



# Healthy School Streets Consultation – Ecole Jeannine Manuel (Bedford Square) Permanent Proposals Consultation Information Sheet



**Proposals to make the trial changes to Bedford Square permanent**





## Making your neighbourhood safer and healthier

The Covid-19 pandemic changed how people in Camden live, travel and work. Many people have spent more time closer to home, making our neighbourhoods more important than ever. We want our streets to **be safe spaces** for you to walk and cycle, **for children to get to and from school safely and healthily**, for **businesses to be able to flourish** and for **you to be breathing cleaner air**. We want to ensure that our streets support in both continuing recovery from the pandemic and by providing a lasting legacy of **greener, safer, healthier travel**, helping us to deliver our wider [Transport Strategy objectives](#).

69% of households in Camden do not own a car, and around 85% of all trips by Camden residents are made on foot, by bike or on public transport. Supporting and encouraging those who can walk and cycle, by creating safer, healthier streets, will also help ensure that there is more space available on public transport and on our roads for those who need it the most.



In line with our [Camden Transport Strategy](#) and [Climate Action Plan](#), and to continue supporting safe, active travel following the pandemic, we have been making changes across Camden as part of our [Safe and Healthy Streets Programme](#).

Healthy School Streets create a safer and healthier environment by temporarily closing roads to motor traffic outside schools during drop-off and pick-up times. This enables more children to walk, cycle or scoot to school, with less air pollution, road danger, congestion, and more space for people to interact. The schemes help to discourage car trips, particularly amongst parents and carers, by providing a safe and inviting space for more walking, cycling, and scooting.

Seventeen Healthy School Street schemes have been rolled out across Camden since March 2020. This brings the total number of [Healthy School Street schemes in the borough](#) to 20, with 27 schools having timed or permanent road closures. The monitoring data that we have collected on these schemes, which can be accessed on our [website](#), has shown that they have had a significant impact on reducing traffic levels outside schools, contributed to improved air quality and are strongly supported by pupils who want us to do more to improve their journey to school.

The information below sets out our proposals to make the current, trial scheme on Bedford Square permanent with a change to the afternoon restriction time as outlined further below.



# About the Ecole Jeannine Manuel Streets Scheme

## Picture of the Ecole Jeannine Manuel School Healthy School Street



The Ecole Jeannine Manuel Healthy School Street scheme consists of a timed road closure on the southern section of Bedford Square outside the school. During the trial, the closure for motor vehicles has been in place for an hour in the morning and an hour and a half in the afternoon to coincide with the opening and closing times of the school, from 8.00am to 9.00am and 3pm to 4.30pm Monday to Friday during school term time only.

In addition to the motor vehicle restriction, two way cycling was also added to the same section of Bedford Square which allows people cycling to travel in both directions on the road whilst keeping motor vehicle traffic travelling one way. This change was designed to improve links for people cycling in the local area and aligns with our [Cycling Action Plan](#) commitment to convert all feasible one-way roads in the Borough to two-way for cycling

We implemented the scheme as a trial in September 2021, under an Experimental Traffic Order which came into force on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021, as part of Phase 4 of our Healthy School Streets programme. The [decision report](#) related to this Experimental Traffic Order (and others) was approved on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021.

This decision report noted that a further consultation, after approximately 12 months of the trial scheme, would take place. During the trial period, the scheme has been monitored and comments from local residents and stakeholders have been received.

This consultation now asks local residents and stakeholders to give their views on whether the scheme should be made permanent after the end of the 18-month trial period. The



proposed permanent scheme would remain unchanged from its trial version apart from a change to the afternoon restriction times to 4pm to 5pm following a request from the school.

