan. Moreover, there is no clarity as to whether TfL will seek to introduce road user charging on the Transport for London Road Network (TLRN).

This relates to another a key point. Barnet does not have direct control of key through routes in the borough, such as the A1, M1, A41, and A406, and that Barnet must be given assurance that the final MTS will place adequate responsibility on TfL and other bodies to help contribute to car reduction targets on their networks in Barnet. These are key strategic routes that would benefit from greater consideration in the final MTS. Equally, the origins and destinations of traffic on these routes are not necessarily within Barnet and, while the draft MTS correctly recognises that borough traffic reduction strategies enable different approaches to reducing vehicle demand to operate in different parts of London (pp. 83-85), the final MTS must also acknowledge that traffic reduction strategies will require cross-borough collaboration.

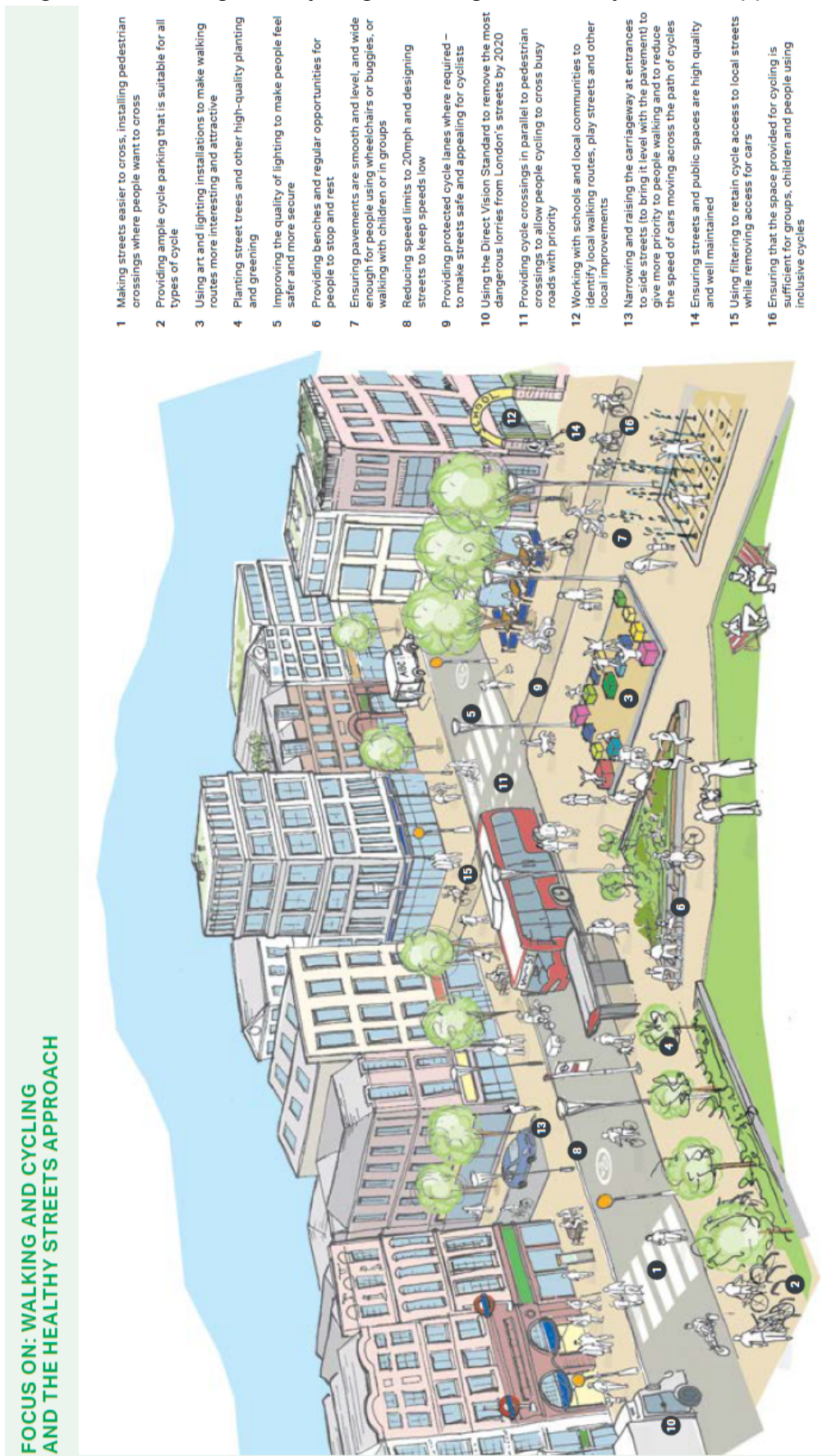
Overall, the final MTS must instigate a process by which TfL takes a greater lead on policy changes to reduce car usage, such as road pricing strategies, in consultation with London Boroughs. The final MTS will require a more detailed outline of its intentions and delivery plan for the introduction of road user charging.

