

The Mayor of Tower Hamlets: [REDACTED]@towerhamlets.gov.uk

The Director of Public Realm: [REDACTED]@towerhamlets.gov.uk

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Council Town Hall

Mulberry Place

5 Clove Crescent

London E14 2BG

11th July 2022

FORMAL COMPLAINT ABOUT THE WAPPING BUS GATE CONSULTATION

The St Katharine & Wapping Ward Panel formally object to the way in which this consultation is being conducted, and request it be immediately pulled, on the following grounds:

- 1) The Wapping Bus Gate community-led engagement predates the Liveable Streets project by 2 years. The St Katharine & Wapping Ward Panel made a presentation to [REDACTED] of LBTH about the commuter traffic rat run through Wapping on 5th December 2017. This was followed up by the Council commissioning Project Centre (PCL) to undertake a survey and it reported on the Wapping Bus Gate in the Document Ref: 5318 dated 15th May 2019. The official consultation dates were 21st February-8th April 2019. The Bus Gate project was therefore entirely resident-led and was not anything to do with the Liveable Streets Project which followed later in 2019. Therefore, there is no remit in your manifesto to remove the Wapping Bus Gate which has the support of 95%+ of local residents because of the improvement in road safety and environmental health for pedestrians, cyclists and children alike.
- 2) The Survey Question wording is confusing and the tick boxes should be re-worded and repositioned in ranking, to bring clarity to the responses sought, and need to be amended to read:

SUPPORT REMOVAL

OPPOSE REMOVAL

NEUTRAL ABOUT REMOVAL

- 3) 30 paper versions of the survey were put through the lobby door of my block of flats. None was addressed individually to residents and none had an address on the letter. When responding by post, the only identity you are required to provide is a post-code. Anyone could have picked up all 30 letters and filled in the survey to suit their personal preferences, thereby fraudulently misrepresenting the true views of Wapping residents. Furthermore, residents could complete the paper version and then duplicate their response which allows you to proceed without any survey code. The survey has no integrity as a result.
- 4) Best practice, as the LGO suggests, requires that you should plan for up to 6 – 12 weeks for a consultation exercise. The Gunning Principles, to which you refer in point 7 of your manifesto, are not being adhered to, as you have not given sufficient context and information for the basis of your review and you have not provided enough time for people to think things over.
In our opinion, you have failed to run the statutory consultation in line with the required standards as laid down by the Gunning Principles and the Local Government Ombudsman.

Please acknowledge this complaint has been received and is formally logged in your Complaints Register and that I am provided with the complaint reference number. I have copied this letter to The Minister of State for Local Government, the Local Government Ombudsman, the Mayor of London; The Chief Executive of LBTH and our local elected councillors.

[REDACTED]

Chair
St Katharine & Wapping Ward Panel

[REDACTED]

BENEFITS OF THE BUS GATE

- The bus gate was introduced in response to a campaign from Wapping residents whose lives were blighted by rat-running and the heavy congestion, pollution, danger to pedestrians and noise it caused.
- The bus gate long pre-dated the Liveable Streets project and should not be seen as part of that scheme.
- The bus gate has been enormously successful and overwhelmingly supported by the people of Wapping, particularly since local residents have been able to obtain exemptions.
- The vast majority of the vehicles passing through Wapping prior to the gate being introduced used the area solely as a rat-run to avoid just 0.7 miles of The Highway. In comparison, the rat-run from The Highway at Glamis Road, along Wapping Wall, Wapping High Street, Vaughan Way and back to The Highway is almost twice as long at 1.3 miles.
- A council review published in August 2020 found that following the introduction of the bus gate journey times on The Highway were less than two minutes longer going west and actually reduced going east.
- After the bus gate was introduced, pollution levels in Wapping dropped significantly. The review found levels of PM2.5 particulates, the sort of pollution that is most dangerous to our children because it goes deep into their lungs, fell by up 90 percent.
- The narrow, cobbled streets of Wapping suddenly became much safer for our children walking to school and for other pedestrians and cyclists. The D3 and 100 buses became more reliable and were no longer delayed by heavy congestion.
- The effect of the bus gate was to keep traffic on The Highway where it should be as a road designed for the purpose. If traffic on The Highway is slow-moving it is the responsibility of TfL to deal

with it, not the Mayor of Tower Hamlets. The Highway is not a road that Tower Hamlets has any jurisdiction over

- The bus gate had no impact whatsoever on the ability of emergency services to access any part of Wapping. Taxis, including those for people using taxi cards, could continue to access all parts of the district on either side of the bus gate through the five access roads into the area.
- Removing the bus gate would reverse a measure that has hugely improved public health, quality of life and safety in Wapping. It would be impossible to square with Mayor Rahman's manifesto commitment to green the borough and reduce pollution.

