

Central Leaside

Joint Area Action Plan



A Joint Plan for Enfield's Local Development Framework and Haringey's Local Development Framework
Central Leaside AAP - Issues and Options Report
February 2008

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4 Connecting Central Leaside

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1** Improving access and movement within Central Leaside is a key issue, particularly if Enfield and Haringey are to accommodate significant future housing and employment growth. At a strategic level, Central Leaside has relatively good transport links – the North Circular provides good east-west connections, whilst the Lee Valley railway line provides fast services between Stansted and central London. The area also has some good strategic walking and cycling connections running north-south through the Lee Valley Regional Park.
- 4.1.2** However, these good strategic links in themselves cause barriers to local movement. The North Circular road, the Lee Valley railway line, the waterways and reservoirs all serve to restrict movement between the residential areas to the west of the action plan area and the employment areas and Lee Valley Regional Park in the east. Where crossings do exist, for example at Northumberland Park, the level rail crossing causes severe delays. The environment is generally hostile to pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, there are infrequent rail services and a lack of bus services to and from employment and residential areas. Sustainable transport modes need to be promoted in order to help reduce the current reliance on the private car.
- 4.1.3** If we are to support a new development in Central Leaside there are choices to make in relation to transport within the Central Leaside area. How can we maximise the benefits of the good east-west strategic road links within the area, whilst ensuring that the North Circular does not prevent movement around the study area on a more local level? How can the proposal for improved rail connections between London and Stansted be used to greatest benefit? And how can we promote more sustainable modes of transport in the longer term, encouraging people to switch from their cars to public transport, walking and cycling?



Figure 4.1 Existing Bus Services

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4.2 Public Transport

- 4.2.1** Enfield's emerging Core Strategy and Haringey's Unitary Development Plan both recognise that an efficient public transport network is essential to supporting the development of a mixed, balanced and sustainable community⁽¹³⁾. It will be important to secure major improvements to the public transport infrastructure if we are to support a new community in Central Leaside.
- 4.2.2** There are a number of bus services running both north-south and east-west within Central Leaside, although their frequency is limited (see Automatic Text). For example, there are just 12 peak hour services running along the North Circular, despite its significance as the key east-west connector. There are bus routes running south to Tottenham Hale along Meridian Way/Watermead Way, and a number of routes that connect the study area with outlying locations, such as Waltham Cross, Edmonton Green and Seven Sisters. These routes are within easy walking distance of some residential areas within the study area. Notably, there is no service that runs north along Meridian Way to Pickett's Lock and Ponders End⁽¹⁴⁾.
- 4.2.3** In addition, there are severe rail service limitations, despite a seemingly good rail connection. Both local and long-distance rail services running along the Lee Valley line are restricted by track capacity. There is only a single railway line in each direction; both fast non-stop services and slow local rail services share the same track. While there are many fast trains that currently pass through Central Leaside, few stop within the study area to serve the local resident and working population. Although there is clearly a need for additional services, this is currently not possible, as the rail line already operates at maximum capacity during peak times.
- 4.2.4** Improving the rail service would be one of the most effective interventions to achieve a step change in Central Leaside, and ensure that new communities are sustainable. To address this, there are proposals to provide two extra tracks along the length of the Lee Valley line next to the existing tracks - this is known as four-tracking. The issue of extending the capacity of the Lee Valley Line is outside the scope of the Central Leaside AAP. Network Rail, together with London Rail, is responsible for taking these proposals forward. Network Rail's Strategic Business Plan (2007) states that it is currently planned to implement four-tracking between 2014 and 2019 and that an agreement with BAA, Network Rail and Transport for London will be sought early in 2008. Analysis undertaken so far suggests there is potential to increase the number of local services that stop at Northumberland Park and Angel Road. Enfield and Haringey Councils both support the four-tracking proposal to improve accessibility to the Central Leaside area. The proposal also has the support of the Mayor of London, Network Rail and Transport for London.

13 London Borough of Enfield, April 2007, Core Strategy Issues and Options Report; and London Borough of Haringey, July 2006, Unitary Development Plan.

14 For more detailed information, see Central Leaside Area Action Plan, Baseline Report (2007). Urban Initiatives for LB Enfield and LB Haringey.

