

JL's PDS Meeting LN Update Questions

1. CE&S PDS Meeting of 11 Jan 2024

An update on the B&NES LN programme was presented to the CE&S PDS Panel at its meeting in Keynsham on 11/01/24.

What happened with the early LTNs implemented in London from 2020 onwards showed that, to be successful, LTNs need to be designed with care. I am not sure we are there yet with the LTNs we are going ahead with here in B&NES. I had a number of questions on the process B&NES has followed for designing its LN schemes, some of which I was able to ask at the PDS meeting within the time available. The remaining questions will be answered by email and both the questions and answers will become part of the public record of the meeting.

My questions plus the answers where provided at the meeting are as follows.

Question 1 – How and by whom were the preliminary designs for each LN produced? The co-design workshops with local residents indicated residents' desires and requirements. But residents are not Traffic Engineers; I understand that the output from each of those workshops was interpreted as statements of requirement, at best as design suggestions, but not as preliminary designs themselves. Who took the output from each co-design workshop and came up with each of the preliminary designs proposed for these LTNs?

Answer 1 – it was a combination of officers and contract engineers together.

Question 2 – I have received conflicting answers in the past when I have asked whether preliminary designs were produced by the contract engineers or by Council officers or by Council members. In a conversation I had in early December 2023 with the contract engineers about the Walcot LN preliminary design, the engineers said they were not tasked with producing that preliminary design but were presented with it by officers. In a subsequent meeting I had with the Cabinet Member later in December 2023, she said that it was the engineers who had produced the preliminary design. May I see a copy of the Schedule or Scope of Work covering the work the contract engineers were asked to undertake by B&NES for their part of the B&NES LN Programme? I do not need to see any commercially confidential aspects of the contract, just the specification of the work the contract engineers were asked to undertake.

Answer 2 – a response will be provided within five working days.

Question 3 – were the contract engineers asked to consider alternative possible preliminary designs and were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with performing a comparative analysis of different possible preliminary designs for each LN?

Answer 3 – For each LN, the preliminary design chosen was the one judged to have the most suitable location for the primary intervention (usually the modal filter).

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Question 4 – were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with doing any traffic analysis or traffic impact assessment for the proposed preliminary or final designs for each LN?

Answer 4 – No. The approach is to collect traffic data beforehand and traffic data afterwards and assess the traffic impact from the data.

Question 5 – were the contract engineers or anyone else tasked with doing an Equality Impact Assessment for the proposed preliminary or final designs for each LN?

Question 6 – were the final designs subject to consultation with and/or signed off by suitable representatives of disabled residents?

Question 7 – were the final designs subject to consultation with and/or signed off by the emergency services?

Question 8 – were the final designs subject to consultation with the local residents who would be affected by each design?

Question 9 – given the lack of analysis of, and consultation on, the final designs, does the Cabinet Member consider it appropriate that these designs should be implemented using ETROs? The ETRO process essentially treats residents as guinea pigs in order to find out what the consequences, intended and unintended, of each design on residents' lives and wellbeing might be?

Question 10 – if it turns out that a design has hugely harmful unintended consequences on local residents, is there a way that the ETRO could be terminated before the minimum term of six months has expired, or would residents be forced to suffer those consequences for at least six months regardless of their severity?

Question 11 – In para 2.12 onwards you say that engagement has taken place with ward members for each of the remaining LN areas to help you understand the issues these designs might create. What was the purpose of that engagement: was it just to identify those issues, to modify the designs to address or minimise the adverse impacts identified, to deprioritise those LNs that might have significant issues associated with them, or something else?