

# Eltham High Street Public Realm Improvements Project Evaluation Survey

### Summer 2018

### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 Apart from outside the cinema construction site, the Eltham High Street Public Realm Improvements were substantially completed by mid-2017, but some minor residual works, including the installation of traffic signals at the Footscray Road junction, continued into December 2017.
- 1.2 Largely funded by TfL (following approval of a 'business case' in 2015), the aims of the project were to deliver the following stated objectives:
  - Make Eltham High Street a place, not just a traffic 'connector'
  - Improve vibrancy and attractiveness and reduce a fear of crime
  - Improve access to shops and services
  - Raise the Town Centre profile and enhance civic pride
  - Support the local economy and make Eltham a destination of choice
  - Promote inclusiveness and social interaction
  - Reduce collision injuries
  - Encouraging walking and cycling
  - Assist bus movements and enhance the safety and comfort of passengers

#### 2.0 Pre-scheme Consultation

2.1 As part of the development and design of the scheme the draft proposals were subject to full consultation during August 2015. An exhibition of the plans went on display at the Eltham Centre and a public survey was conducted alongside stakeholder evenings.

- 2.2 The questionnaire was delivered to c.6,500 local premises and posted on-line. Respondents were asked to indicate their degree of support for the various features of the draft scheme.
- 2.3 A copy of the pre-scheme questionnaire and a summary of the results are included as Appendix 1.
- 2.4 This 2015 consultation survey resulted in 867 responses with high levels of support expressed for almost all aspects of the proposals at that time.
- 2.5 Most of those expressing views also stated a preference for a signalised junction at Footscray Road rather than a less formal arrangement.

#### 3.0 Post-scheme Consultation

- 3.1 A condition of TfL funding was that the Council should, after an appropriate period, conduct post-scheme studies to evaluate how well the measures implemented had fulfilled the stated objectives. One of these studies is a "Project Evaluation Survey" (PES) the subject of this briefing.
- 3.2 In June 2017 a copy of the PES consultation material, comprising a letter and a questionnaire, shown in Appendix 2, was delivered to the same 6,500 local premises as before. It was also made available to the general public through the Council's website. A plan of the consultation area was included with the letter. Delivering the PES material to the same area as in 2015 allows some comparison of local opinion of the implemented measures vis-à-vis previous expectations.

# 4.0 Project Evaluation Survey Analysis

4.1 The PES comprised a number of statements relating to the above objectives against which respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement. The net community agreement for each statement is measured on an "approval rating" scale of -10 to +10, calculated by assigning the following values to each response:

Strongly disagree: -10
Disagree: -5
Neutral: 0
Agree: +5
Strongly Agree: +10

- 4.2 By the response deadline (late July) the survey had elicited a total of 1214 returns, 1172 (96.5%) of which were residents or businesses in the wider Eltham area (i.e. with SE9 post code). The remainder resided further afield.
- 4.3 470 returns (39%) completed the questionnaire without further comment; the other 740+ (61%) added comments mostly remarks concerning one or more aspects of the current arrangements. A number of responders elaborated further and added complimentary commendations.
- 4.4 Each return was logged individually and the net response for each questionnaire statement is summarised on the bar charts in Appendix 3. Not all the returns addressed all of the statements. A nil response to any statement was logged as "neutral".
- 4.5 The average "approval rating" for each statement is included in Appendix 3. A significant positive rating indicates general community agreement and a negative rating general disagreement. A zero or small value rating (+ or -) indicates general neutrality or a balance of community opinion. The main general findings were as follows.

### 5.0 General Findings

#### Caveat:

- 5.1 Funding has been set aside to complete the street works near the cinema which will be implemented towards the end of 2018 and early 2019. This is a prominent site at the centre of the High Street for which the outstanding works (including a high profile 'courtesy crossing') are quite extensive. Until these have been completed, the value of the project benefits will not be fully realised or appreciated.
- 5.2 A number of survey returns have made this point and have suggested that it was premature to carry out an evaluation study at this time. Notwithstanding, the PES response has been processed as follows.