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- 4.2.5** People are further discouraged from using rail services given the poor quality of the majority of the stations within the action plan area. Angel Road rail station is particularly inferior, with unwelcoming entrances and its unappealing location underneath the North Circular. It is one of the least used stations in London and has a poor level of service. The location and accessibility of Angel Road station is a key issue to be addressed within the Central Leaside AAP.
- 4.2.6** The implementation of the four-tracking scheme could provide the opportunity to explore the use and location of the station, to make it more accessible and attractive to users. Angel Road station could either be relocated or improved in situ. If the station could be relocated south of its current location it could then become central to the development opportunities at Kimberley Road and around Tesco and IKEA. The potentially large catchment population within easy access of a relocated station and the associated increased patronage levels development would generate would help to justify its relocation. However, the impact of relocating Angel Road station nearer to Northumberland Park station will need to be assessed fully. There are clearly cost and access implications for the wider community associated with relocation, and these would need to be weighed against the opportunities for regeneration in the area.



Figure 4.2 Angel Road Station

4 Connecting Central Leaside

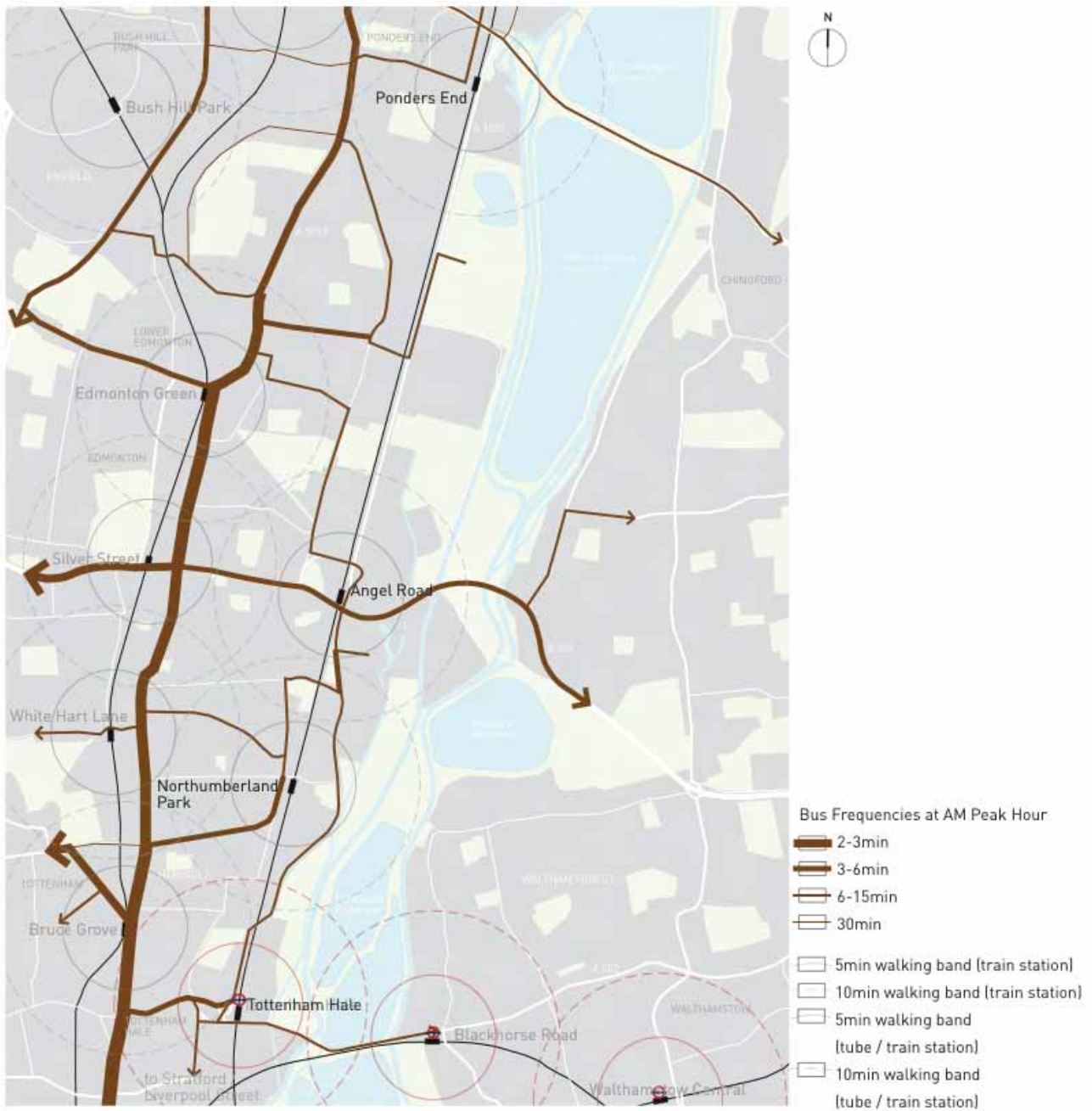


Figure 4.3 Bus Frequencies

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Question 14

How can more people be encouraged to use bus services in Central Leaside?

4.2.7 We think that there are three options; more than one could be pursued. Please give us your views, and if you wish to suggest further options, please do so.

Option 14A

Seek the maintenance and improvement of existing bus services and facilities.

Implications: This option will include seeking an increase in the frequency of existing bus services, as well as improved bus facilities, such as the provision of real time information and improved waiting facilities. This option would encourage more people to use public transport, although there will be cumulative benefits if it is combined with the option below.

Option 14B

Seek the provision of new bus routes within Central Leaside.

These new routes should improve accessibility within the area to existing industrial estates and residential areas, as well as to areas beyond Central Leaside, including Waltham Forest, Tottenham Hale and Edmonton Green (see Figure 4.4 'Options for Improving Bus Services in Central Leaside').

Implications: By providing more bus routes, this option would provide a viable alternative for individuals currently dependent upon their car. This would have a positive environmental effect as traffic congestion would be reduced, especially at peak times, and it could also help to resolve the car parking problems currently faced in many of the employment areas. The provision of better services along Meridian Way and Watermead Way to Tottenham Hale would be particularly important in the short term, ahead of four-tracking.

Option 14C