## Monitoring information collected before / during the trial

During the trial period of the scheme, we have been collecting monitoring data which can be viewed in detail in the monitoring factsheet provided in the **Related** section at the bottom of this page. Headlines include:

- Bedford Square South experienced significant decreases in average traffic levels, with a 68% decrease during the morning restrictions and 80% decrease during the afternoon restrictions compared with traffic counts taken prior to the installation of the scheme.
- Adeline Place, Bedford Avenue and Bedford Square East all saw increases in traffic levels and this is explored in more detail in the monitoring factsheet below.
- Analysis of average traffic speed data on Bedford Square South and streets outside of the restricted area showed that speeds were under 20mph.
- Levels of cycling increased on Bedford Square South and all sites surveyed except one, with Bedford Square East seeing average increases of over 300 cycles in the morning and over 130 cycles in the afternoon.
- The majority of comments received on the Council's Commonplace survey during the trial were positive about the changes.
- Air quality monitoring data showed that there was a 5.1% decrease in levels of harmful NO<sub>2</sub> recorded outside Ecole Jeannine Manuel when comparing data for February to April 2021 (pre-trial) with data for the same months in 2022 (during trial). Bedford Avenue and Bedford Square North had increases of 0.8% and 5.7% and this is analysed in more detail in the monitoring factsheet.

## What are we now consulting on?

Based on the monitoring data and the feedback received from residents and stakeholders during the trial period, and in line with policies and objectives set out in our Camden Transport Strategy, Climate Action Plan and Clean Air Action Plan, we are now consulting on making the trial changes permanent.

You can view the drawing of the proposed permanent scheme in the **Related** section at the bottom of the consultation webpage.



The Ecole Jeannine Manuel Healthy School Street scheme consists of a timed road closure for motor vehicles on the southern section of Bedford Square during school drop off and pick up times. This is enforced using signage and an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera at the junction with Bedford Square East/Bloomsbury Street. During the trial, the traffic restrictions have been in place between 8.00am – 9.00am and 3pm – 4.30pm, Monday to Friday during school term time only. Following a request from the school, if the scheme is made permanent, the afternoon restriction time would be changed to 4pm – 5pm as this more closely aligns with the end of the school day.

The ANPR cameras only record vehicles travelling into the zone during the hours of operation so if a vehicle is already parked within the restricted area, it can be driven out of the area without incurring a fine. These features are proposed to be retained in the permanent scheme, if approved following consultation.

The following vehicles are exempt from the restrictions:

- Vehicles registered to properties and businesses on the sections of the road with restrictions where exemptions have been agreed with the Council.
- Any vehicle being used for ambulance, fire brigade or policing purposes.
- Refuse collection vehicles.
- Blue Disabled Badge holders that require access, where exemptions have been agreed with the Council.
- Services such as Dial-A-Ride and PlusBus Door to Door.
- Vehicles belonging to parents or carers of pupils of the school that have a disability that prevents them from walking, cycling, or scooting to school, where exemptions have been agreed with the Council.
- Other exemptions agreed with the Council on a case-by-case basis.

Taxis and deliveries will continue to not be exempt, and these should be scheduled outside of the restricted times, or the vehicle should be parked outside of the restricted area and the remainder of the journey carried out on foot. However, exemptions can be applied for in exceptional circumstances, such as when people with mobility issues may need essential taxis during the restricted hours.

## Why your views matter

The previous changes were implemented as a trial under an Experimental Traffic Order for 18 months. We committed to undertaking a public consultation after around 12 months of the trial scheme to seek the views of local residents and stakeholders on making the trial scheme permanent after the 18-month trial period.

Your views are important in providing feedback both on the proposed scheme as a whole and elements of it, and we would therefore welcome your responses on the pages that follow. To view the plans and find out more about the proposals, click on the links in the **Related** section at the bottom of the consultation webpage.



We will be pleased to hear your views on the proposals as well as any alternative suggestions or objections you may have to any aspect of what we are proposing.

## What happens next?



After the consultation, a decision report will be produced and published online via our website. Local residents and stakeholders will be notified of the outcome. The report will consider a broad range of information including consultation responses, feedback received

during the trial period, relevant policies and other data/information including monitoring information collected during the trial period.

All of this information will be considered in making a recommendation in the report about whether, at the end of the trial period, the experimental scheme should be made permanent, modified, or allowed to lapse.