

Voltaire Road Reimagined

The title 'Voltaire Road Reimagined' is written in a large, dark brown, cursive script. The text is set against a solid green background. Interspersed among the letters are various small, colorful illustrations: a person jogging, a person walking, a person on a bicycle, a small white dog, and several stylized trees in white, blue, and yellow. Small black birds are also scattered around the text.

Design Report

April 2025

Table of Contents

What is this document?.....3

1. The Healthy Streets Approach.....4

What is the Streets Reimagined Programme?5

How was the Voltaire Road scheme chosen?.....6

2. Proposed design8

3. Exploration and Feasibility11

Area Profile11

Engagement.....23

Engagement and the proposed design27

4. What happens next?.....30



What is this document?

Lambeth Council aims to enhance Voltaire Road, creating a desirable destination that supports local businesses and provides space for people to meet, relax, and travel actively. We seek to celebrate local history and champion inclusivity, creativity, and accessibility.

The Voltaire Road Reimagined Design Report (April 2025) is a summary of engagement, data collection and design work that has taken place since between September 2024 and March 2025.

This report includes a proposed design for Voltaire Road and explains why this design is proposed. This document intends to provide local communities with additional information to help inform their feedback on the proposed design. This document is included on the Voltaire Road “Have Your Say” online engagement page – [available here](#).

This document will be updated with our learning from Design Engagement taking place from 30 April 2025 until 21 May 2025.

A final version of this document will be included as part of an Officer Delegated Decision Report, including learning from the design engagement and any resulting changes to the trial design. For more information on how Lambeth Council makes decisions – [please see this link](#).



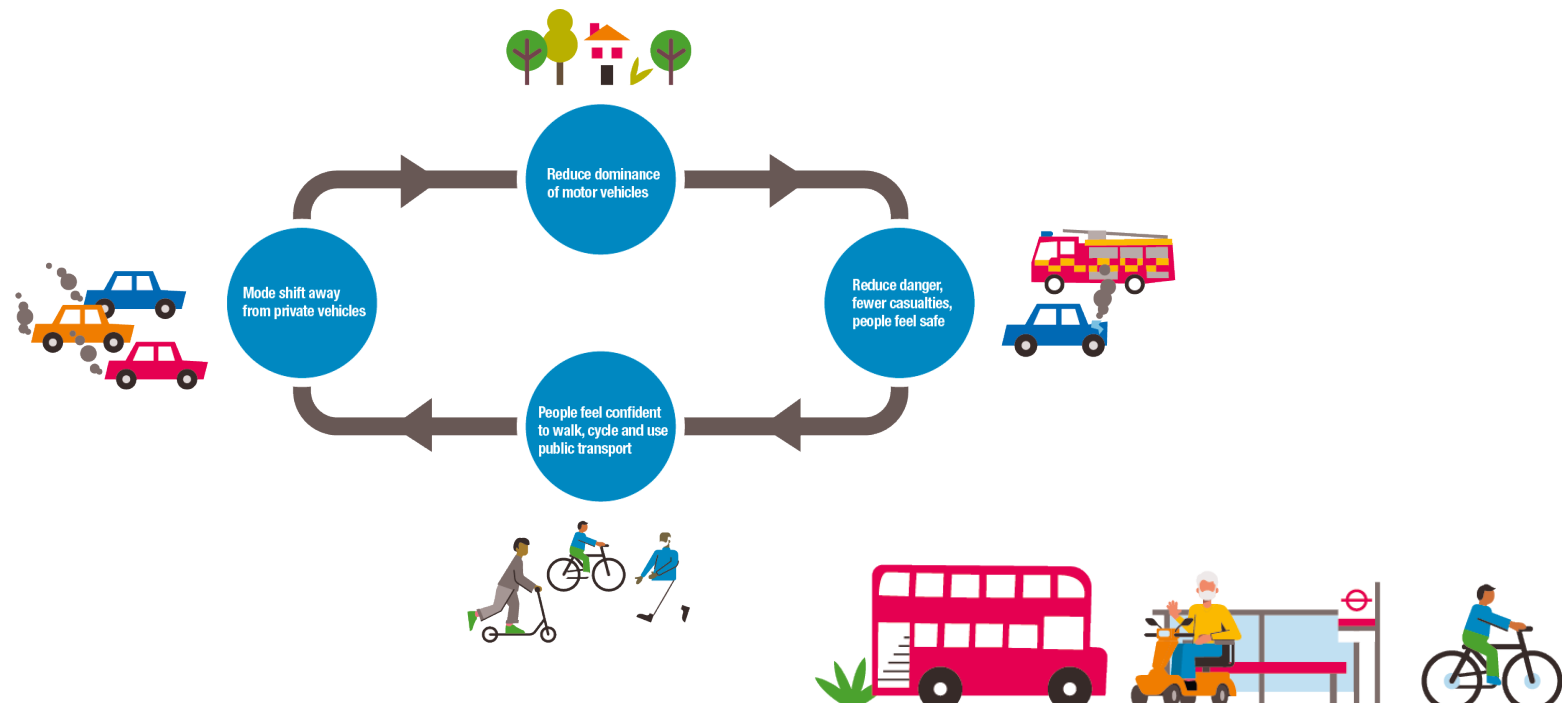
1. The Healthy Streets Approach

The way we manage our streets has a big role to play in making our borough a healthier place to live, work or play. Lambeth is a borough committed to social justice and equity across everything it does – this includes how we manage our streets. In 2019 we published our [Transport Strategy](#), which sets out the vision for our streets.

Motor traffic has a big impact on our lives, from noisy congestion, toxic air, or road danger that either prevents or disincentivises us from walking, scooting, wheeling or cycling. This is particularly unjust as 58% of households in Lambeth do not own a car and rely on active travel and public transport.

In 2021, we adopted our [Climate Action Plan \(CAP\)](#) which sets out how, together, we will create a Lambeth that is fit for the future. A key requirement identified in the CAP is to reduce the amount of motor traffic on our streets, with an evidence-based target of 27% by 2030.

To do this, we are using the [Healthy Streets Approach](#). This process helps us understand how all sorts of projects fit together, support each other, and collectively help make our streets safer, more inclusive, and more enjoyable places.



What is the Streets Reimagined Programme?

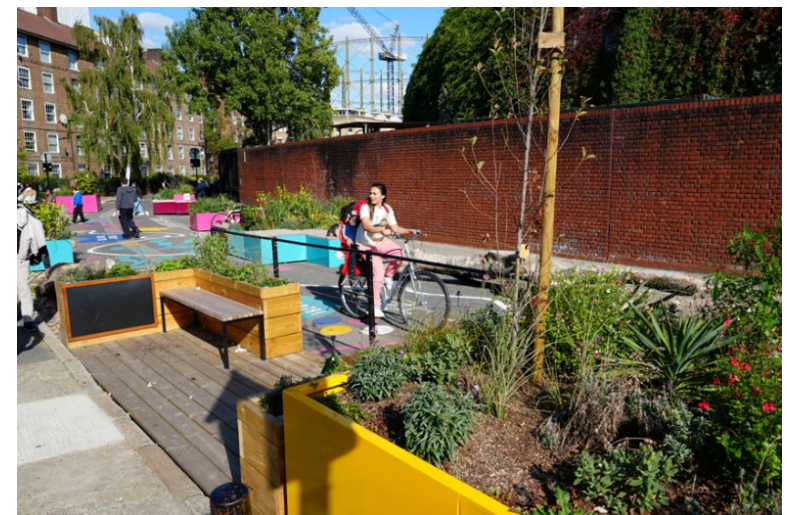
Lambeth Council want to make our neighbourhoods fit for the future. This means designing streets and public spaces that are clean, vibrant and climate resilient as well as enabling people to lead healthier, happier lives.

Streets Reimagined schemes create a destination that supports local businesses and provides space for people to meet, relax, and travel actively. We seek to celebrate local history and champion inclusivity, creativity, and accessibility.

The Streets Reimagined programme seeks to transform spaces across the borough from high streets, underused side roads, and transport hubs. The aim of the programme is to transform streets away from motor vehicles, freeing up space for activities that support local businesses and people.