# 5.3 Regarding Statements I & 4:

- I. Overall, the public realm scheme has made Eltham High Street and Passey Place a more pleasant environment than before
- 4. The tree's and street gardens have improved the street scene

- 5.4 There is general agreement to Statements I and 4 which relate primarily to aesthetic considerations. Most respondents feel that the High Street looks much better than it did before. The main issues of disagreement are:
  - The wooden "ELTHAM" sign and (to a lesser extent) the stone "ELTHAM" plinth which some view as a waste of money.
  - The colour of the paving, which some view as 'too light' and too susceptible to stains and chewing gum marks, etc.
  - The shabby appearance of the street gardens and/or trees that some feel are receiving insufficient care and maintenance.

### 5.5 Regarding Statement 2:

- 2. Generally I feel safer visiting Eltham High Street and Passey Place than I did before
- 5.6 The impacts of the scheme are largely neutral in respect of statement 2, mainly because most people did not feel unsafe before. The main issues of disagreement relate to shared footway parking and/or other vehicle encroachment onto pedestrian space. The most frequently cited concerns are:
  - A lack of definition between the permitted parking places and other footway (resulting in confusion).
  - Other illegal parking / encroachment onto intended pedestrian spaces, particularly in Passey Place.
  - To mitigate these problems a small number would like to see general parking completely removed from the High Street to the nearby car parks.
  - Some still remain concerned about anti-social behaviour particularly with regard to activities in Passey Place (drinking, cycling, etc.).

# 5.7 Regarding Statement 3:

- 3. I will probably visit Eltham High Street area more often than I did before
- 5.8 Overall those who claim to be less inclined to visit the High Street for whatever reason (134) are dwarfed by those who agree that they will probably visit more often (252).

- 5.9 The impacts have also been largely, bearing in mind that many with no inclination to change their habits are just as likely to tick 'disagree' for Statement 3. Much of the 'strong disagreement' relates to the reduction in 'convenience' parking on the High Street frontage and in Passey Place.
- 5.10 A shortage of disabled parking is also a disincentive for some blue badge holders although this provision increased compared to previous provision.
- 5.11 Increased parking charges elsewhere (i.e. Sainsbury's) are also a concern.
- 5.12 There is little evidence, therefore, that local intentions have altered appreciably one way or the other in this regard but intentions of those living further afield are less easy to assess.

### 5.13 Regarding Statements 5 & 10:

- 5. The wider footpaths have created a more pedestrian-friendly place
- 10. I am now more likely to walk to the Eltham High Street area rather than come by car
- 5.14 Statement 5 attracts general agreement. The main issues giving rise to disagreement relate to on-going congestion around some of the bus stops and illegal parking on pedestrian spaces.
- 5.15 There is less agreement with statement 10 but the assertion by some 25% of respondents that they now feel more inclined to walk into Eltham rather than come by car is a positive outcome.

### 5.16 Regarding Statement 6 & 11:

- 6. The new cycle lanes have created a more cycle-friendly place
- 11. I am now more likely to cycle to the Eltham High Street area rather than come by car
- 5.17 The response to statement 6 is fairly neutral, while that to statement 11 is largely negative. There is little evidence that more people will cycle into Eltham than before. A number claim they are put-off by cycle lanes frequently interrupted by parked vehicles, etc. The responses to these statements may also reflect an older than average demographic with high levels of car-dependency and less likely to cycle.

### 5.18 Regarding Statement 7:

- 7. The bus stops work better than before
- 5.19 The response to Statement 7 is also largely neutral. Some disagreement relates to queuing passengers causing footway congestion. The requirement to relocate the bus stop previously outside McDonalds to its present site near M&S has added about 100m walking distance for passengers exchanging between N-S and E-W services or wishing to access other facilities to the west. Not surprisingly this has attracted many adverse comments (101), but more respondents (291) agree that the bus stops are now better sited than before, with that in question being more central for the main High Street facilities.

### 5.20 Regarding Statement 8:

- 8. Crossing the road is easier than before
- 5.21 The response to Statement 8 is also broadly neutral.
- 5.22 The loss of the pedestrian refuges at the Well Hall Road junction is the issue of most concern, while the striped patterns on the other crossings have caused some consternation. Inevitably some respondents do not think the signalised crossings allow sufficient 'green man' time. A number have asked for permanent signals to replace the temporary facility near the cinema instead of the proposed 'courtesy' crossing. The above concerns are largely off-set by approval of the new pedestrian facilities at the Footscray Road signals.

