

Hoxton West Low Traffic Neighbourhood (interim traffic counts)

This briefing gives interim traffic counts from the Hoxton West Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) taken in November 2020 and March 2021 in comparison to changes in background levels of traffic caused by the COVID-19 lockdown.

It shows that whichever measure of the lockdown effect on traffic is used, traffic has on average fallen further inside the Hoxton West LTN. On LTN boundary roads where traffic displacement might be assumed to be a risk, the traffic on average has also fallen. Traffic on New North Road, East Road, City Road and Old Street have all fallen.

Background

The ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic and its associated public health lockdown response has had big effects on travel in London including large drops in public transport use (following government guidance to avoid using it wherever possible) and initially large reduction in road transport. But as London emerged from its third lockdown in the first half of 2021 there is the continuing potential for vast increases in the number of motor vehicles on our roads if even a small proportion of people who used to travel by public transport switch to using private cars.

The public health and road safety implications will be profound for those groups already disproportionately impacted upon by the secondary effects of motor vehicle use, including those on low incomes, people of minority ethnic backgrounds, older people, and children. This could potentially exacerbate air pollution in a borough that already has the sixth highest mortality rate out of 418 UK local authorities and by one analysis, the largest number of road injuries amongst pedestrians and cyclists per 1000 journeys of any borough in London. This would be particularly socially unjust in a borough where 70% of households do not own cars.

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods

The rollout of LTNs has been an important part of London and Hackney's response to the pandemic and a key to preventing a car-led recovery. The LTNs are designed to physically prevent motor vehicles from cutting through residential areas while maintaining motor vehicle access to residents and creating space, cleaner air and better conditions for walking and cycling. But what does the evidence from interim traffic counts actually show?

In Hoxton West, the Low Traffic Neighbourhood is bounded by four boundary roads, City Road and Old Street to the south of the LTN and to the east, East Road and New North Road. Four

filters were installed within the LTN; Micawber Street junction with Shepherdess Walk, Shepherdess Walk to the south of the junction with Micawber Street, Nile Street junction with Provost Street and Ebenezer Street junction with Vestry Street.

It was introduced in August 2020 using experimental traffic orders. An initial filter was installed at Nile Street, close to the junction with East Road, however, early feedback from residents in the area pointed to a new rat run along Provost Street - Nile Street - Shepherdess Walk, which effectively bypassed the LTN. As a result, in September 2020 the filter along Nile Street was relocated to the west of the junction with Provost Street to address this issue.

Between 16 November to 3 December 2020, Hackney commissioned a series of traffic counts within the LTN area. These counts were compared to baseline counts taken before the introduction of the LTN.

The effect of lockdown must be considered alongside the traffic counts and different ways to compare the impact of lockdown on traffic are described in further detail below. Whichever measure of the background lockdown effect on traffic is used, traffic has on average fallen further inside the Hoxton West LTN by an average of 42%.

In late March 2021 (22 to 28 March), Hackney commissioned further traffic counts for the boundary roads of the LTN. These counts were compared to baseline counts taken before the introduction of the LTN.

On LTN boundary roads where traffic displacement might be assumed to be a risk, there was still a reduction in traffic levels, on average a reduction of 30%, where New North Road, City Road, East Road and Old Street were considered as the boundary roads.

Benchmarking the effects of lockdown

We are aware that road traffic in November 2020 and March 2021 was depressed by the second and third of the capital's lockdown periods which have an effect independent of the LTNs measures. We considered a number of ways to benchmark this. One way would be to look at national traffic levels which according to the DfT were **24% down** during November 2020 but had recovered to just **8% below pre-COVID levels** by March 2021.

More local benchmarks would include the traffic flows on the A12 in Hackney which is an urban motorway with high flow levels and would be largely unaffected by any potential traffic displacement from LTNs. Traffic on this road was **14.8% down in November 2020 and 10.3% down in March 2021**.

An alternative local benchmark would be to look at the overall average of flows on roads in Hackney and compare this to the equivalent period in 2019. On average traffic flows on Hackney's roads in November 2020 were **12% down on the equivalent period in 2019** and **13% below 2019 levels** in March 2021. Details of the roads from which continuous TfL and

snapshot data was used to derive these local benchmarks are given in **Table 1 and Table 2** below.¹

Table 1: Traffic on Main Roads in Hackney - November/ December 2020 (16/11/20 - 01/12/20)		
Location	% change on equivalent period in 2019²	Baseline Source
Homerton High Street (TfL 3)	+6.5% ³	TfL 2019
Albion Road	-6.2%	TfL 2019
A10 Tottenham High Road	-8.8%	TfL 2019
Seven Sisters Road	-10.4%	TfL 2019
A12 Hackney Wick	-14.8%	TfL 2019
Southgate Road	-17.8%	TfL 2019
Green Lanes Borough Boundary	-16.6%	TfL 2019
A10 jw Walford Road 289	-15.4%	TfL 2019
A10 Kingsland Road jw Richmond Road	-12.9%	TfL 2019
Old Street	-20.9%	TfL 2019
A10 Hoxton	-23.8%	TfL 2019
Mare Street jw Brenthouse Road	-27.5%	
A10 Stamford Hill (1)	1.1%	DfT 2019
A107 Upper Clapton Road (6)	-10.1%	DfT 2019
A107 Lower Clapton Road (south of jw Laura Place) (41)	0.7%	DfT 2019
Average of Roads	-11.8%	Various

¹ Most of the traffic counts are derived from continuous points but a few extra count points have been added based on Hackney snapshot counts where counts for the relevant period with an appropriate pre-COVID baseline were available

² The 2019 baseline uses data from 18 November 2019 to 1 December 2019 while the equivalent dates in 2020 are the period 16 November 2020 to 29 November 2020 (to achieve consistency of days of the week).

³ We issued 12,000 key worker parking permits during the pandemic, many of which were used in the area around Homerton Hospital, which is thought to be a partial cause for this increase in traffic compared to pre-lockdown levels. It is also worth noting that traffic levels on Homerton High Street were close to than pre-pandemic levels before the introduction of the London Fields low traffic neighbourhood, and remained at this level for much of remainder of the year

**Table 2: Traffic on Main Roads in Hackney - March 2021
(22/03/21 - 28/03/21)**

Location	% change on equivalent period in 2019	Baseline Source
3 Homerton High Street	-3.1%	TfL 2019
22 A10 Tottenham High Street	-7.0%	TfL 2019
29 Seven Sisters Road	-11.3%	TfL 2019
50 Albion Road	3.7%	TfL 2019
53 Mare Street jw Brenthouse	-15.1%	TfL 2019
150 Green Lanes Border	-13.3%	TfL 2019
193 A10 jw Richmond	-4.7%	TfL 2019
221/222 Old Street	-23.9%	TfL 2019
278 A10 (Hoxton)	-17.7%	TfL 2019
290 A10/jw Walford Road	-15.7%	TfL 2019
332/333 A12 (Hackney Wick)	-10.3%	TfL 2019
357 Southgate Road	-26.3%	TfL 2019
City Road (East of Cayton Street)	-27.0%	DfT 2018
Average of Roads	-13.2%	Various