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From: Norman Will (Will Norman, Walking & Cycling Commissioner)

[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>

Sent: 15 August 2022 19:35

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: Mayor of London <mayor@london.gov.uk>; Unmesh Desai

[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>

Subject: FORMAL LETTER OF COMPLAINT TO MAYOR RAHMAN CONCERNING THE CONSULTATION TO REMOVE THE WAPPING BUS GATE *5221

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter, sent on behalf of the St Katharine and Wapping Ward Panel, about your concerns with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets's proposal to remove Wapping Bus Gate, as part of the Councils' Liveable Streets consultation.

I am aware that the London Borough of Tower Hamlets (LBTH) is consulting on removing the Wapping Bus Gate as part of a consultation to remove four of its Liveable Streets schemes.

Transport for London (TfL) was not initially and directly notified of LBTH's decision to consult on the removal of the bus gate. The bus gate was implemented in November 2019 with TfL Bus Priority funding that was not, in fact, part of the Council's Liveable Streets programme.

Tower Hamlets has the third lowest rate of car ownership across London boroughs with 71 per cent of residents not owning a car. Alongside this, Tower Hamlets has an

above average proportion of people choosing to use active travel modes, with 80.6 per cent walking, cycling, or using public transport on a regular basis.

A central aim of the Mayor's Transport Strategy is to prioritise schemes that make it safer and easier for people walking, cycling, and using public transport in the borough, with a target of 80% of journeys being made by these modes by 2040.

I am very concerned about the removal of the Wapping Bus Gate without the decision being supported by a full set of evidence, including how LBTH are meeting its public sector equality duty. If these issues are not satisfied it may impact TfL's decision on future funding.

I have written to LBTH to ask to meet to discuss this consultation further and to reiterate our concerns. More importantly still, this will be an opportunity to discuss the borough's plans to encourage people to walk, cycle or use public transport and how TfL and the Council can work together to improve air quality in the borough.

Best Wishes,

Will

Will Norman
Mayor's Walking & Cycling Commissioner

City Hall | Kamal Chunchie Way | London | E161ZE

 *Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail*

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 July 2022 15:13
To: Mayor of London <mayor@london.gov.uk>
Cc: Unmesh Desai [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@london.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk)>
Subject: FORMAL LETTER OF COMPLAINT TO MAYOR RAHMAN CONCERNING THE

CONSULTATION TO REMOVE THE WAPPING BUS GATE

Importance: High

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Dear Mr Mayor,

The St Katharine & Wapping Ward Panel has written to complain formally about the flawed consultation to remove the Wapping Bus Gate. I attach a copy of our letter.

We also strongly oppose its removal because of all the benefits it has brought to Residents of the Ward, and I attach a one-page explanation of the main outcomes which have helped Wapping to become a safer environment in which to live, given substantially reduced through-traffic flows diverting off the Highway in the rush hour onto our narrow cobbled streets. This alone has brought the enormous health benefits from reduced pollution and particulates in the atmosphere.

It is our understanding that the proposals by Mayor Rahman are contrary to your own environmental and road safety policies and we look to you, please, to help support us in our opposition to this irrational and politically motivated action by LBTH, which is not wanted by our local Residents or Businesses.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Chair

St Katharine & Wapping Ward Panel

[REDACTED]

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From: Jabbal Jasmit [REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>
Sent: 15 August 2022 19:06
To: [REDACTED]@towerhamlets.gov.uk>; Fletcher Peter [REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Liveable Streets closure removal consultation

Hi [REDACTED]

I hope you are well, please find attached our consultation response.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

Jasmit

From: [REDACTED]@towerhamlets.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 August 2022 10:40
To: Jabbal Jasmit [REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>; Fletcher Peter [REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Liveable Streets closure removal consultation

Hi Jabbal,

I was intending to draft all the reports over the weekend. If there is anything you can send through it would be much appreciated. But if not Monday is ok.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: Jabbal Jasmit [REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>
Sent: 12 August 2022 10:37
To: [REDACTED]@towerhamlets.gov.uk>; Fletcher Peter

[REDACTED] [tfl.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk)>

Subject: RE : Liveable Streets closure removal consultation

Hi [REDACTED]

We have almost finalised our response, can you allow us to get it to you by Monday?