Across the borough, we have identified streets where the community comes together.

Each of these spaces is unique, and our improvements—incorporating feedback from the local community and businesses—will reflect this character.



How was the Voltaire Road scheme chosen?

The section of Voltaire Road that comprises the project area is a small shopping parade just off Clapham High Street. The area has little motor traffic due to TfL's project in 2020 making Voltaire into a one-way street for vehicles by banning left turns from Clapham High Street.

It has a high number of commuters as it provides access to Clapham High Street overground station and interchange for Clapham North and local bus services. It is also an important cycle link and part of Lambeth's [Healthy Route Network](#), which was upgraded in 2024 by TfL.

The businesses within the project area are well established and consist of several bars, pubs and late-night venues, a restaurant, coffee shop, personal care establishments and shops.

Clapham High Street is a destination for day and night time economy and is bookended by Venn Street and Voltaire Road.

In 2016, Lambeth Council commissioned a TfL Urban Design team to carry out an urban design study for Clapham High Street and within the report Voltaire Road was highlighted as street with a high potential for change. Designs were drawn up to reduce the width of the carriageway and increase space for people and businesses, however due to budget restrictions the full scheme was not realised. Improvements were made to the street in 2022, to widen the pavement on the western side.

Lambeth's Big Shift have been working in partnership with This is Clapham Business Improvement District since 2023 to deliver 23 car free weekends with the objective to showcase how the street could be used for businesses and the community, when motor vehicle movements are removed. The events have been a success and Voltaire Road Reimagined is the next step in enhancing the high street to deliver a desirable destination which prioritises people, supports businesses, encourages leisure and is an amenity for residents



What has happened so far?

Exploration and Feasibility: During Big Shift Car Free days in 2023 and 2024, we spoke to users of the street to find out about their thoughts on a car free space which supports the local economy. During Winter 2024 we spoke to businesses and local people through online engagement, workshops and drop ins. The purpose of this was to gain local knowledge and details of how the street is used and what people's hopes were for the future.

Healthy Neighbourhoods Design Development: between January 24 and April 2025 we used the findings from the Exploration and Feasibility phase to inform the proposed design for Voltaire Road Reimagined.

What is happening now?

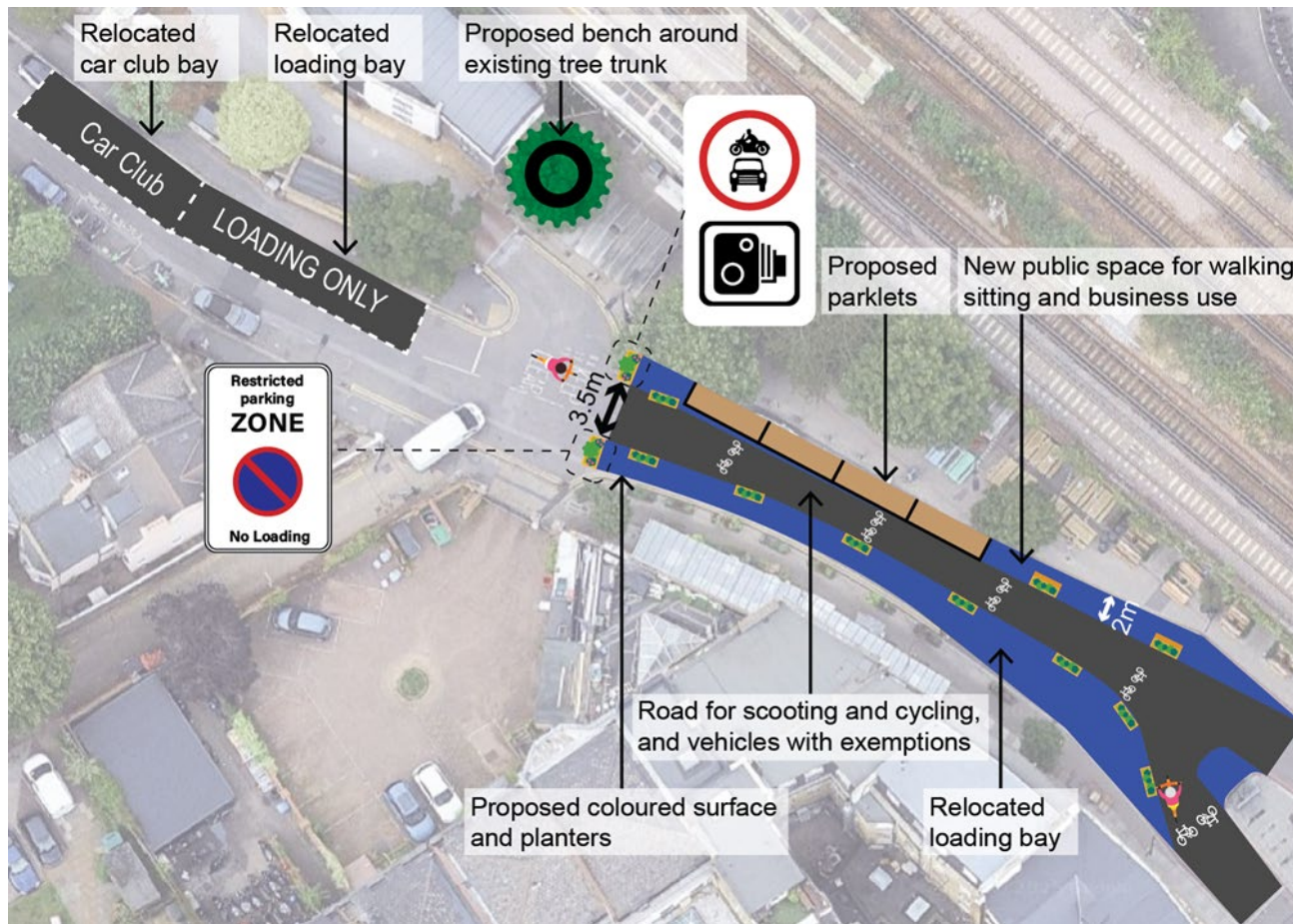
Proposed Design: this report includes a proposed design and we are now asking the community and local stakeholders for feedback. This will help us to understand if we have found a solution that is technically feasible, safe and that considers the needs of the community.

Once the engagement on the proposed design is complete, feedback will be analysed and help inform the final design of Voltaire Road Reimagined. If a decision is made to implement the Reimagined scheme, this will be done on a trial basis.



2. Proposed design

We are proposing to create a traffic free area between Clapham High Street and Slievemore Close from motor vehicles, except for vehicles with an exemption such as emergency vehicles.



- Introduce a motor traffic restriction which prohibits motor vehicles but allows people walking, scooting, wheeling and cycling, and emergency services through.
- Relocate the loading bay to the west of Voltaire Road, creating over 50m² of space for people to enjoy, whilst still providing loading space for businesses.
- Bring new public space to life using colourful surfacing. This will be achieved by repurposing current parking bays.
- Remove the planters which are currently on the pavement to increase space for people who are walking, pushing prams or may use mobility aids
- Install parklets on one side of the street to increase greenery, public seating and space for business use. Parklets would be flush with the kerb to increase accessibility
- Install public seating around the existing tree located outside of Clapham High Street Station.



Proposed Design – view from Voltaire Road



What are we proposing?

- A traffic filter will be placed south of the entrance to Clapham High Street Station and Slievemore Close. The filter will prevent motor vehicles from passing.
- People walking, wheeling, cycling and scooting can pass through the filter, as well as emergency services.
- The restriction is placed in a location that means motor vehicles can turn around when approaching the restriction, and safely exit to the north of the restriction.



Proposed Design – view from Clapham High Street



We propose to:

- Retain the banned left turn for motor vehicles into Voltaire Road which was put in by Transport for London.
- Retain the essential cycleway link through the space which is part of the Healthy Routes network. With updates to the floor markings in relation to the proposed design.
- Declutter the space on all the pavements on Voltaire Road, including on the island that splits Voltaire Road at the junction with Clapham High Street



3. Exploration and Feasibility

Exploration and Feasibility is where we complete an Area Profile – this helps us understand the area based on available data such as demographics and local facilities.