### Regarding Statement 9:

9. Traffic conditions have generally improved

Facilitating motorised vehicle movement along the High Street was never a scheme objective so no appreciable change in traffic conditions was expected. It is not surprising, therefore, that Statement 9 attracts general disagreement, but that does not mean that most respondents necessarily think there has been significant deterioration. Only 27% strongly disagree with Statement 9, while some 22% feel there has been some improvement.

The main issues of disagreement relate to:

 The relocated pedestrian refuge near the Nissan dealership, to which longer queues at the Well Hall Road junction are largely attributed.

- A narrower carriageway and/or lack of enforcement of double parking that reduces traffic movement space.
- Longer queues at the Footscray Road junction resulting from its signalisation, which impacts on access to/from Blunts Road and the Sainsbury's filling station.
- 'Rat-running' through adjacent streets to avoid congestion on the High Street.
- Insufficient enforcement of the 20-mph speed limit.

### **6.0** Adverse Comments

6.1 The following adverse comments have been mentioned by respondents to the PES. This information is also summarised in tabular form in Appendix 4, which should be read in conjunction with the following.

### Regarding Statement 1:

- The choice of paving is poor it is too light and shows up stains and chewing gum marks. It always looks dirty.
- Utilities reinstatements have been executed poorly and/or with the wrong materials.

### Regarding Statement 2:

- The parking places are poorly defined vehicles encroach beyond the delineated limits of the bay. Encouraging pedestrians to share space with parked cars is dangerous.
- Vehicles (including cycles) encroach illegally onto pedestrian spaces (facilitate by low kerbs), and particularly in Passey Place (which needs an 'access barrier'). Parking generally is haphazard. Further measures are needed to prevent footway parking, particularly of an evening.
- Parking problems will only be resolved by removing general parking from the High Street to the car parks.
- Anti-social / threatening behaviour is still a problem, particularly in Passey Place where youths congregate, smoke, drink, sell drugs and ride cycles recklessly etc.

### Regarding Statement 3:

- The reduction of (free) parking space on the High Street itself and in Passey Place means I am less likely to visit.
- There is insufficient Town Centre parking for disabled drivers, so I go elsewhere.

### Regarding Statement 4:

- The wooden "ELTHAM" sign is ugly and a waste of money and/or is poorly sited.
- The "ELTHAM" stone plinth is a waste of money and/or should not have been sited under trees it is constantly dirty.
- The appearance of the trees and street gardens (planting boxes) is spoiled by litter and weeds.
- The quality of the seating is poor particularly the wooden seats on the planting boxes that are split and uncomfortable.

### **Regarding Statement 5:**

- Wider footways have encouraged more unlawful footway parking which erodes pedestrian space.
- Wider footways have encouraged cyclists to use them.
- Wider footways have reduced road traffic space causing more congestion.
- There are still narrow sections of footway that become congested particular around the bus shelters.

### **Regarding Statement 6:**

- The cycle lanes have reduced road traffic space causing more congestion.
- Very few cyclists use the cycle lanes; better use could have been made of this road space for parking and/or general traffic.
- Vehicles frequently park and/or stop on the cycle lanes causing obstruction; cars moving in and out of parking spaces and/or opening car doors put cyclists at risk.
- The segregated cycle lane past Tesco Express is not used and takes-up too much road space, and/or it conflicts with turning traffic; exacerbated by the adjacent parking, this contributes to congestion and puts cyclists at risk.

### Regarding Statement 7:

- Some bus stops are too small for the number of services. They are frequently over-crowded, while services are sometimes unable to access the right stop when several buses arrive at the same time.
- Moving the bus stop previously outside McDonalds to outside M&S has caused inconvenience to many passengers and was a mistake.

### Regarding Statement 8:

- The loss of the pedestrian refuges at the Well Hall Road junction makes the crossings less safe, particularly for elderly pedestrians unable to cross in one movement.
- The striped features on the controlled crossings are confusing and unnecessary.
- The proposed courtesy crossing (a large 'feature refuge') outside the cinema is a bad idea we want a permanent signalised facility.
- The signalised crossings generally provide insufficient crossing time, while the 'countdown' is stressful for elderly pedestrians.

