

TOWARDS A NEW LONDON PLAN: TRANSPORT (5.12 – 16)



Recovery Plan: POLICY 36 – Decarbonisation of Transport

The Mayor of London should produce a shared decarbonisation vision for transport:

- Work collaboratively with residents, schools, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders to present an inspiring vision of what zero-carbon streets and neighbourhoods could look like, highlighting the benefits to different groups of people.
- Encourage Friends of Streets groups, to give the community a role in street management and make the 'healthy streets' approach real and tangible, with targets for healthy streets in each Borough. This could be a responsibility for neighbourhood forums.
- Give greater attention to buses: recognise their importance for visits to shops, libraries, health centres and hospitals. Make the case for government funding to enable a zero-emission bus fleet before 2030.
- Adopt road pricing much earlier than the deadline in the London Plan, but only if it is equitable and proportionate.
- Provide docking stations for bikes at high street locations and expanded across Outer London.
- Recognise the right of every citizen to have access within walking distance to a good quality public green space.

Transport policy ought to be more equitable or fairer: e.g. road accident rates in poorer areas are higher than in posher areas; and the same goes for air quality, levels of transport service provision etc. Climate change is generally impacting more vulnerable communities rather than rich ones.

Climate Crisis: the current plan fails to address the climate emergency effectively. Despite targets for 80% sustainable travel by 2041, car use remains high, and emissions are not declining. This is partly due to: political timidity (backlash against ULEZ) and underfunded public transport. The new plan must prioritize binding carbon reduction targets, funded by charges on high-emission vehicles, and reinvest revenue into public transport

Reducing the need to travel should be an overarching policy objective (was in the first two London plans). Hence our Lifetime Neighbourhoods policy, providing people with what they need, people who spend large parts of their lives within walking distance of where they live.

The new plan considers **polycentric development** (multiple centers) to reduce travel needs. Just Space proposed this back in 2016 and we continue to support it, but notes market resistance and past rejection in favor of "business as usual" centralization. Polycentrism is a much better way spreading the load and utilising space, rather than everything focusing on the hierarchy of the centre. Polycentric development needs more orbital transport and more buses.

Climate change and reducing emissions should be another overarching policy. Current policies are failing to reduce emissions and car traffic. The 80% sustainable travel target is good but it's a long way from being met, partly due to unreliable and slow buses. **CO2 emissions** remain a major issue, with ground-level air quality (ULEZ) being addressed but overall CO2 reduction neglected, which from a long-term view is disastrous. Something more radical has to be done, including more attractive and radically improved bus and train services

Congestion is worsening (e.g., drivers spent 101 hours in gridlock in 2024, up from 97 in 2022). London is the most congested city in Europe, costing estimated £3.85bn. Traffic speeds in central London have decreased further, which is one of the justifications for selective charging of different types of vehicles entering the congestion charge area

Bus reliability and speed have declined. Some bus lanes have been removed in outer London, affecting service reliability and frequency. Bus lanes need to be better protected. Illogical routes for bus diversions are also a problem.

Cars propagate huge inequalities, with 65% of households in Camberwell without a car, but only 20% without a car in Hampstead Garden Suburb. Generally the outer boroughs have car ownership towards 80% and around 45% in inner London, but they have fewer public transport options.

Car parking standards in developments are often too high, especially in outer London, although there is resistance to reducing them from developers, councils and communities, especially where there aren't controlled parking zones (CPZ), as in much of outer London.

High-density developments cannot come with cars and car parking - which means public transport must be improved to accommodate them. There is vacant parking spaces on much new build

Developing station car parks - even low density East Finchley and Finchley Central have extensive car parks adjacent, rather than the high-density tall development at other transport nodes

Cycling: only about 4% of people in London cycle, although there is a new pattern emerging with **hired e-bikes** being used in central and inner London. In outer London there needs to be better facilities to enable cyclists to use the road network through creation of cycleways, as well as cycle tuition. It's scary for most people to cycle, it's a minority until roads become safer, which includes much stricter enforcement of bad/dangerous driving.

Cycle parking requirements (e.g., one space per office worker) may be outdated given the rise of hire bikes (e.g., Lime), and can lead to massive amounts of embodied carbon to develop space which isn't used. Big problem around mainline stations of hire bikes left everywhere all over pavements etc - the companies benefitting (including Network Rail) aren't contributing to providing space.

Proposal: **ULEZ extended** to bigger gas-guzzlers, which have higher emissions and should pay the ULEZ. This proposal would mainly hit the rich, not require any new infrastructure (use ULEZ cameras etc) and would reduce emissions, generating a steady income stream which could contribute towards increasing frequency on some suburban train lines, for example.

The Mayor proposes **increased rail frequency** on suburban lines - metroisation - but funding is lacking.

Strong concern about **new infrastructure (train lines)** that are tied to and necessitate the development of new high-density unaffordable homes. The proposed Bakerloo line extension has created huge negatives, with the de-designation of a large longstanding area of Strategic Industrial Land on the Old Kent Road, for example to enable market housing growth

Mayor's proposals for **PTAL (Public Transport Accessibility Level)** reform/ more sensitive metrics that account for actual journey times (including reliability) and service quality, not just proximity to stations supported.

Healthy Streets and Active Travel are endorsed as an overarching approach but needs better enforcement and data transparency to counter opposition. But we're not really getting healthy streets in outer London. The London plan could require local plans to set out clearly mapped transport interventions: improved walking infrastructure, safe cycling networks, strategically important bus corridors kerbside management, accessibility and other healthy street measures. Free up road space through a 'kerbside strategy': re-using backstreet road space for seating, bike parking, cafes - to make healthier and more civic streets.

The Healthy Streets Approach was developed to put public health at the centre of planning for transport and the public realm. It is designed to promote street designs that reduce car dominance and make walking and cycling safer, healthier and easier. At the foundation of the approach are ten evidence-based 'Healthy Streets Indicators' of what makes streets attractive and healthy places for all. Following the London Plan 2021, all planners and developers must use the Healthy Streets Approach in the design and assessment of streets and public spaces.

Safeguarding rail freight facilities (e.g., sidings) and developing consolidation centers to reduce lorry use. Opposition to loss of industrial land with good rail freight options (e.g., Park Royal) for housing, and the economic activity there disaggregated and scattered to the winds. This also applies to waterways and wharves. Raises a broader potential issue of the deindustrialization of Greater London and the decanting of essential services and production beyond the green belt to neighbouring authorities, resulting in longer journeys from factories and warehouses into London. Another example is the closure of Smithfield market in central London and Billingsgate market. The proposed move to Dagenham was odd but has been cancelled; now they're not moving but simply being closed down and disaggregated

Aviation. We need to reduce aviation, particularly domestic flights which serve a tiny minority of people. The expansion of Heathrow and runway 3 is unjustifiable and harmful in many ways. The City Airport serves an even tinier minority and takes up land which could probably accommodate 50,000 homes (how many?). The Mayor has the powers to reduce aviation as much as possible. The GLA should be strongly against the expansion of aviation and facilities within Greater London.

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