We engage people in the neighbourhood to shape initial designs. We gather key quantitative data – such as traffic data. All of this helped us and guided the development of the proposed designs in Section 2

Area Profile

This section includes a wide range of data sources that have been collected to help us better understand Voltaire Road. This information has helped shape the proposed design of the Voltaire Road Reimagined trial outlined in Section 2.

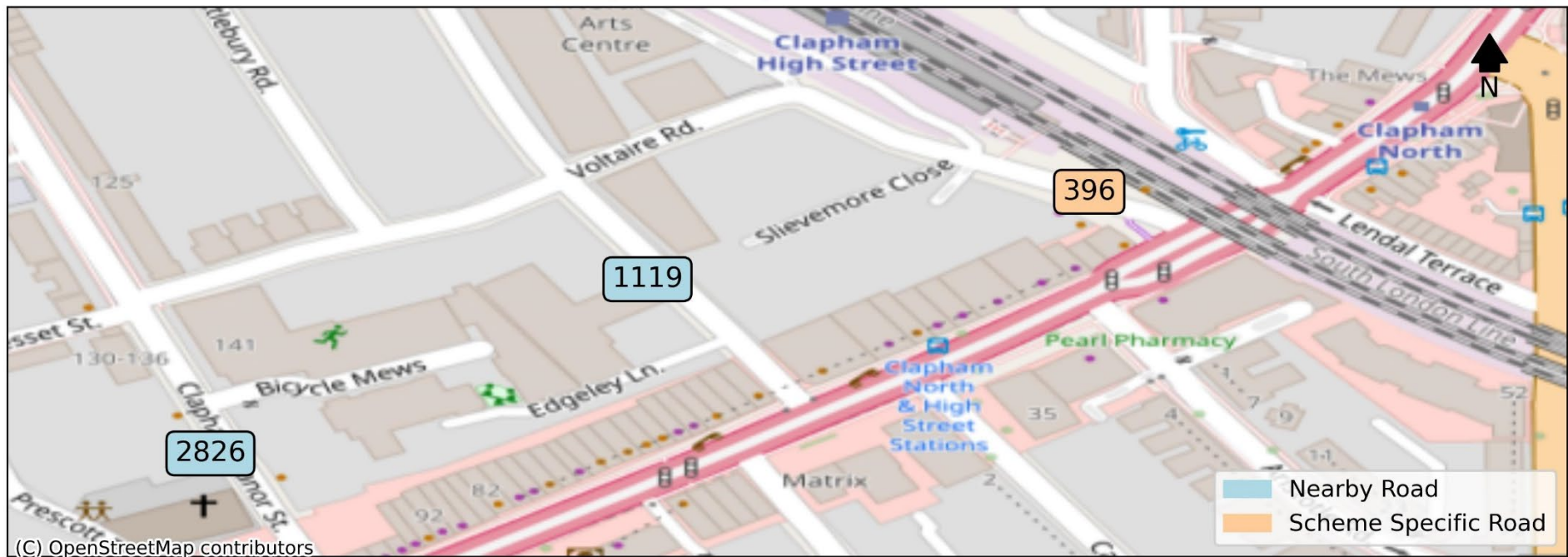


Motor Vehicle Flows

For Voltaire Road, traffic data collection began in November 2024 using a camera which will remain in place for the duration of the Streets Reimagined trial. The camera records the numbers of motor vehicles, cars and people which are using the length and width of the proposed scheme area. Data shown below excludes school holidays.

Extra data was collected on Edgeley Road and Clapham Manor Street in December 2024 using Automatic Traffic Counters to provide an additional context of motor vehicle flows in the local area.

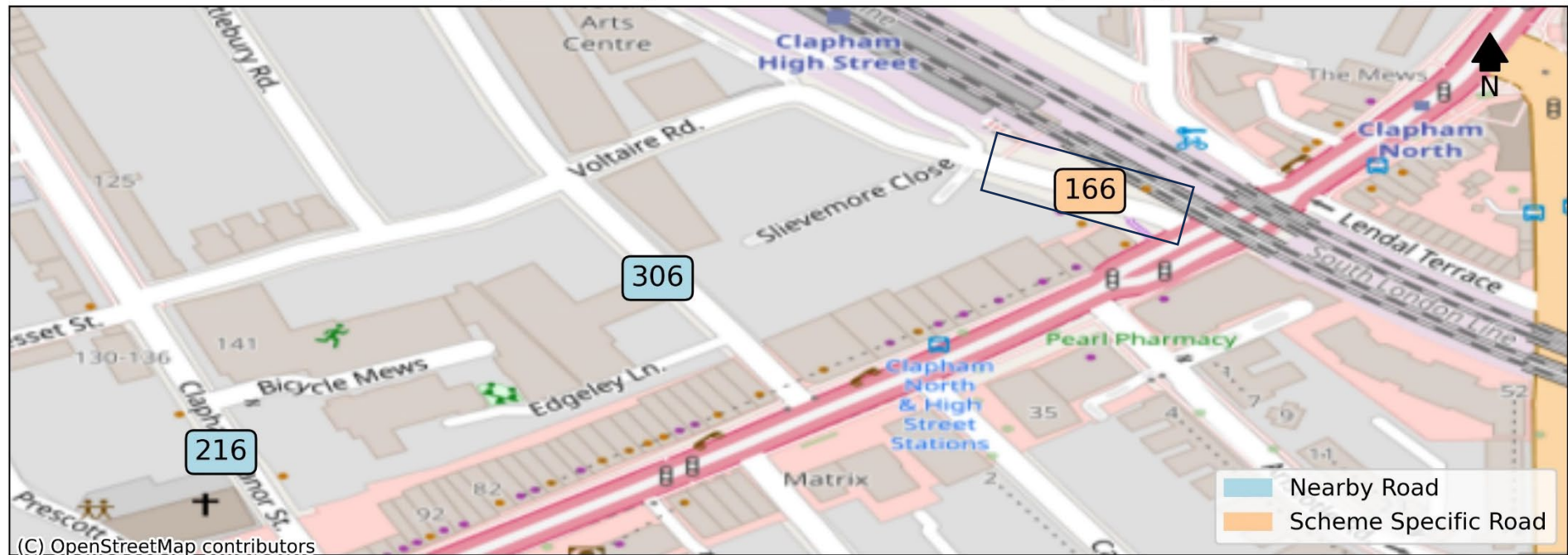
Average Weekday Motor Vehicle Flow



Motor Vehicle Speeds

The map shows the number of speeding motor vehicles on an average weekday in the local area. Some of the monitoring locations are closer to junctions, and speeds in the middle section of the road are more likely to be higher than the values recorded on the map. For Voltaire Road specifically, over 40% of motor vehicles on an average weekday are going at a speed greater than the speed limit of 20 miles per hour.