Kind regards,

Jasmit

From: [REDACTED] [towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@towerhamlets.gov.uk)>

Sent: 04 August 2022 16:59

To: Jabbal Jasmit [REDACTED] [@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk)>; Fletcher Peter [REDACTED] [@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk)>

Subject: Re: Liveable Streets closure removal consultation

Hi Jasmit,

Would it be possible to get a response by 10th august?

Regards

[REDACTED]

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From: Jabbal Jasmit <[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>

Sent: Thursday, August 4, 2022 4:20:55 PM

To: [REDACTED] [towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@towerhamlets.gov.uk)>; Fletcher Peter [REDACTED] [@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk)>

Subject: RE : Liveable Streets closure removal consultation

Hi [REDACTED]

Thank you for this.

We will require some more time to respond to this. Are you able to extend the time we have to provide a response?

Thanks,

Jasmit

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@towerhamlets.gov.uk>
Sent: 29 July 2022 14:54
To: Fletcher Peter <[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>; Jabbal Jasmit <[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>
Subject: Liveable Streets closure removal consultation

Dear Peter and Jasmit

We are consulting on proposals attached to this email? They are to remove many of the road closures and other traffic management changes implemented as part of the Liveable Streets Programme. As part of this process, we are consulting key stakeholders for their feedback on the proposals. I have attached all the consultation documents setting out the Council's proposals.

These include:

Bethnal Green

- Re-introducing two-way traffic on Old Bethnal Green Road between Pollard Row and Temple Street
- Removal of closures on Punderson's Gardens, Clarkson Street, Pollard Row and Pollard Street
- Removal of the pocket park closure on Old Bethnal Green Road
- Removal of the closures on Arnold Circus and Old Nichol Street
- Removal of closures on Wellington Row/Barnet Grove and Quilter Street
- Removal of closure on the junction of Gosset Street and Columbia Road
- Re-introducing two-way traffic of two way traffic on Columbia Road between Chambord Street and Ravenscroft Street

Wapping

- Removal of the Bus Gate on Wapping High Street

Brick Lane

- Removal of the two Liveable Streets closures between Hanbury Street and Woodseer Street and Buxton Street Taylors Yard Entrance

I have attached a form for you to fill in with any comments, concerns or objections to the proposals. Alternatively, if you think it would be more suitable to arrange a call to discuss the details, I would be happy to arrange a time next week to go through them.

Please can you respond with comments by the end of next week. Apologies for the late turnaround.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: Members Correspondence <MembersCorrespondence@tfl.gov.uk>
Sent: 29 July 2022 18:26

To: Unmesh Desai <[REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>
Cc: Members Correspondence <MembersCorrespondence@tfl.gov.uk>;
[REDACTED]@towerhamlets.gov.uk; Tweddle Thomas [REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]@towerhamlets.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Busgate- Wapping

Dear Unmesh,

I am picking this up both as Ijeoma's replacement (your new point of contact at TfL) and in Tom's absence.

We are aware of the London Borough of Tower Hamlet's consultation on removing their Liveable Streets, in which they have also included the removal of the Wapping Bus Gate. We have written to LBTH's leadership about this and have requested a meeting. Our view is the bus gate is important for ensuring the reliability of route 100, and a good experience for customers that use it.

I hope this is useful ahead of the meeting tomorrow.

All the best,
Libby

Government Relations

Transport for London

From: Unmesh Desai [REDACTED]@london.gov.uk>
Sent: 29 July 2022 15:00
To: Tweddle Thomas [REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>
Cc: Members Correspondence <MembersCorrespondence@tfl.gov.uk>;
[REDACTED]@towerhamlets.gov.uk; [REDACTED]@towerhamlets.gov.uk>
Subject: Busgate- Wapping

Dear Thomas,

I hope you are well.