Walking and Cycling (Active Travel)

The draft MTS envisages London as a city where people choose to walk and cycle. Barnet has historically seen low levels of walking and cycling recorded in the borough and needs to encourage more residents to undertake more active travel. At last September’s Environment Committee, the Committee resolved, amongst other items, that a Cycling Strategy for Barnet should be formulated as part of the overall Transport Strategy for the Borough and agreed to further steps to install more cycle infrastructure in Barnet.

The application of the Healthy Streets Approach to the design and management of street environments intends to make cycling and walking more attractive, safer and more accessible. The draft MTS goes to a degree of detail to demonstrate what such a street environment might look like in the figure on the following page.

Figure 2 - Walking and Cycling following the Healthy Streets Approach



Considering the range of urban, sub-urban and semi-rural settings within Barnet, it is difficult to picture how such an approach would work in practice across the whole of Barnet. Barnet would benefit if the final MTS outlined in greater detail what sort of street environments best encourage higher levels of active travel in various urban settings, and the sort of cycle infrastructure and cycle lane engineering solutions that are best suited.

As Barnet currently has fewer on-road cycle lanes, but a good number of routes available to cyclists through parks and signed links on quieter roads, the final MTS should consider in greater detail the potential of green and open spaces to help deliver attractive and accessible cycle routes, in addition to town centres and residential streets. Barnet would also benefit from hearing further detail in the final MTS about what cycle improvements are to be expected on TfL roads.

The draft MTS proposes (Proposal 3, p. 51) the expansion and improvement of cycle networks in London so that 70% of Londoners will live within 400 metres of a high-quality and safe cycle route by 2041. However, the proposed new cycle routes (p. 53) reinforce the current radial bias of London's transport system, despite it being well-recognised that London lacks good orbital routes that offer an alternative to car travel. This is most certainly the case in Barnet. It is of greater benefit to Barnet if the future cycle network in 2041 covers far more of outer London and introduces more orbital routes. Otherwise trips by car will remain the primary mode of transport for journeys between Barnet's town centres, and the borough will struggle to best contribute to overall car reduction targets.

The draft MTS also proposes (Proposal 6, p. 57) to increase the use of TfL's Cycle Hire Scheme as well as future models of cycle hire (dockless bikes etc.). So far, such schemes have largely benefited inner and central boroughs, and are yet to expand to or see widespread adoption in Barnet. The final MTS could do more to advocate the uptake of such schemes in outer London specifically.

Public Transport

London's public transport system is an essential part of the Healthy Streets Approach, as it gives people alternatives to car use, and offers an affordable and efficient option for journeys that are either impractical or too long to walk or cycle. By applying the Healthy Streets Approach, the draft MTS intends to create an attractive whole journey experience on public transport.

To an extent, the draft MTS recognises the public transport challenges facing outer London, in particular the need for more reliable, accessible, affordable and demand-responsive bus services. The commitment to extending the Hopper fare to include unlimited bus and tram journeys within the hour (p. 121) is positive for outer London and Barnet, as bus remains the only way to make certain journeys on public transport. Research into travel affordability by London Councils has already

highlighted the reliance on buses in outer London, particularly amongst low-paid Londoners working in the region. From this perspective, the commitment by the Mayor to freeze fares across the TfL operated transport network and extension of the Hopper fare by the end of 2018 is also welcome.

However, the draft MTS neglects the specific spatial challenges facing outer London and Barnet in particular. Bus transport is the only real option for most orbital public transport journeys in this part of outer London and too many destinations in adjacent counties. Barnet remains underserved by orbital public transport routes and without them the car will remain the most reliable and effective means of travelling across the Borough and between town centres. Proposal 54d (p. 137) seeks to improve bus priority on key radial routes. Whilst this is important, rapid orbital bus routes are desperately needed in Barnet, with improved frequencies and capacities. Greater prioritisation of such routes is necessary.

The draft MTS proposes the devolution from the Department for Transport to the Mayor/TfL of local stopping rail services in London (proposal 61, p. 157), in hope of offering improved frequencies, journey times and interchange opportunities. The assumed geographic scope that is presented in the draft MTS (p. 159) incorporates the section of the Great Northern rail line to Welwyn Garden City within Greater London as a prospective London Overground service. This would include New Southgate, Oakleigh Park and New Barnet stations,

Corridors and Scale of Growth

Barnet has some significant areas of growth, aiming for 28,000 new homes, which are likely to put additional pressure on available highway space. The table below illustrates Barnet's housing growth in terms of the increasing number of households in the period 2011-2039.