Investigate the potential for leisure and recreational water-bus or water-taxi services from Tottenham Hale to Central Leaside (see Figure 4.4 'Options for Improving Bus Services in Central Leaside').

Implications: This service would only be directed at the leisure market as journey times would not make it a viable option for businesses and commuters. It would, however, be a way of raising the profile of Central Leaside and the Lee Valley Park.

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Question 15

Question: How can more people be encouraged to use rail services in Central Leaside?

4.2.8 We think that there are four options; more than one could be pursued. Please give us your views, and if you wish to suggest further options, please do so.

Option 15A

Seek to increase the frequency of rail services at all stations within Central Leaside.

Implications: While this option will encourage more people to use local rail services, the limited track capacity at present will mean that any improvements to the frequency of existing services will not result in a step-change in the use of the railways. Increased frequency can only be supported if there is sufficient residential population to patronise the extra services. This has implications for the amount of new homes in the area and the density of residential development.

Option 15B

Improve access to all rail stations within Central Leaside.

Implications: This option will significantly improve the safety and security of the railway stations, therefore encouraging more people to use local rail services. This option, however, will have far greater benefits if combined with improvements to the frequency of services and, in particular, with four-tracking.

Option 15C

Relocate Angel Road station, to the south of its current location.

Implications: This option would ensure that Angel Road station relates well to both existing and new development in the Angel Road area. By relocating the station to the south, it could potentially provide a focus for new mixed-use development and activity. However, the distance between the relocated Angel Road station and neighbouring stations, particularly Northumberland Park, will need to be considered, as well as any potential impacts upon the frequency and quality of services to these stations. The costs associated with relocation will be considerable. These costs, however, should be viewed with the understanding that there is already a need for substantial investment in the station.

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Option 15D

Create a new station at Pickett's Lock.

Implications: A new station at Pickett's Lock would only be a viable consideration in conjunction with significant proposals for a major new sports and leisure event centre on the Pickett's Lock site, that would attract large crowds. This number of visitors to the existing athletics centre and cinema complex would not justify a new station. In the event of major new proposals coming forward, a new station in this location could also help to improve station access for nearby residents and businesses (see options presented in Section 9.3). The impact of a new station on Angel Road and Ponders End stations would also need to be considered.



Figure 4.5 Angel Road Station

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4.3 Walking and Cycling

- 4.3.1** As a result of movement within Central Leaside being dominated by the private car, the area suffers from pockets of severe traffic congestion. This is particularly evident during peak traffic times along Meridian Way/Watermead Way, the North Circular and Tottenham High Road. This has a negative impact on the quality of the surrounding environment both for pedestrians and cyclists. Parts of the study area are particularly unwelcoming and unattractive as a pedestrian or cyclist, including some of the industrial estates adjacent to the North Circular, the area around Meridian Way/Watermead Way, and along local streets including Montagu Road. Walking and cycling is not only discouraged by the heavy traffic, but also by the sheer scale of the road infrastructure around the North Circular. Improvements to the pedestrian environment and access to public transport facilities for local communities in existing residential areas such as the North East Tottenham / Northumberland Park area should be explored.
- 4.3.2** There are also a number of pedestrian and cycle links within the area that could be enhanced to fully exploit both existing features and future opportunities. East-west 'green fingers' linking residential areas to the River Lee waterways could be created. Links also need to be strengthened along the waterways, where there is the opportunity to improve the quality of these areas to encourage more active use. The use of the waterways could also be explored, for commercial and leisure purposes.
- 4.3.3** An existing but incomplete pedestrian link exists along the route of the former rail alignment between Angel Road and Edmonton Green. This provides a direct route to the town centre. However, the hostile environment of the road network and employment uses located here, makes the Angel Road end of this route particularly unpleasant. Connections at the Angel Road end should therefore be enhanced to encourage increased use of this pedestrian link.
- 4.3.4** The ability to achieve a well-connected pedestrian environment is limited unless the character of part or all of the area is transformed through new development fronting on to the street to create more activity and better natural surveillance. Where areas are to remain as large format industrial and warehouse units, a better pedestrian environment can be achieved through higher quality estate management as employed in, for example, the Brimsdown estate in North East Enfield. All new development proposals should consider how to reduce the current dependence on the private car, through a combination of parking restrictions and the provision of alternative modes of travel. Central Leaside should champion alternative modes of transport, if it is to become a sustainable place in which to live and work.

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Question 16

How can more attractive and useable walking and cycling routes be provided in Central Leaside?

- 4.3.5** We think that there are two main options; more than one could be pursued. Within each option, there are other choices to be made. Please give us your views, and if you wish to suggest further options, please do so.

Option 16A

Improve walking and cycling routes within the Central Leaside area.

If significant transformation of the Angel Road area through mixed-use development were to take place, this could provide an opportunity to create a proper street environment in this location, with residential and commercial buildings fronting onto the street, pavements and lighting. Within the employment areas, any future development or projects undertaken to improve access should seek to improve the potential for walking, including proper footpaths and pavements, improved lighting and security features. Conditions to improve walking and cycling along key routes, such as Meridian Way/Watermead Way as well as along routes to and from Angel Road and Northumberland Park stations and to and from bus stops.

Implications: This option would make it easier to move around the Central Leaside on foot or by bicycle, and remove barriers to internal movement. However, significant improvements could only really be achieved in conjunction with new development.

Option 16B

Improve the walking and cycling connections to the wider area beyond Central Leaside, helping to connect the area to key facilities and amenities.

This could focus on (a) improved connections to the national cycle route and Lee Valley pathway, which could involve new crossings across the Lee Valley railway line, and better connections to Banbury Reservoir and Waltham Forest (b) improved connections to Angel Road shopping area and through to Edmonton Green, which could involve upgrading the pedestrian link alongside the former rail alignment between Angel Road and Edmonton Green.

Implications: Any new mixed-use development would be expected to contribute to improved connections to improve accessibility to employment, social facilities, public transport and open spaces including the Regional Park. New crossings would help to reduce the barrier to walking and cycling caused by the Lee Valley railway line.