Traffic on Hoxton West LTN Boundary Roads

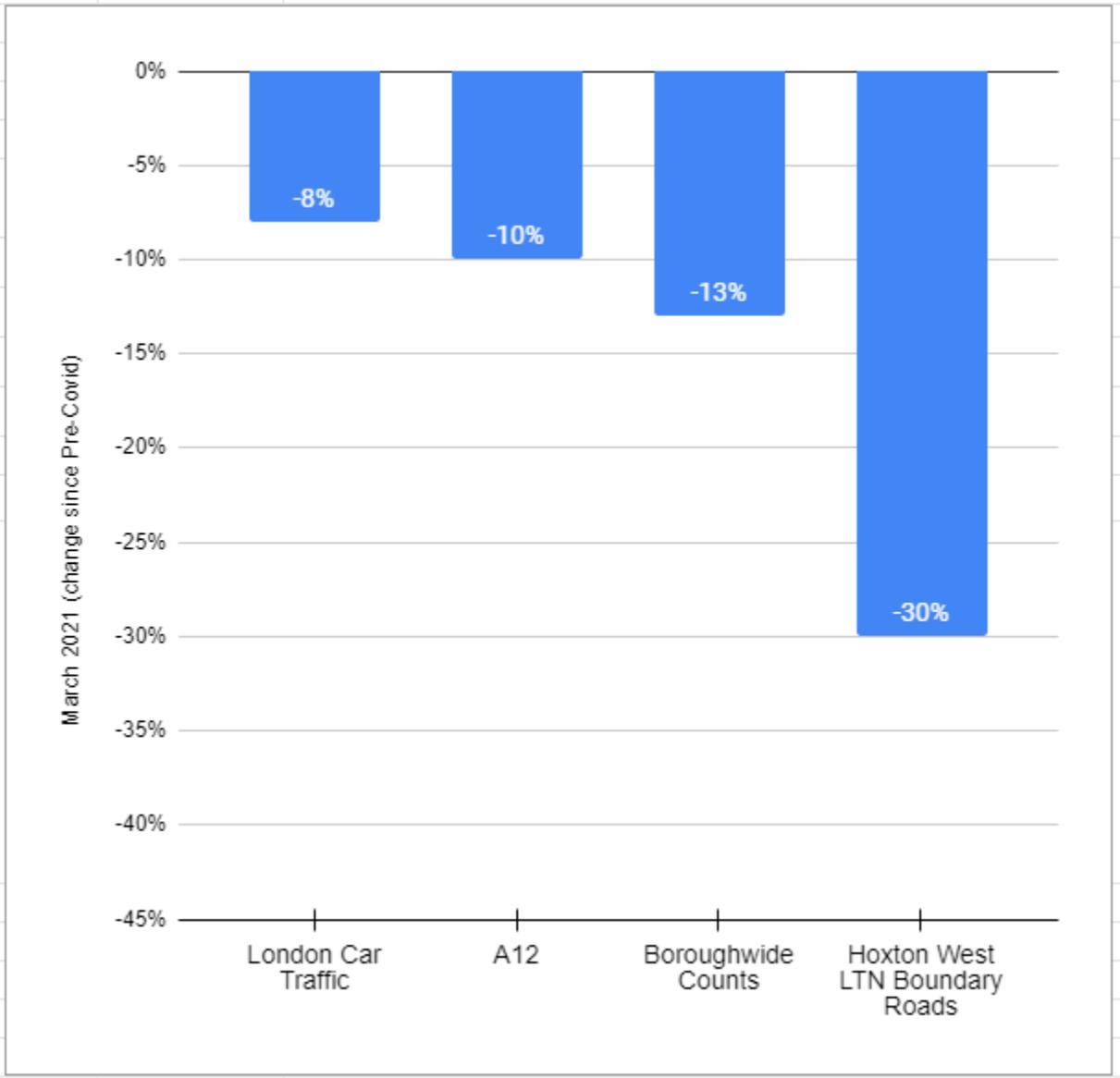
It is useful to view the changes in traffic levels on boundary roads of the Hoxton West LTN with these background benchmarks in mind⁴. Traffic trends from the Hoxton West LTN boundary roads with the baseline period used are given in **Table 3: Traffic Trends on Hoxton West LTN Boundary Roads**.

A comparison with the average flow on the Hoxton West Boundary Roads with national and local traffic benchmarks measured in March 2021 is also shown in **Figure 1** below.

Road	March 2021 ATC counts % change from 'baseline'	Baseline source
City Road (East of Cayton Street)	-26.7%	DfT 2018
East Road (North of Bevenden Street)	-38.4%	Dft 2018
New North Road (North of Murray Grove)	-37.7%	November 2018
Old Street (East of Roundabout)	-16.6%	DfT 2018
Average of Hoxton West LTN Boundary Roads	-29.9%	Various

⁴ An important caveat to bear in mind is that whereas with the TfL traffic counts could be compared with a baseline for the equivalent period in 2019, this type of data was not available for the many of the newly commissioned counts on LTN boundary roads. Instead baseline figures from the most recently available pre Covid traffic counts were used instead.

Figure 1: Hoxton West LTN Boundary Roads and National and Local Traffic Trends March 2021



Traffic on Hoxton West LTN Internal Roads

The figures in **Table 4** below show the changes in monitored levels of traffic on roads inside the low traffic neighbourhood in November 2020. While there is a variation in traffic levels all roads with the exception of Britannia Walk and Provost Street show a decrease in traffic averaging a 42% drop in traffic since the most recent count from the period before the pandemic.

A comparison with the average flow on the Hoxton West Internal Roads with national and local traffic benchmarks measured in November 2021 is also shown in **Figure 2** below.

Road	November 2020 ATC counts % change from 'baseline'	Baseline source
Shepherdess Walk (North of Murray Grove)	-43.7%	July 2018
Micawber Street (West of Taplow Street)	-73.6%	July 2018
Shepherdess Walk (South of Nile Street)	-54.9%	July 2018
Westland Place (South of Nile Street)	-39.7%	July 2018
Nile Street (East of Shepherdess Walk)	-70.8%	July 2018
Britannia Walk (South of Nile Street)	+4.5%	July 2018
Murray Grove (East of Provost Street)	-50.2%	July 2018
Provost Street (South of Murray Grove)	+6.8%	July 2018
Vestry Street (North of Provost Street)	-53.1%	July 2018
Average of Hoxton West LTN Inner Roads	-41.6%	July 2018

Figure 2: Hoxton West LTN Internal Roads and National and Local Traffic Trends November 2020