2011 Census	2015	2021	2031	2039
136,000	150,000	162,000	181,000	189,000

The table below illustrates Barnet's population growth

2011 Census	2015	2021	2031	2039
356,000	393,000	415,000	448,000	469,000

At Environment Committee on July 11th 2016, the report titled "*Moving Around Barnet – a Direction of Travel*" identified the redevelopment and regeneration projects in Colindale, Brent Cross Cricklewood, West Hendon, Mill Hill East and Stonegrove/Spur Road Estate, as key sites where housing growth must be considered alongside future transport development. The draft MTS places considerable emphasis on ensuring such projects incorporate the Healthy Streets Approach. In addition, there is a central assumption within the draft MTS that, with

the growth of high-density development in the capital, people will become less reliant on cars for their journeys and the Healthy Streets Approach will plan for a more active lifestyle within an increasingly compact environment. Increasing mode share within these developments by walking, cycling and public transport can assist in avoiding gridlock on a highway network which is already under stress from volumes of vehicular traffic. The Council will further explore this in the development of its own transport strategy.

Over the coming decades, this pattern of development will take place in considerable parts of Barnet; however, much of the borough is likely to remain low-density, particularly within the central and northern reaches of the borough. The draft MTS is clear that it wants to unlock further growth potential and intensification through new rail links, including Crossrail 2, the Bakerloo line extension, the Elizabeth line extension, and expansion of the London Overground network through the devolution of suburban rail services. Within the draft MTS, there are two particular rail schemes of significance for Barnet that might unlock further growth potential in the Borough. However, both schemes need firmer commitment and clarification from the Mayor in the final MTS.

1) London Overground extension from Old Oak to Cricklewood / Brent Cross (Dudding Hill Railway Line)

This is included in the draft MTS as a possible route to be reopened, and commits the Mayor, TfL and relevant London boroughs to involvement in a feasibility study for the scheme (proposal 83, p. 209), however the core route is seen as Hounslow to Old Oak with a possible section to Cricklewood considered as requiring greater justification. The MTS also includes a map (p. 239) detailing a potential London Overground extension from Old Oak to Brent Cross. Barnet's agenda is for this route to be reopened to support sustainable and convenient orbital movements and town centre growth, and reduce demand on the North Circular.

At present, options for a route to Cricklewood or northwards via Brent Cross into the core of the borough are being tested for initial feasibility by the West London Alliance, and the commitment towards this scheme from the Mayor should be tightened.

2) Crossrail 2 (New Southgate branch)

The inclusion of New Southgate station in the draft MTS as a station on Crossrail 2 is positive for Barnet. It would entail an extended branch running between New Southgate and Seven Sisters stations, running via either Wood Green, or Alexandra Palace and Turnpike Lane. Crossrail 2 can play a key role in unlocking further growth in eastern Barnet and support reduced car-dependency development within certain ward areas of Barnet.

However, the draft MTS and Implementation Plan insufficiently clarify the phases by which branches such as New Southgate to Seven Sisters are to be expected as part of the overall delivery of Crossrail 2. The draft MTS (p.149) mentions the unequivocal endorsement of Crossrail 2 by the National Infrastructure Commission in 2016, but fails to mention that a report by the Commission in the same year titled “*Transport for a world city*” stated that the Commission believed the delivery of the New Southgate to Seven Sister branch should be deferred to a later phase, considering the high costs of the proposals. While the Council recognises the need for effective and responsible financial management of Crossrail 2, it is of great benefit to Barnet if the New Southgate extension is not deferred. At the very least, the final MTS should give greater indication as to the phases and dates by which specific parts of Crossrail 2 are expected to be delivered. The Council would also welcome a commitment from the Mayor and TfL to retain the New Southgate to Seven Sisters branch in the earliest possible phase of Crossrail 2 delivery.

The draft MTS only briefly mentions the importance of the Thameslink Programme in also driving growth in London. The Brent Cross Cricklewood development is Barnet’s most significant growth and regeneration programme and is underpinned by the construction of a new Thameslink railway station, delivered by the Council with Network Rail, which will link the Brent Cross Cricklewood development to King’s Cross St Pancras in under 15 minutes. However, this is largely overlooked within the draft MTS when compared with other new rail projects. The Council should advocate for greater emphasis of this project within the final MTS.

Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ)

The draft MTS sets out proposals for the extension of the ULEZ (central London ULEZ standards and charges in 2019 applying to all vehicles; the zone would be expanded London-wide for heavy vehicles and to inner London for all other vehicles except taxis) by 2021. It identifies that a boundary for the Inner London ULEZ set just within, but not including, the North and South Circular roads is being explored at the moment.