Please excuse me for writing directly to you but I need some urgent information re the above, namely did we fund this scheme in any way or did we/do we have any role in its implementation. The Mayor of Tower hamlets is currently undertaking a consultation exercise with a view to removing the scheme. Both myself and the local councillors- copied in- have received hundreds of objections, both in how the consultation exercise is being carried out but also opposing the removal of the scheme. There is an active local campaign whose representatives I am meeting tomorrow. There seems to be a perception that TfL/GLA has a role here and I would be grateful if you can tell me what the position is before my

meeting tomorrow at 2 pm. I am led to believe that we have no formal role but it would be good to have confirmation of this.

I do apologize for the short notice at which this request is being made. Also do I have a dedicated stakeholder liaison officer as I understand that Ijeoma- who was very helpful- has now moved to another role.

Many Thanks and Regards

Unmesh

Unmesh Desai AM

Labour London Assembly Member for City and East London

London Assembly **Labour**

GREATERLONDONAUTHORITY
City Hall, Kamal Chunchie Way, London E16 1ZE

london.gov.uk

Excerpt from Mayor's Question Time briefing – sent to City Hall 14 July 2022

- *LBTH have been introducing neighbourhood measures to reduce traffic, encourage walking and cycling, and reduce danger, for some time*
- *The new LBTH Mayor has started a process of engagement about removing at least some of these measures. TfL will be clear with LBTH that no DfT or TfL funding can be used to remove any measures, but also asking about the monitoring of impacts and the consultation process that will be needed to feed into their decision making - including how they are exercising their Public Sector Equality Duty in any decision making*

From: Norman Will (Will Norman, Walking & Cycling Commissioner)

██████████@tfl.gov.uk>

Sent: 08 July 2022 15:47

To: mayor@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Cc: Herbert Sarah (PA to Deputy Chair of TfL) ██████████@TfL.gov.uk>

Subject: Meeting up

Dear Lutfur

I'm writing to introduce myself and ask for a meeting.

My name is Will Norman. I'm the Mayor of London's Walking and Cycling Commissioner. I work with Sadiq, TfL and all the London boroughs to make our streets safer to enable more people to walk and cycle.

I think it would be useful if we could find a time to meet. I'd be delighted to come to you. I wonder if your office could talk to mine and find a time that works for us both?

Look forward to meeting in person

With best wishes

Will

Dr Will Norman
Mayor of London's Walking & Cycling Commissioner

City Hall | Kamal Chunchie Way | London | E16 1ZE

 *Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail*

From: Norman Will (Will Norman, Walking & Cycling Commissioner)
[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>

Sent: 08 July 2022 16:51

To: Preen Heather [REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Tower Hamlets to Reverse Liveable Streets - Consultation

I've emailed requesting a meeting

Will Norman

Mayor's Walking & Cycling Commissioner

City Hall | Kamal Chunchie Way | London | E16 1ZE

 *Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail*

From: Preen Heather [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk)>

Sent: 07 July 2022 18:43

To: Norman Will (Will Norman, Walking & Cycling Commissioner) [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk)>

Subject: FW: Tower Hamlets to Reverse Liveable Streets - Consultation

FYI. Have you managed to have any contact with LBTH yet?

Best wishes

Heather

Heather Preen

Head of Local Communities & Partnerships

Transport for London

[REDACTED]

From: Rigakis Stylianos (ST) [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk)>

Sent: Thursday, July 7, 2022 5:15 pm

To: Clark Julie (nee Dye) [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk)>; Jabbal Jasmit

[REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk)>; Fletcher Peter [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk)>

Cc: Monck Sam <[REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>; Rees Penny [REDACTED]@tfl.gov.uk>
Subject: Tower Hamlets to Reverse Liveable Streets - Consultation

Hi all,

Tower Hamlets have gone ahead with launching a consultation to reverse the Liveable Streets schemes. This very disappointing to see.

This is hot off the press so this may be the first time you read about this consultation:

As part of Mayor Lutfur Rahman's pledge to reverse Liveable Streets schemes that have seen a number of roads closed, the Council is launching a consultation on current traffic management schemes. Each of the schemes will be considered on an individual basis with a consultation taking place which residents and businesses can take part in.

- *Bethnal Green*
- *Bow*
- *Brick Lane*
- *Wapping*

More information can be found here <https://talk.towerhamlets.gov.uk/liveablestreets>

It would be useful to know whether we/TfL will be responding to this and any input from us is required.

Kind regards,

Stylianou

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