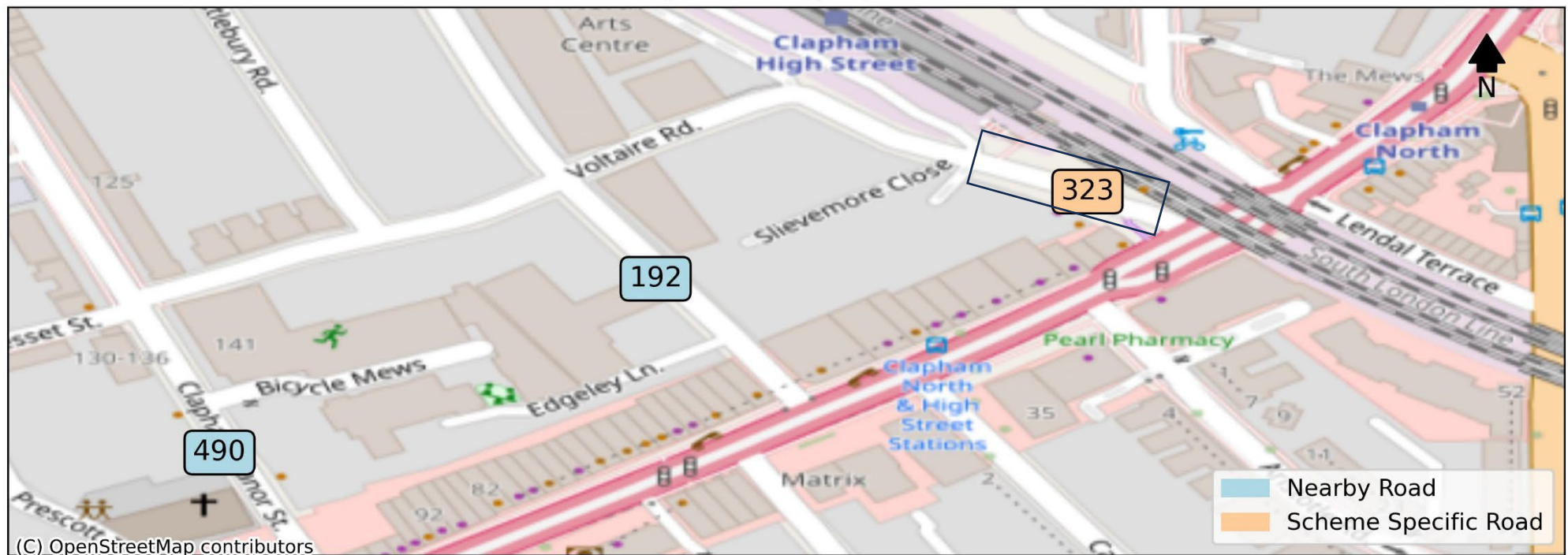
Average Weekday Number of Motor Vehicles Speeding



Cycling

This map shows the number of cyclists recorded at the camera monitoring location on Voltaire Road on an average weekday, as well as cycle data collected from the Automatic Traffic Counters on Edgeley Road and Clapham Manor Street respectively.

Average Weekday Cycle Flow

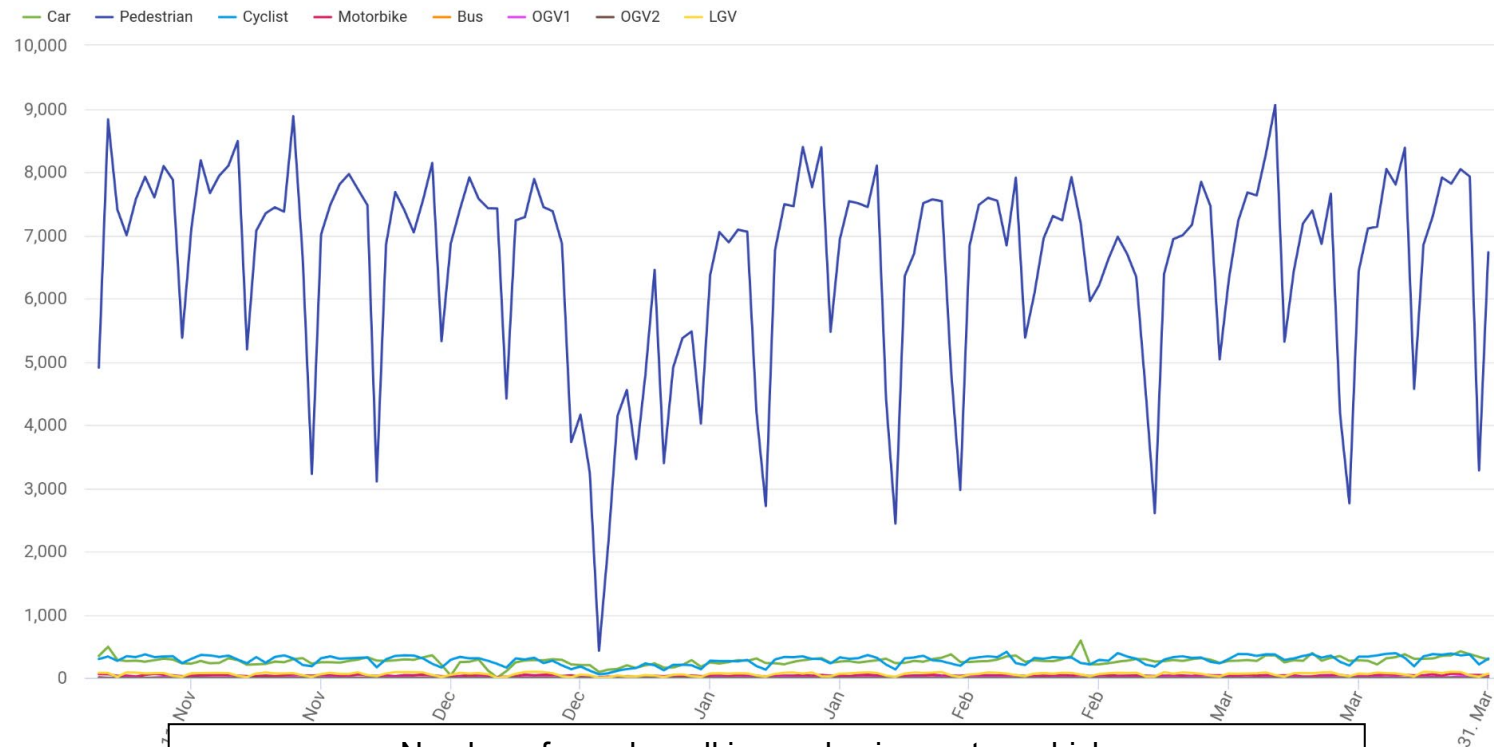


Walking

Voltaire Road hosts a number of local businesses as well as being the entry and exit point of Clapham High Street station. It subsequently has a large quantity of people walking and wheeling. On an average weekday, there are 7,343 people walking to access local businesses and amenities, as well as the station. Saturdays are also busy, with an average number of people walking of 7,158.

Counts over time

Daily counts by class



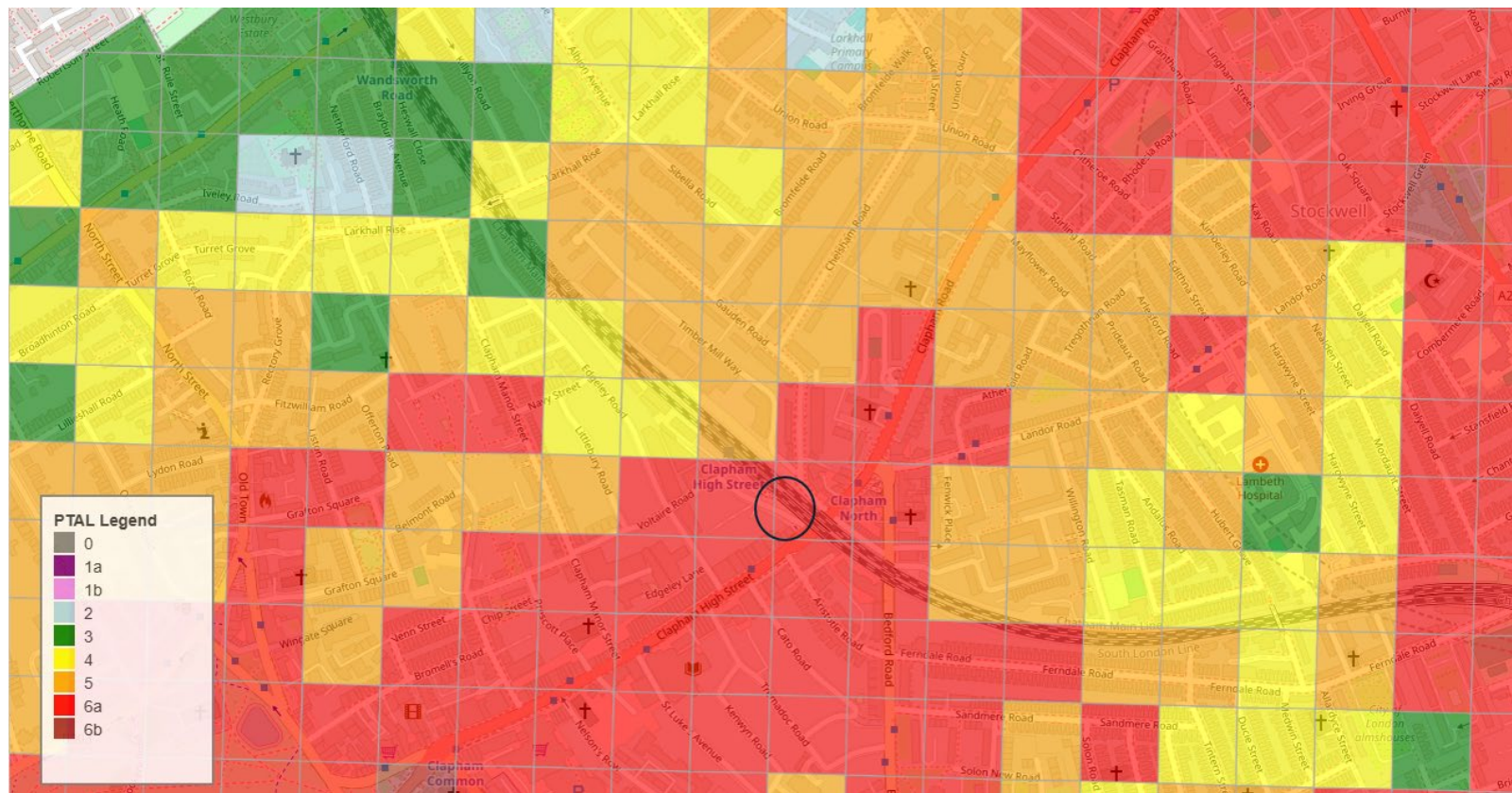
Number of people walking and using motor vehicles
November 2024 – March 2025 – inclusive of school holidays.



