**Shoreditch to Bethnal Green – Response to Liveable Streets Proposal**

**Suggested principles for approach to street improvements:**

* Improve air quality on all streets;
* Reduce street noise, particularly at night;
* Reduce through-traffic movements;
* Reduce opportunities for anti-social behaviour (esp. drug-dealing and street drinking);
* Improve quality of streets for pedestrians and cyclists;
* Improve safety of streets for pedestrians and cyclists;
* Improve quality of public realm generally;
* Support local businesses and markets to operate efficiently.

**Likely negative impacts:**

* Significant inconvenience for local residents’ and businesses’ vehicle movements, including: business deliveries, market services, taxi drop-off/pick-up, disabled/elderly drop-off/pick-up, emergency services;
* Increased driving distances for residents/businesses;
* Worsening air quality and noise issues on adjacent major routes.

A certain amount of the negative impacts (particularly ‘inconvenience’) for local people is accepted in the wider context (climate change, obesity epidemic, air quality etc). People using vehicles will accept less ‘vehicle efficiency’ in the interests of sustainable improvements to the environment, however a balance needs to be sought and the proposal thus far seems out of balance in terms of benefits/costs to local people and businesses.

The accompanying drawings include:

1. An Analysis Plan looking at the current traffic issues in the area;
2. A proposed Strategic Changes Plan proposing a different approach to meeting the principles above.
3. A Concept Plan for Arnold Circus specifically suggesting an alternative approach which meets more of the needs of local residents and businesses.

**Drawing 1: Analysis Plan**

This plan identifies the major issues (largely traffic-related) as follows:

* East/West through traffic on Columbia/Gosset/Old Bethnal Green Rds;
* North/South through traffic on Warner Pl/Squirries St;
* North/South through traffic on Ravenscroft/Columbia/Virginia/Swanfield St/Redchurch Sts (mostly from north);
* North/South through traffic Calvert Ave/Boundary/Redchurch Sts;
* Traffic conflict ‘knot’ at Warner/Squirries/Gosset/Old BG Rd;
* Most schools are located on one or more of the main through-traffic routes;
* Arnold Circus suffers from renewed bus circulation (after removal for several years);
* Anti-social behaviour takes various forms and is located throughout the neighbourhood with an emphasis in the west of the area stretching from Hackney to Brick Lane in the south and along the Columbia Rd area to the north;
* The surrounding streets include good local east/west movement alternatives - along Bethnal Green and Hackney Roads, both/either of which are in close proximity to most of the area;
* The surrounding streets provide very poor alternative north/south movements routes – Cambridge Heath Rd to the east is the only major street carrying all traffic movements, with Shoreditch High St being south only and part of a Hackney gyratory which carries considerable City and wider-origin through traffic;
* The identified neighbourhood is approximately 1.5km from east to west, which

means considerable extra travelling for anyone in the west of reach Cambridge Heath Rd in the east.

**Drawing 2: Strategic Proposal Principles:**

* Remove the major east/west through route along Gosset/Old Bethnal Green Rds past the schools;
* Retain and improve this route as a major pedestrian cycle street with cycle priority at the intersection with Warner Pl/Squirries St;
* Retain north/south movement along Warner Pl/Squirries st with no through access to east or west off this route (this effectively divides the area in two for vehicle movements);
* Retain ‘difficult’ through routes in both sub-areas (see plan for options, details to be worked out in conjunction with affected communities) to serve local residents and businesses;
* Ensure any street blockages can be opened if needed for emergency services;
* Ensure any street blockages restricting market trader access are able to be opened weekly for market use;
* Arnold Circus to have partial vehicle access (see plan), however no bus access (buses to be completely removed from Calvert Ave as per previous arrangements), to enable business access and school access to north and south;
* Redchurch St to be largely pedestrianised, with through routes as shown and potential for shared surface use, weekday mornings for instance, for servicing requirements;
* In principle streets to be closed using small loops rather than cul-de-sacs as these will require turning heads and ‘doubling’ traffic use;
* All proposed street closures to be trialled and tested with local community and users.

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