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4.4 The Road Network and Parking

- 4.4.1** There are a number of issues to be resolved in relation to the major road network, particularly the North Circular (see 4.4.1). The North Circular provides excellent links to the west (A10, M1) and to the east (M11). However, access to and from the industrial estates is difficult and the interchange between Meridian Way and the North Circular is indirect and confusing. Also the links to the north and south through Tottenham High Road get congested at peak times. One of the issues to bear in mind is the impact of increased traffic due to further development. New local and strategic road links considered will need to be assessed carefully so that they do not add to commuter traffic in the immediate and wider area, including Tottenham Hale.
- 4.4.2** Despite these restrictions there is a significant amount of freight movement along Meridian Way/Watermead Way. There are concerns about the effects of this freight movement on the local environment. Any proposals for the employment areas that might cause an increase in freight movements would need to be balanced with environmental considerations. There might also be potential, in the long term, to transfer the movement of freight from the roads to the waterways and rail.
- 4.4.3** The local road network is poorly connected across Central Leaside. The main issue is that the area is dissected by hostile, large scale, through routes. For example, local vehicles travelling east-west between Enfield and Waltham Forest tend to use the North Circular to do so, adding to the traffic congestion problem of this major road. Further, the layout of local access roads in parts of the study area is unclear and in many places confusing.
- 4.4.4** An improved local road network could help to improve movement through the area, for all transport modes. Improving access and movement could then maximise potential development opportunities. It could help serve existing and proposed businesses and communities within this area and change the way in which the area is currently used and developed now and in the future. It could create a pedestrian friendly environment, which is easy to move through and use.
- 4.4.5** Opportunities for new local road connections in the area could involve new links between Leaside Road, across the Lee Valley Trading Estate to Harbet Road, although any environmental impact on the Lee Valley Regional Park would need to be assessed carefully. Opportunities may also exist to provide improved local routes between the Hall Lane junction on the North Circular and Eley's Estate, overcoming the roundabout nature of existing road connections.
- 4.4.6** There are currently no controlled parking zones and no on-street pay and display parking areas within the Central Leaside area. The industrial estates in the action plan area are characterised by considerable levels of ad-hoc on-street parking. For example, parked cars on the pavements in Eley's Estate. In contrast, there is considerable off-street parking at the retail sites for IKEA and Tesco and at other smaller retail units. Some of the industrial estates have limited car parking for visitors and businesses.

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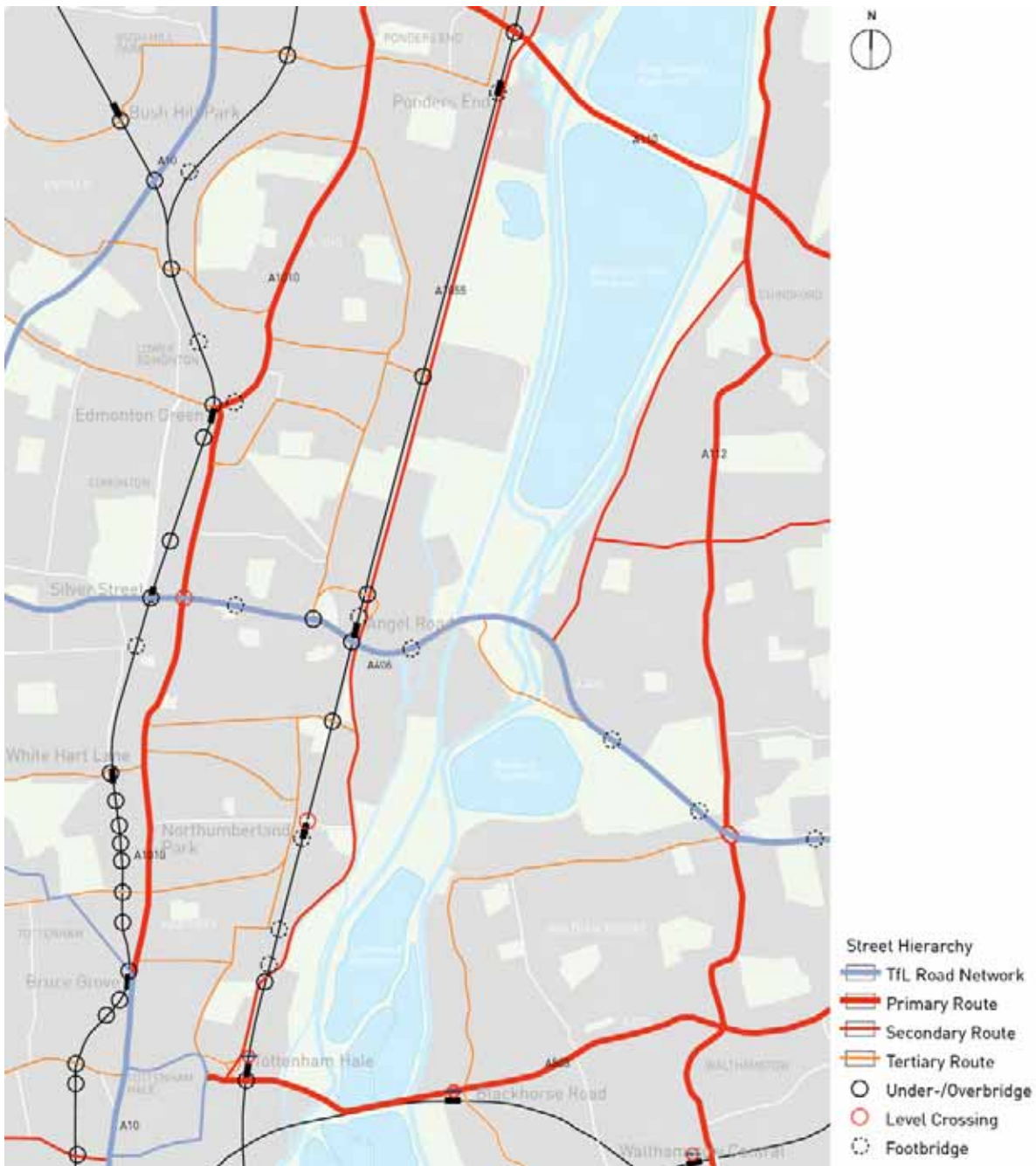


Figure 4.6 The road network in Central Leaside

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- 4.4.7** We would like to pose a few questions in relation to relieving congestion in the Central Leaside area and reducing the dominance of car use. Previous sections on improving public transport and walking and cycling connections are likely to have a significant impact on the dominance of the car in the area. However, these questions consider options for the management of traffic and the road network. Please consider these and give us your views. If you think there are other options, please let us know.

Question 17

Should we provide more protection from heavy road traffic to residential areas, for example around Montagu Road, Dyson Road and in North East Tottenham / Northumberland Park?

Implications: This could include road closures or traffic calming measures to protect residents from heavy vehicular traffic and rat-running on residential streets. However, this could increase some congestion on main routes.

Question 18

If major new development is to go ahead in the area, should additional traffic movements be catered for through improvements to the highway network, including increased capacity?

Implications: If major new development takes place in the area, increasing the number of people living and working in Central Leaside, there is likely to be an increase in car movements, unless the level of improvements to public transport in the area could justify car-free developments. This would add congestion to the network, which is already under pressure. Small-scale improvements to the highway network and traffic management could be sought, alternatively new east-west local road links north and south of the North Circular could be considered, which would help to alleviate congestion on the North Circular.

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Question 19

Should we seek to introduce management of the currently informal parking arrangements in the employment areas?

Implications: This would help to improve the image of the employment areas, as well as conditions for walking within them. In the event of new mixed use development in Central Leaside and an increase in the residential population, it would also help to manage the parking available in employment areas, so that it is only used for businesses and visitors.

Question 20

Is there potential for freight, bulky goods, waste and construction material to be transferred from the roads to more sustainable modes of transport, including rail and the waterways?

Implications: Operational wharfage already exists at the Edmonton Incinerator and there is protected wharfage south of the IKEA store, as well as proposals for Pickett's Lock. The potential therefore exists to encourage a step-change in how freight, bulky materials and waste are moved around the area, through the use of the waterways. Whilst initial set up costs will be relatively high, this option would have benefits both for businesses as well as the environment, as traffic congestion will be significantly reduced. This option will also make use of the waterways, which are currently underused, although there may be negative visual and aesthetic impacts.

The current limited capacity of the Lee Valley Line would be a barrier to increasing rail freight, but this could be an option for consideration in the future with improvements to capacity being progressed.

This document has been produced by Urban Initiatives for Enfield Council and Haringey Council.

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