Public Transport

Voltaire Road Reimagined is within London Travel Zone 2. The Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) is a measure which rates the whole of London, based on an area's distance from frequent public transport services.

The image below shows the most recent data from 2023, where the area proposed in Voltaire Road Reimagined, and surrounding, scores 6a. This means the area has some of the best public transport options in London.

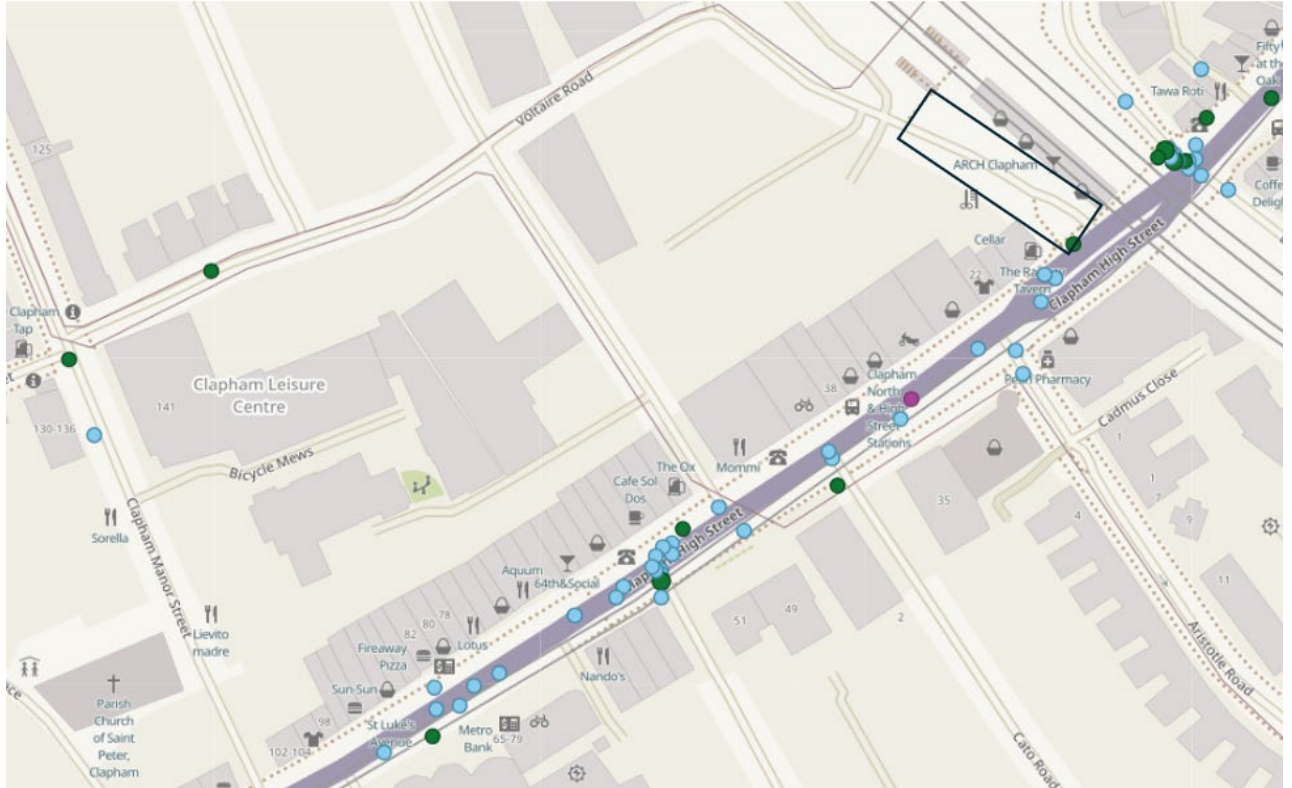


Collision Data

This map shows locations of fatal, serious and slight collisions that have taken place across on Voltaire Road and the surrounding streets, between 30 November 2021 and 30 November 2024.

The concentrations of collisions and casualties are predominately on the busiest roads and concentrations at the main junctions. There are also significant concentrations of casualties on the A3 Clapham High Street. No collisions are recorded on Voltaire Road for this period.

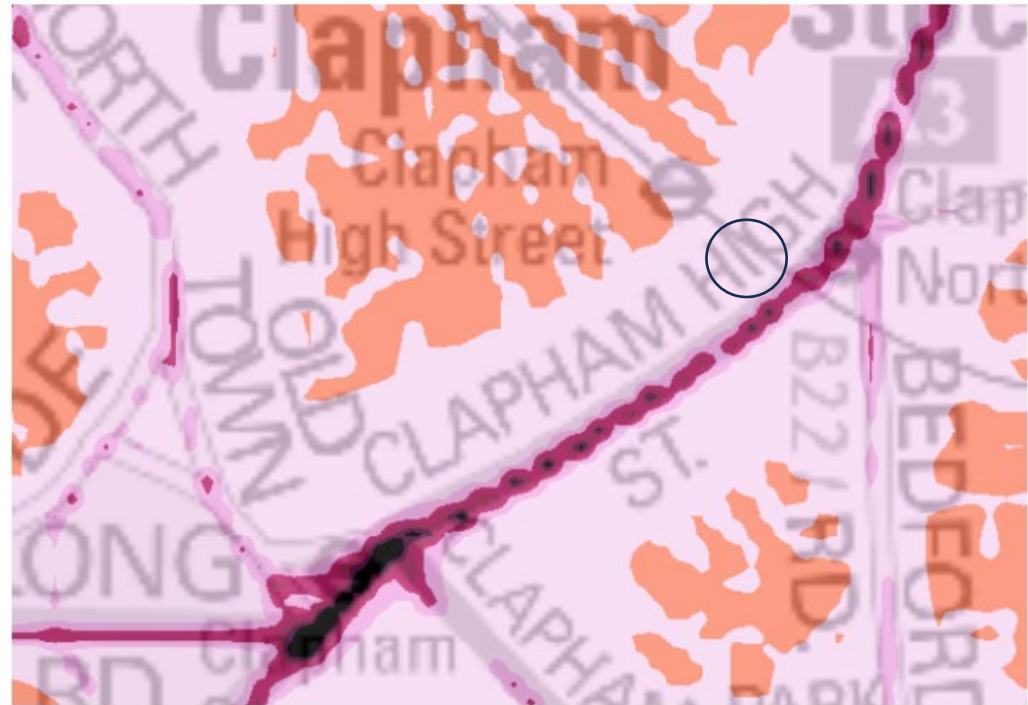
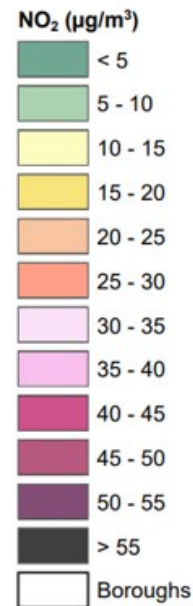
Streets Reimagined aim to support both active travel and use of public transport, as such form part of [Lambeth's Road Danger Reduction Strategy](#). This works in tandem with our approach to road danger reduction on main roads, outlined under the Healthy Main Roads – Safe By Design principles on page 16 of the strategy.



