

MAYOR'S DRAFT TRANSPORT STRATEGY COMMENTS BY LONDON FORUM OF AMENITY AND CIVIC SOCIETIES

Who are we?

The London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies (London Forum) is the umbrella group for some 130 amenity and civic societies across Greater London. We engage with both Government and the Mayor of London on planning, environmental and transport matters, commenting on proposed strategies and policy changes which affect London.

We were founded in 1988, but, through one of our predecessor organisations – the London Amenity and Transport Association – we have been involved in influencing London's transport planning since the early 1970s, counting amongst our successes, the abandoning of the Ringways (1973), the review of accumulated road schemes and road widening lines (1981) and the introduction of the London-wide Night and Weekend Lorry Controls (1981-86). We supported the Central London Congestion Charge and opposed the abolition of the Western Extension (2008).

Mayor's Draft Transport Strategy

We were fortunate in having had a very informative preview from Lucinda Turner in March and a very full presentation for our members from Mike Keegan on 26 June. At that stage our members had not had a chance to read it, but most of the comments were very supportive of the thrust of the strategy and, if anything, either wanted more detail, more specific proposals or felt that the measures described did not go far or fast enough.

A change in direction

The London Forum **strongly welcomes** the draft Transport Strategy. We consider that there has been a long gap since the last Transport Strategy in 2010 and regret that, apart from support for cycling, the last two mayoral terms have failed to address the main transport-related challenges we face: worsening congestion and air quality. We were extremely disappointed by the last mayor's lack of strategic direction and rudderless policies. With some notable exceptions his strategy was aimless, which meant that London drifted or was buffeted by evolving influences.

The new draft Transport Strategy, therefore, marks a major turning point for moving London in the direction of meeting both climate change and air quality concerns, by changing the mode shares of Londoners' trips by increasing walking, cycling and public transport use, whilst reducing the share of total trips by motor vehicles, by 2041 and creating healthy streets. London Forum **strongly supports the new direction of travel.**

Healthy Streets:

We **strongly welcome** the emphasis on Healthy Streets to promote better health, cleaner air and a much better quality local environment. Managing and designing our streets as part of strategy to change radically the modal split in favour of walking,

cycling and public transport will help transform our local environment. It will take very clear aims and strong clear policies, firmly applied and closely monitored, to bring about the change in direction that we need.

London Forum, therefore, **strongly supports** the Mayor's goals and the proposed direction of travel. However, we also **support reducing the need to travel**, which also needs to be tackled, often at the local, neighbourhood level, through improving accessibility to local social infrastructure – shops, primary school, GP surgery and local parks.

Accessibility

Accessibility to facilities, as opposed to mobility, needs to have more emphasis in this strategy and the London Plan – it must emphasise the **need to create or maintain accessible/walkable neighbourhoods. Both this strategy and the London Plan need to facilitate a more inclusive and equitable city by improving access to opportunities (jobs, education, health and leisure) and to essential local services**

We **support** the need to reduce car use by reducing Londoners' dependence on the car through providing attractive and accessible alternatives, including active travel, reducing congestion and air pollution and reducing health inequalities.

Walking and cycling

We **strongly support** proposals improving the pedestrian environment including creating Liveable Neighbourhoods, healthy routes improved accessibility for older and disabled people. (Proposal 1), transforming the walking and cycling environment in Central London, including transforming Oxford Street and Parliament Square, improving cycle routes and promoting new walking routes, and generally making it easier to walk and cycle in London.

Freight and Servicing

We **strongly support** the need to plan a strategic consolidation and distribution networks, **but** this will need to be a proactive strategy (unlike in the last 10 years). (Proposal 15) If this is going to happen, the Mayor may need to take the lead.

Road user charging:

We **strongly support** charging for road use, extension of existing charging areas. (Proposal 18)

Improving air quality

We **strongly support** measures to improve air quality (proposals 22-26) and in particular **welcome the timeline** (Figure 12) for implementing measures to achieve this.

A Good Transport Experience

We **strongly welcome** proposals to improve accessibility to public transport, especially the proposed accessibility implementation plan (Figure 17), especially proposals for step-free access to rail and tube stations.

New Homes and Jobs

We **support** car-free housing in areas with good public transport accessibility (proposal 76)

We **support** growth in areas where growth has resulted in public transport investment – there should be new mode share targets for these locations (Proposal 78)

This list highlights key policies that we support or oppose.

Peter Eversden
Chairman

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Chairman; Planning, Environment and Transport

London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies