June 2024

To Whom It May Concern

**Re: Kings Heath & Moseley Places For People Phase 2 Designs**

Kings Heath BID’s latest response to the current consultation documents for phase 2 of the Kings Heath & Moseley Places for People (LTN) scheme is largely unchanged from our response to the original consultation in November 2021. This is still available on [our website](https://www.enjoykingsheath.com/blog/kings-heath-ltn-kings-heath-bids-response/) and is set out as an appendix to this document.

In addition to that, we note that our recommendations 9, 15, 20 and 24 have either been addressed, are no longer relevant, or are considered under these updated proposals.

The BID notes, equally, that two and a half years have passed since the original consultation. In that time, “the LTN” has remained the most talked about topic of conversation in Kings Heath and deep divisions and disagreements remain about it. The BID, while neither in favour of nor against these proposals, would reiterate that the time being taken to complete these installations (however they ultimately look) has done nothing to engender community cohesiveness between either businesses, residents or visitors.

And, in addition to our original response, the BID makes the following further observations:

Plan S1\_013: rather than a fixed line of bollards on Silver Street, the BID would prefer to see a hinged (or “coffin”) bollard, to facilitate deliveries to and from the businesses on Balaclava Road.

Plan S1\_014: the BID welcomes the proposals to simplify and strengthen the plan for York Road. However, we still view this as an interim measure and would welcome the opportunity to continue to work with Birmingham City Council on a scheme to further enhance York Road for all users.

Equally, experience has shown that appropriate signage and adequate enforcement are vital for York Road to be enjoyed by legitimate users of the street.

Plan S1\_021: the siting of the modal filter on Poplar Road was one of the more controversial installations of the original phase of the LTN. However, over time, some businesses and other users – primarily children, parents and staff of Kings Heath Primary School - have accepted and adapted to the changed complexion of that street. Whilst showing no preference, the BID would highlight that this change is based on a conversation being had four years ago and sentiments may well have changed since August 2020.

More generally:

* The BID retains its concern that the introduction of one-way loops may lead to an increase in speeding traffic, so would like to see additional traffic calming in these areas.
* Wherever possible, the BID would like to see rows of concrete bollards and other permanent measures complemented with greening features to soften these barriers and make them look and feel less imposing.
* The BID would still like to understand exactly how the bus gate on Addison Road is planning on being operated. While this remains unknown, it continues to create uncertainty for businesses on that street and further afield.
* One of the biggest challenges following the initial installations in and subsequent to August 2020 was the fact that online travel apps weren’t updated leading to many, many incorrectly followed routes. We would urge Birmingham City Council to learn lessons from this before further changes are made.

Finally, the BID once again reiterates that its calls for support to the local business community, whether that be direct, supported marketing campaigns, incentives for workers, easier to understand parking charges or anything else be acknowledged by Birmingham City Council as that has failed to materialise since the scheme was first introduced nearly four years ago.

Yours Faithfully,

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Ian Vesey, Chair, on behalf of the Board of Directors of Kings Heath BID

**Appendix: Initial Consultation Response, November 2021.**

**The Response of Kings Heath BID to the Kings Heath & Moseley Places For People Consultation**

The Kings Heath BID, represented by its Board of Directors, having considered the consultation documents and having had private conversations with the project team, local councillors and the local business community, both before and during this current consultation process would like to make the following comments regarding what is commonly known locally as phase 2 of the LTN:

* The BID recognises the international, national and local need to reduce carbon emissions and acknowledges that a “climate emergency” very much exists
* The BID understands that there are many car journeys across Birmingham every day of 1 mile or less and that these contribute significantly to pollution. Our own High Street has been widely regarded as one of the most polluted in the country
* When phase 1 of the scheme was introduced, the BID took the decision to remain neutral and to support and signpost businesses which wished to make representations, both positive and negative. The BID Board stands by that decision, which has been ratified at an Annual General Meeting of the BID Company
* The BID also recognises that, given the easing of Covid restrictions and a more measured approach to phase 2, the consultation being carried out by Birmingham City Council is widespread and accessible to everyone
* The BID thanks the project team for the opportunities to discuss the scheme in advance of the release of the proposals and for the two business-specific events that have taken place
* The BID does, though, acknowledge that many businesses have legitimate concerns about the impact that the LTN has had on them and, more importantly, will have on them once phase 2 is implemented
* There are a range of opinions about the LTN among the businesses of Kings Heath. Many accept that LTNs are inevitable for the reasons stated above. Of these some see the LTN as commercially damaging (e.g., loss of footfall, difficulties receiving deliveries, etc.) while others see it as a commercial positive (e.g., the hospitality sector on York Road and businesses which support or promote non-motorised travel).
* Other businesses accept the environmental imperatives but feel that LTNs are not the way to achieve these aims, while still others completely reject the implementation of LTNs *and* the environmental objectives underpinning them
* The anecdotal evidence gathered from businesses saying that their customers are now shopping elsewhere is a real concern to them. This is, in part, driven by negativity on social media but is also a reality to many businesses
* The BID has, and will continue to support all of its businesses to mitigate against any negative impacts that the LTN has or may bring, but its ability to do so is limited by resources, a lack of tangible support from the Council and the general concern that the impacts of the LTN haven’t been fully considered
* The BID retains its concerns that making it difficult to drive into or around Kings Heath, without giving residents, customers and visitors viable alternatives is simply putting people off from coming to Kings Heath
* While the BID does agree with the medium to long term imperatives which underpin the LTN, this scheme puts its short-term economic viability at risk in relation to other suburbs of the city and neighbouring areas such as Shirley and Solihull
* The BID has already begun working with businesses to encourage them to consider other forms of transport for short journeys around the area, but the reality is that for many businesses that require deliveries, or which rely on customers bringing large items to them, a car or van is the only practical way of doing this. The LTN makes these journeys difficult and lengthy, resulting in valuable time lost from operating a business
* The implementation of the LTN presents the BID with a new set of challenges in terms of maintaining the viability of all the businesses in Kings Heath and sustaining the vibrancy of Kings Heath as a local centre in order to make the trial LTN a success
* Whilst there is a taxi firm that is based within the Kings Heath BID area, it is worrying that other taxi companies are allegedly increasingly reluctant to drop off or pick up from Kings Heath
* People remain reluctant to use buses as a form of public transport, due to perceived and actual anti-social behaviour, fewer passengers wearing face coverings and cost. Addressing these issues and therefore making bus travel a more attractive proposition would encourage fewer car trips
* The implementation of this scheme, while potentially inconveniencing residents of Kings Heath, does not necessarily affect their ability to earn a living. The same cannot be said for people who work or operate businesses in the area

In response to these concerns, the BID would like to make the following recommendations to Birmingham City Council, some of which may already be being considered.

***In terms of the implementation of the LTN:***

1. That if the scheme is to be introduced more or less as the plans currently show, it is implemented in a phased approach so that Kings Heath does not become inaccessible overnight and businesses, customers, residents, employees and visitors can gradually acclimatize to the enforced changes
2. That all proposed one-way circuits are implemented in the same direction (ie clockwise or anti-clockwise) to make it easier for drivers to navigate around Kings Heath
3. That where these one-way circuits are introduced, additional traffic calming measures are installed to reduce the speeds at which some drivers will use these streets
4. That the Council works alongside the BID and business community to carry out a widespread marketing campaign to encourage customers who have been lost to other suburbs and to Shirley and Solihull back to the area – both by car and alternative forms of transport
5. That where inevitable traffic works take place in the future, modal filters are temporarily removed to offer routes through Kings Heath and avoiding unnecessary congestion – as was evident when Valentine Road, Shuttock Lane and Heathfield Road have been closed to motor vehicles this year
6. That when these works do take place, they are scheduled to take place no more than one at a time to minimise the disruption that all road users will face
7. That Birmingham City Council undertakes a proper review of how traffic movement, speeds and parking are enforced in Kings Heath and ensures an adequate and sensible presence of traffic enforcement officers across the area on a permanent basis
8. That the impacts of traffic flow across and through the LTN area are constantly monitored and, where bottlenecks occur, these are dealt with by introducing the necessary technological implementations, such as new traffic lights, which are fit for purpose to allow traffic to flow freely
9. That the “Covid Barriers” on the High Street, not currently part of the LTN plans, are dealt with immediately, whatever the outcome of that may be
10. That other measures to reduce traffic and improve the air and environmental quality are implemented both now and in the future
11. That where such measures exist, and as soon as technological advances bring new products to the market, Kings Heath should be offered the opportunity to adopt these first
12. That the impacts of the implementation of the LTN are considered, measured and, where appropriate, adjusted or amended. These include, but are not limited to, the current “no right turns” from Addison Road onto the High Street and from Vicarage Road onto the High Street
13. That Birmingham City Council introduces all other measures necessary to reduce and ultimately remove HGV vehicles using the A435 as a corridor through the city or from the city centre to the south

***In terms of specific amendments to the current plans:***

1. That due consideration and mitigation is given to the businesses on Addison Road, Institute Road, Heathfield Road, Poplar Road, York Road and Silver Street which, even after the implementation of these measures, will still require deliveries from large vehicles which may find access and egress more challenging due to the modal filters
2. That the proposed one-way circuit of Poplar and Valentine Roads begins after the entrance to the Asda car park, allowing for delivery vehicles and customers to enter from and exit to the High Street
3. That the modal filter on Silver Street be moved to the western side of Fairfield Road, allowing continued delivery access and egress to businesses on Balaclava, Waterloo and York Roads
4. That a dedicated right-turn filter is introduced from Howard Road East to Alcester Road South, allowing for more vehicles coming into Kings Heath to pass through the junction at each traffic light phase
5. That signage to car parks is improved along the high street and that parking is standardised across all car parks in Kings Heath, ideally with an initial 90-minute free period

***In terms of improving the look, feel and attractiveness of Kings Heath Centre:***

1. That Birmingham City Council works with the BID and local businesses to improve the overall quality of the High Street and LTN area including:

* Cleaning of the high street and side streets to include jet-washing pavements with a 2-year maintenance programme
* Graffiti removal with a 2-year maintenance programme
* A programme of works to make Kings Heath more welcoming
* General repairs to street furniture
* Replacement of old lighting columns
* General sprucing up and repainting with a 2-year maintenance programme

1. That the unsightly concrete bollards currently holding the road signs in place are either upgraded, branded or removed to improve the aesthetic of the high street
2. That, as a part of the scheme implementation, additional signage is put up along Kings Heath High Street promoting the area’s unique independent offering and directing foot traffic to the streets that run off of the high street
3. That Birmingham City Council works with the owners/operators of the privately-owned car parks, primarily those adjoining the supermarkets in Kings Heath, to better support those visitors who have no choice but to drive into Kings Heath – employee parking, school walking bus drop-offs, longer free periods, etc.

***In terms of public and alternative forms of transport:***

1. That the Council continues to apply the strongest pressure possible to the West Midlands LEP and Transport For West Midlands to see the opening of Kings Heath Railway station as soon as possible
2. That other alternative transport initiatives are made available across Kings Heath, including the Voi Scooters and Beryl Bikes
3. That the Council invests in and encourages car sharing schemes, reducing the need for car ownership in the LTN-affected area
4. That the Council offers incentives to businesses based in Kings Heath to invest in alternative forms of transport, either through grant or loan funding
5. That Birmingham City Council bans bus operators from using older, high-polluting vehicles on any routes that pass through the LTN area
6. That bus services into, across and through Kings Heath are rationalised to reduce the proliferation of bus operators whose vehicles add to empty buses and increase pollution
7. That more is done to reduce the cost and negative perceptions of public transport, making it a viable and affordable alternative to car travel
8. That incentives are offered to people working in Kings Heath to make it easier for them to commute via means other than private vehicles