Air Quality

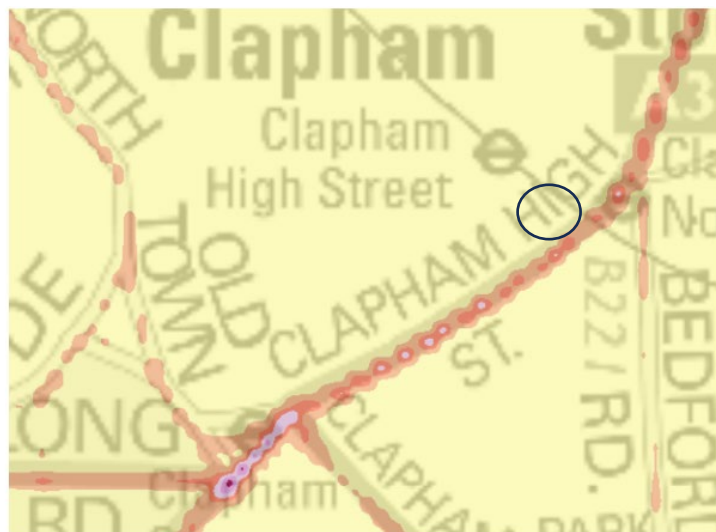
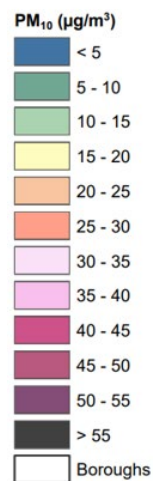
In 2007 Lambeth declared the entire borough as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) for the pollutants Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2) and Particulate Matter (PM_{10}). There are various approaches used to tackle this which are set out within Lambeth's Air Quality Action Plan – [available here](#). We know measures are needed on both local streets and main roads.

This map shows a computer model of levels of nitrogen dioxide in the area around Voltaire Road. 5 and under is low and 55 and over is high.



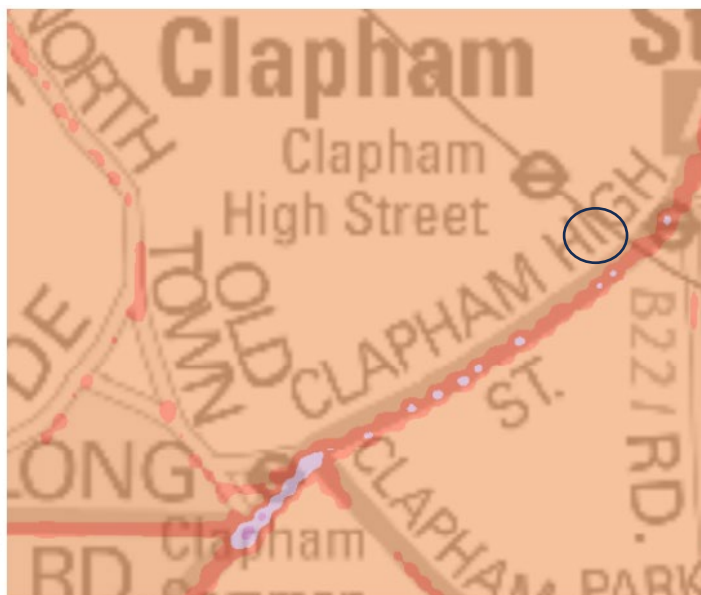
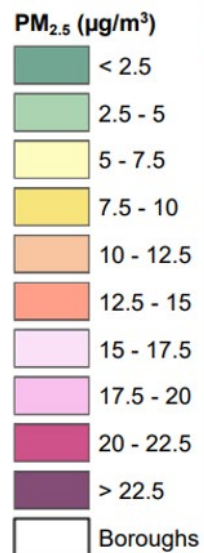
Nitrogen Dioxide concentrations in the area around Voltaire Road





PM10 concentrations in the area around Voltaire Road

This map shows a computer model of levels of Particulate Matter levels (ug/m3) in the area around Voltaire Road. 5 and under is low and 55 and over is high.



PM2.5 concentrations in the area around Voltaire Road

This map shows a computer model of levels of Particulate Matter levels sized 2 micrograms, per cubic metre, in the area around Voltaire Road. 2.5 and under is low and 22.5 and over is high.



What else is happening in the area?

Streets Reimagined projects

Prescott Place – This Streets Reimagined project completed a period of engagement in December 2024 and is currently undergoing internal stakeholder review. Once this process is finalised, officers will begin engagement on the proposed design in Summer 2025.

Healthy Neighbourhoods

Stockwell Garden Healthy Neighbourhoods - The Stockwell Gardens Healthy Neighbourhood is currently in the Proposed Design Engagement Phase.

The scheme area is located to the north-west of Brixton Town Centre and is bounded by A3 Clapham Road to the north, A203 Stockwell Road to the east and Landor Road to the south.

Larkhall Rise – an existing traffic filter on Larkhall Rise Bridge which is a component of Lambeth's Healthy Routes network.

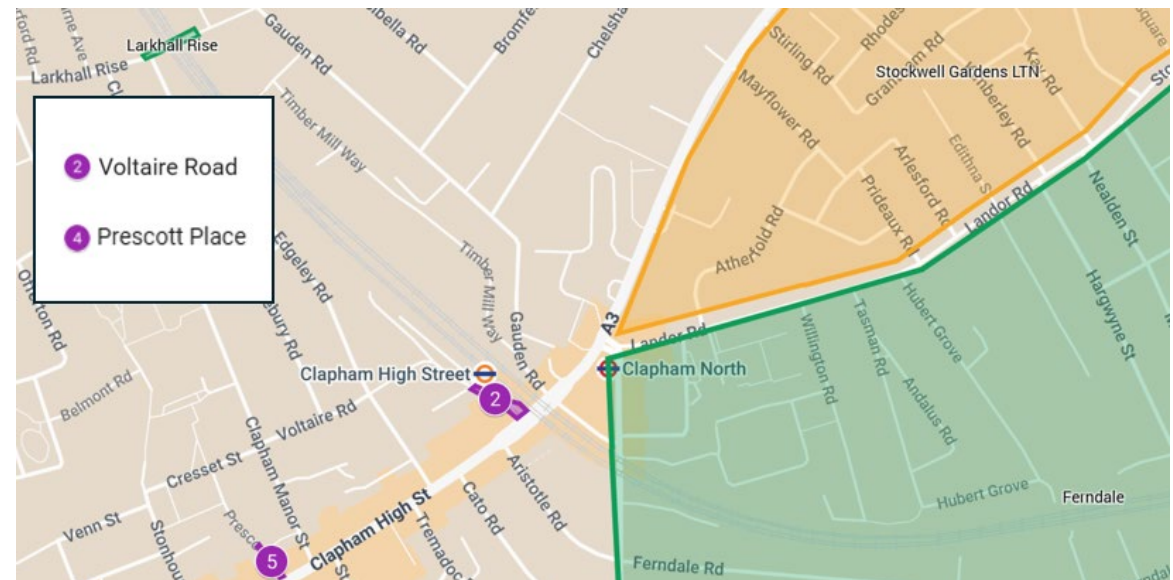
Ferndale – an existing Low Traffic Neighbourhood which was made permanent in 2022.

Planning Applications

There are currently proposed developments at:

- Clapham North Arts Centre
- Timber Mill Way (off Gauden Road)

No impacts are expected from either proposed development.