In common with other London boroughs and areas near to the busy roads of outer London, Barnet continues to exceed national targets for air pollution. According to GLA ULEZ evidence, in 2025 there will be a 31% predicted reduction in NOx emissions in Barnet if all of Barnet is in the ULEZ, but if only the area below the North Circular is in the ULEZ there will be only an 8% decrease in NOx emissions by 2025.

If the Inner London ULEZ does not include the North Circular in Barnet, there is also a risk that traffic avoiding paying to enter the ULEZ will cluster on the North Circular, contributing further to what is already a major polluting road in the borough.

If Barnet were to advocate to the Mayor the full expansion of the ULEZ to cover the whole of the Borough, it must also consider the wider economic impact on residents. The ULEZ proposes a delay in charging residents' and businesses within the ULEZ charging area for a number of years before it will apply to all vehicles. This can assist in supporting the transition from older more polluting cars, to those which meet with the ULEZ criteria. Should the ULEZ be extended to include the whole of Barnet, a significant period of transitional relief provided for all borough residents is necessary.

Orbital Movements

Orbital routes are not sufficiently identified, discussed or tackled in the document, and more emphasis is needed as to how these will contribute towards a significant mode transfer, and what support and initiatives will be required to deliver the improvements. In the draft MTS, the vision for Outer London, as outlined on p. 31, makes no reference to orbital routes.

In Barnet, cars remain the principal mode by which people make orbital journeys. Improving orbital links for alternative modes of transport is necessary if Barnet is to realistically fulfil the headline targets for mode share in the draft MTS. Orbital connectivity also has a deep impact on economic growth and the overall success of the Borough's many town centres. As mentioned earlier, although there is emphasis on new bus priority in the draft MTS, this is only really considered radially in and out of London rather than orbitally east-west around London. There are also no proposals for any orbital rail links going through Barnet (the potential Crossrail 2 and London Overground extensions will only provide orbital links heading both east and west out of Barnet). Barnet needs to seek a stronger and more detailed commitment from the Mayor to improve orbital transport links.

If possible orbital rail links such as a Duding Hill Line London Overground extension into Barnet via Brent Cross or Cricklewood were approved or considered further, the Council believes TfL and the Mayor should also explore the fare model behind these services to ensure they are financially sustainable and equitable. In the north-sub region and Barnet in particular, there is a risk that orbital rail services will cross zone boundaries less frequently, resulting in lower fare charges when compared to radial rail journeys of equivalent distances.

Injury Accidents

In Barnet, the number of collisions involving vulnerable road users is among the highest level in London. Barnet, in absolute numbers, also has the highest number of Killed and Seriously Injured collisions in London. Barnet is a TfL priority borough, with initiatives such as community speedwatch in place.

The MTS proposes a zero-accident environment from 2041 onwards for serious and fatal accidents. With the challenges Barnet faces, this is a most welcome ambition. However, the practicality of this target is questionable. The draft MTS also provides

insufficient direct support to boroughs to help realise this target, and lacks specific targets over time for the period between 2017/18 and 2041.

The Healthy Streets Approach encourages reducing speed limits to 20mph and designing streets to keep speeds low. The Council would welcome a commitment from the Mayor to support more 20mph speed limits in Barnet in locations where residents think they are needed.

Interaction with areas outside of London

There is minimal reference in the draft MTS about how London should connect and integrate transport with neighbouring counties beyond Greater London. This is of particular relevance for Barnet, as the Borough has considerable interplay with the Hertfordshire region and Hertfordshire County Councils Highways and Transportation function.

Funding

The draft MTS recognises that achieving a transport system that meets London's needs and can successfully deliver the policies and proposals of the strategy requires additional funding that is both stable and secure (p. 265). This, according to the draft MTS, necessitates a new approach to funding and delivering the transport network, and highlights road user charging, land value capture and greater devolution of financial powers as possible measures. More detail in the final MTS on when new approaches might be introduced and how they will enable the Mayor, TfL and boroughs to better fund infrastructure projects would be beneficial.

Conclusion

A clear and repeated theme has emerged within the Council's assessment of the draft MTS; the strategy does not adequately distinguish the specific character and needs of outer London and Barnet in particular. This is most evident in the lack of considerable proposals and a detailed ambition to radically enhance orbital connectivity. The Council should advocate for orbital improvements to become a greater priority in the final document.

In addition, the Implementation Plan in the draft MTS remains too broad, and divides the delivery of the strategy into three time periods: 2017-2020, 2020-2030, and 2030-2041. It is of greater value, and more practical, if the final MTS also provided greater detail into the immediate delivery of the strategy over the following 5, 10 and 15 years. The Council would welcome more medium and short term targets.