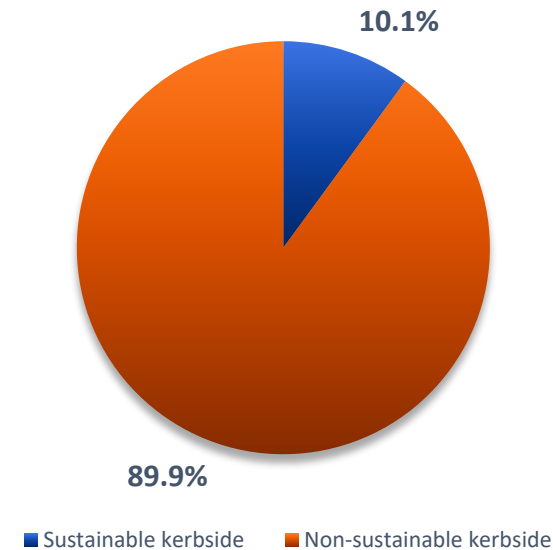
Sustainable Kerbside

The kerbside - the space at the side of the road typically used for car parking - is one of the largest public spaces we have control over. Through our [Kerbside Strategy](#), we have committed to using 25% of our kerbside for sustainable uses across the borough, through the following four priorities:

- Accessible and active travel
- Create places for people
- Increase climate resilience
- Reduce traffic and emissions from transport

As of April 2025, the kerbside on Voltaire Road was mainly designated for parking and management of parking by double yellow lines, with just 10% of the kerbside in the project area uses for sustainable uses. The changes proposed to Voltaire Road will see the **whole** of the kerbside within the project area used for sustainable uses, including parklets, planters, spaces for people and businesses.

Voltaire Road - Kerbside baseline



Sustainable uses of the kerbside:

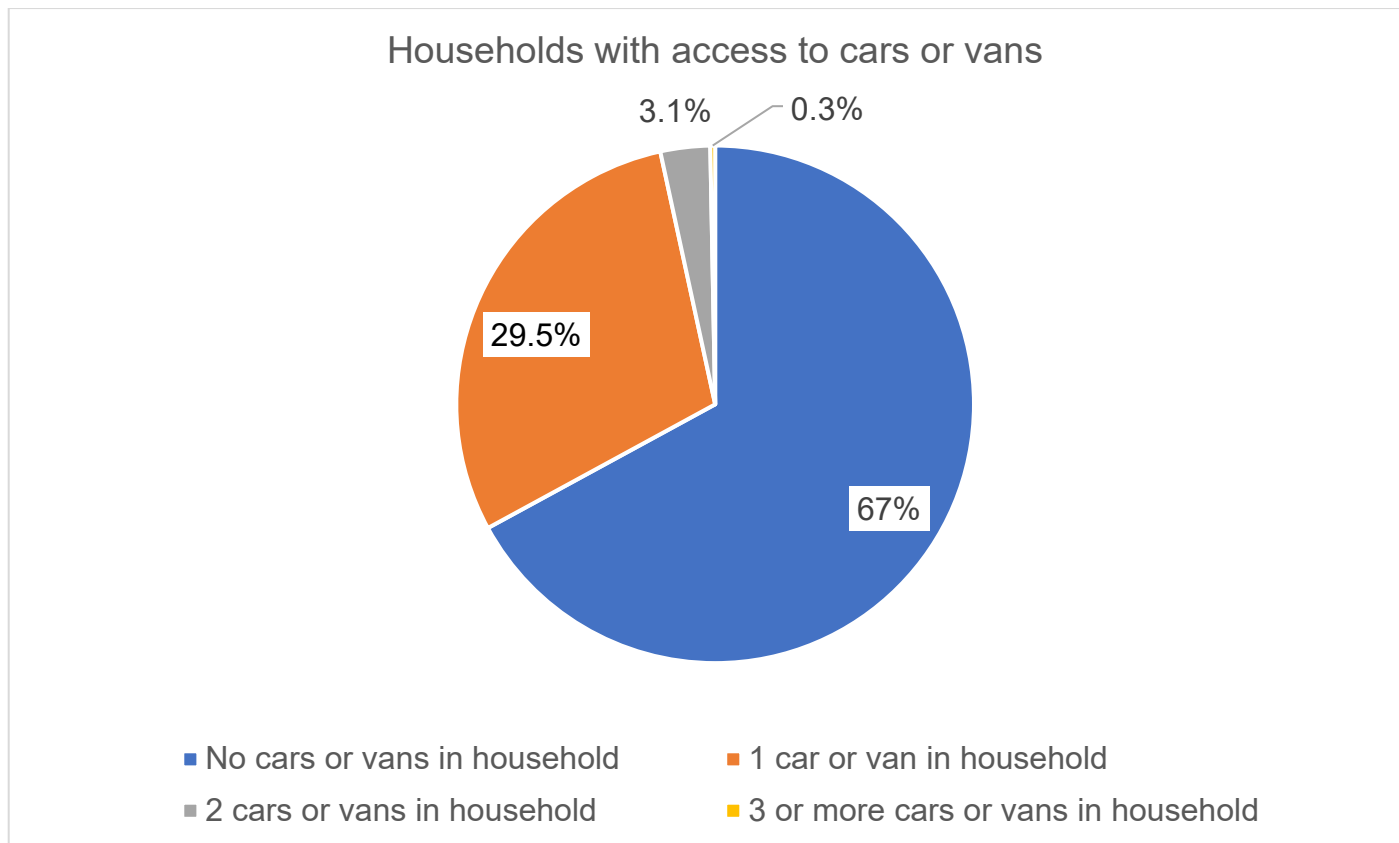
- Green space and street trees
- Community and business parklets
- Cycle lanes
- Pedestrian Crossings
- Bus lanes and bus stops
- Shared Scooter / Bike Bay
- Car Club Bay
- Electric vehicle charging bay



Demographics

- The Voltaire Road area has a higher proportion of adults aged 20-34 (49.9%) in comparison to England's population for the same age group (19.5%). Only 3.7% of residents within the area drive to work (using a car, van, motorcycle or scooter) in comparison to 9.3% average across Lambeth.
- 67% do not have access to a car, in contrast to 23.5% of people in England.

Source: 2021 Census Data



Engagement

The Voltaire Road 'Identify' phase of engagement took place from October 2024 to January 2025, following on from the Big Shift Car Free Days which took place over summer and autumn 2024 and in summer 2023. We undertook several engagement activities to understand the area, its needs and wants.

The engagement events were advertised through different channels and aimed to reach a wide demographic. All feedback from the following activities was shared with the designers to inform the design proposals

Exploration and Feasibility - Engagement Activities

Activities	Detail	Result
Letter Drop Leaflet sent to all households within the Reimagined Street area on 4 November 2024	A leaflet introducing the Voltaire Road Reimagined project and the Have Your Say engagement website was sent to all households within the leaflet distribution area.	Leaflets distributed to 1,191 addresses on and near to Voltaire Road.
<u>Reimagined Voltaire Road Have Your Say site</u> Launched 11 November 2024	A website providing information on the Reimagined Street scheme, including an interactive map, timeline and information on engagement events was launched.	132 visitors (per 24 January 2025) and 5 news subscribers.
<u>Interactive Map</u> Launched 11 November 2024	An online engagement map people could click on to add specific feedback for specific locations within the project area.	7 comments on map (per 24 January 2025).
Voltaire Road Business Survey	Online survey directed at businesses on and nearby Voltaire Road, asking for their input on staff and customers' transport use,	6 responses (per 24 January 2025).



Launched on 5 November 2024 and open until 31 December 2024	use of outside space, deliveries, waste collection and intentions for decarbonising their operations.	
Safety for Women and Girls Neighbourhood Visit 20 November 2024	Arranged in partnership with the Safer Neighbourhoods Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) team, a led walk was conducted through Prescott Place and down Clapham High Street to Voltaire Road. The purpose of the walk was to explore safety concerns for women and girls and identify issues and opportunities through facilitated questions and a discussion.	Walk completed with two attendees, and written feedback on safety for women and girls in the area provided by one registered attendee after the event.
Key Stakeholder Outreach Completed in phases	Direct outreach to stakeholders near the Reimagined Street.	28 stakeholders engaged with as per stakeholder map.
Clapham BID outreach Ongoing contact through all project phases	Regular meetings with the Clapham BID, working in partnership with This is Clapham to deliver Car Free Days in December.	Ongoing contact will be maintained throughout all project stages.
Business drop-in visits Between 4-16 November 2024, and 11 December 2024	All identified strategic businesses on and near to Voltaire Road were visited to provide an overview of the project and get their feedback on their use of the project area, transport access needs and desires for improvement in the future.	41 businesses visited to provide information on the scheme and to request their feedback. 6 businesses completed the online survey, and 11 businesses provided verbal feedback on the scheme and their access needs during visits and follow-up phone calls.
Letter Drop	A leaflet outlining the Brixton Project engagement activities, times, dates and locations was sent to all households within	Leaflets distributed to 1,191 addresses on and near to Voltaire Road.



Leaflet sent to all households within the Reimagined Street area on 11 December 2024.	the leaflet distribution area. The leaflet also contained information on the Have Your Say engagement website.	
Lamp post wraps Erected on 9 December 2024.	Large lamp post wraps advertising the Brixton Project engagement activities, times and dates as well as a QR code to the Have Your Say engagement site were put up on Voltaire Road.	4 across the length of the Reimagined area.
Voltaire Road Car-Free Days Took place on four weekends in 2023, and during 14 weekends in 2024	Car free days were arranged to allow residents, businesses and visitors to experience a car-free environment on Voltaire Road.	Car free days were arranged in collaboration with the Clapham BID and the local businesses.
Accessibility Working Group (AWG) visit Completed 14 December 2024	The Accessibility Working Group (AWG), set up by Lambeth Council in partnership with MP Smarter Travel, conducted a site visit to Voltaire Road with members of the Disabled Community to give feedback on how they felt while moving through the area.	The site visit to Voltaire Road took place during one of the Car Free Days, and Working Group members with a range of disabilities provided feedback on Voltaire Road's kerbside, degree of road safety, infrastructure and to what degree Voltaire Road promotes health and well-being.
Creative engagement delivered by The Brixton Project Completed as a series of creative engagement events in December 2024	The Brixton Project were commissioned to lead on engagement with residents, businesses and community groups in co-creating a shared vision for Voltaire Road through creative means. This consisted of a series of engagement events led by local artists and creative practitioners to engage a broad demographic in sharing their experiences and viewpoints on the Voltaire Road Reimagined scheme.	The Brixton Project delivered five engagement events during the Car Free Days on 14 and 15 December 2024 and engaged with local businesses through informal interviews prior to and following the Car Free Days.



<p>LGBT Hero</p> <p>Meeting took place 10 January 2025</p>	<p>A meeting was held with LGBT Hero, a national health and well-being charity for LGBTQ+ people and developers of the Lambeth Allies programme, to understand how LGBT+ voices can be engaged with as the Voltaire Road Reimagined project progresses.</p>	<p>In this meeting, methodologies for engagement with local LGBTQ+ people and communities were discussed, as well as possible recruitment channels. Consider continuing collaboration with LGBT Hero in subsequent stages of the Voltaire Road Reimagined project.</p>
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Engagement and the proposed design

This section outlines key areas where the engagement undertaken from October 2024 to January 2025 has shaped this specific design proposal or identified clear actions for officers going forward. This feedback was provided before a design was proposed. This section will be updated in the final Design Report, informed by feedback from local businesses and people on the proposed design.

Feedback 1: There were a range of requests from fewer cars, to full pedestrianisation from residents, businesses and people using the street for leisure. It was felt that this would produce environmental and health benefits, improve access to Clapham High Street Station, encourage a mode shift to active travel, improve personal and road safety for a range of road users, provide a cultural space for the community to enjoy and positively impact local businesses.

Actions: Officers have investigated the use of the road by speaking with businesses, community and servicing.

Design change: The proposed design removes access to motor vehicles except for limited and targeted exemptions. This maximises the opportunity in the street for public and business use.

Feedback 2: In case of pedestrianisation, maintain loading facilities on Voltaire Road.

Action: Officers spoke to businesses in the locality about their loading requirements. This feedback has been incorporated into the proposed design.

Design change: The loading bay has been relocated on Voltaire Road to outside of the scheme extents. The proposed location will still allow for loading and increases the amount of space in the street that can be used for other uses.

Feedback: Residents and businesses described an issue with litter and flytipping on Voltaire Road. They described household rubbish left on the street made the area less attractive. There were suggestions for enhanced quality and increased frequency of cleaning and rubbish collection.

Action: We are investigating options regarding bagged household waste locations and solutions to tackle litter.



Feedback 3: Prioritise pavements for pedestrian and business use, whilst reducing street clutter and cycling on pavements, and place access routes for cyclists and emergency vehicles in the centre of the road.

Action: Officers have used this feedback to whilst creating the design, especially when looking at what can be removed from the street to make it less cluttered.

Design change: The proposed design provides businesses with extra space which will be in the existing road space. Due to this extra space, businesses will be expected to keep pavements clear for people walking and using mobility aids. We will also remove any unnecessary street signs, posts and planters which clutter the pavements.

Feedback 4: Residents and the Accessibility Working Group (AWG) provided negative feedback on the existing pavement and road surfaces, describing them as visually unappealing, uneven and lacking in dropped kerbs, potentially posing tripping hazards and impeding movement.

Action: The feedback of the residents and AWG has been taken on in the design where possible.

Design change: Drop kerbs of a temporary nature will be included in the design to ensure that spaces are accessible.

Feedback 5: Add play equipment to make the road more attractive for children and families.

Actions: We have been in contact with Network Rail to discuss the possibility of partnership working to upgrade the space in front of Clapham High Street Station. There is an opportunity to reimagine this space to ensure it includes the needs of children, greenery and provides space saving cycle parking and seating. This is an ongoing discussion therefore any changes beyond seating have not been proposed. Big Shift Car Free Days have taken place since 2023 and will take place every weekend until the end of September 2025. The car free days offer activities for children, young people and community.

Feedback 6: Add more lighting to enhance feeling of personal safety and deter fly tipping.

Actions: A lighting assessment will take place later in the Spring when the trees on Voltaire Road are in leaf to assess whether the 6 existing street lamp columns are impacted by the scheme. Network Rail have been contacted to trim trees on their land to improve the filtering of the light that is existing on the street.



Equalities Impact Assessment – summary of impacts identified

The Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is used to assess the potential impacts of the Voltaire Road Reimagined project against those with protected characteristics by law (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion, sex and sexual orientation) and socio-economic status. Note that a detailed EqIA, informed by the design engagement, will be included as part of any decision to implement a trial.

At this stage, the key findings for Voltaire Road are:

Age and sex:

- Concerns about personal safety at night: street light improvements.

Pregnancy and maternity:

- Concerns about poor air quality negatively impacting children in particular and a lack of public space designed with children's needs in mind on Voltaire Road.

Disability and age:

- Improve accessibility by providing coloured pavement surface and installing planters/seating to delineate the pedestrian area and provide spaces to rest.
- The pavements can be experienced as cluttered and tables, chairs and a-boards can pose as tripping hazards or make movement difficult.
- Use of the disabled is unknown therefore surveys are being conducted to investigate this.

Sexual orientation:

- Voltaire Road and Clapham in general is home to multiple LGBTQ+ venues and is a destination for LGBTQ+ communities. The space must feel safe – by creating a more people focused space the project could increase footfall, increasing natural surveillance and safety on the street.



4. What happens next?

The design engagement runs from 30 April until 21 May 2025 and includes:

- 3-week Have Your Say online survey with paper copies available on request
- Email to stakeholders, including everyone signposting to the Have Your Say survey
- Leaflet to inform people about the online survey sent to all addresses on Voltaire Road, as well as addresses 100 metres outside of the proposed trial area
- 121 meetings with businesses on Voltaire Road to discuss the design.

Review of Design Engagement feedback and decision on starting a trial

All feedback provided during this engagement will be collated and reviewed by officers. What we learn through this process will help shape a final design for Voltaire Road.

A final version of this document will be included as part of an Officer Delegated Decision Report, including learning from the design engagement and any resulting changes to the proposed design. For more information on how Lambeth Council makes decisions – [please see this link.](#)