### Regarding Statement 9:

- Traffic continues to travel too fast more enforcement is needed.
- Double parking frequently obstructs traffic; there is insufficient enforcement of parking offences generally.
- The new signals at Footscray Road are causing more delays and congestion, particularly around the access to Blunts Road and the Sainsbury's filling station.
- There is more congestion and traffic delays generally partly caused by too many traffic lights including signalised crossings.
- The repositioned refuge near the Nissan dealership causes longer queues, tempting motorists to pass it dangerously on the wrong side. It should be removed.
- More traffic is 'rat-running' down adjacent streets (Sherard Road, North Park, Dobell Road, Gourock Road, etc.) to avoid delays on the High Street.

#### 7.0 Commendations

- 7.1 In addition to expressions of agreement, the following features of the High Street improvements have attracted particular commendations from 2 or more respondents to the PES.
  - The whole High Street environment looks fantastic so much nicer than before - I'm proud to live here, people love visiting – much appreciated – great job.
  - The quality of the paving and general workmanship is excellent.
  - The wider pavement are lovely to walk on with far less congestion than before.

- Flush levels are fantastic for wheelchair users and prams and/or the elderly much more inclusive
- Passey Place is now a beautiful and enjoyable space love al fresco eating.
- The "ELTHAM" signs are a triumph. They add to civic pride. The wooden "ELTHAM" sculpture is enjoyable and imaginative the stone "ELTHAM" plinth is stylish and super quality.
- The trees and planters are most appreciated the range of trees and plants is excellent.
- The new seating encourages social interaction and is very welcome. The famous names of Eltham celebrities are interesting and enjoyable.
- The more centralised bus stop is helpful.
- 30 minutes free parking is good
- The new signals at Footscray Road make this junction so much safer for pedestrians and cyclists thank you
- The diagonal crossing at Well Hall Road is a welcome feature that has improved pedestrian accessibility.

#### 8.0 Other Comments

- 8.1 The following frequently expressed comments are not specifically relevant to the public realm improvements but are more general observations over which the Council is urged to exercise more control:
- 8.2 <u>Maintenance</u>: the flower beds should be regularly cleared of weeds and litter; the footways should be cleaned more frequently to remove stains and gum; more receptacles for cigarette ends and gum should be provided.
- 8.3 <u>Parking enforcement</u>: the Council should be more proactive in enforcing illegal parking, particularly unlawful vehicle encroachment onto pedestrian spaces and the access restrictions in Passey Place.
- 8.4 <u>Speed enforcement</u>: the Council should liaise with the Police to ensure better compliance with the 20mph speed limit.
- 8.5 <u>Utilities reinstatement</u>: the Council should act to ensure that all utilities reinstatements are made promptly and with the correct materials
- 8.6 Anti-social behaviour: The Council should issue 'on-the-spot-fines' for littering and cycling illegally in pedestrian spaces. Other intimidating behaviour should be better policed.

8.7 <u>Passey Place flower stall</u>: the flower stall should be allowed to occupy a more prominent site (as it did temporarily) to add more colour and vitality to the High Street.

### 9. Conclusion

- 9.1 In conclusion, the scheme has delivered on many of the stated objectives which gained majority community support through the pre scheme consultation. This is reflected by many of the positive outcomes and "approval ratings" explained in the report.
- 9.2 There is no question that the majority of those responding to the PES consider the High Street is a more pleasant place, with more generous footways, than prior to the work. The additional of street trees and planting is particularly welcome.
- 9.3 The conclusions are made with the caveat related to the Cinema works in 5.1 above. Local opinion may well change on the completion of these works once the entire High Street is free of works.
- 9.4 It is also the case the a number of residents have concerns about parking (provision and enforcement), the level of cleaning and maintenance of the completed work. This feedback aligns with the Councils experiences in dealing with reports of issues since the scheme has been completed.
- 9.5 It is also easy to forget what the High Street was like before the work was delivered. The space afforded to pedestrians was extremely limited and parking was always challenging, with limited availability of kerb side space. Whilst the amount of kerb side parking space has reduced (by around 50%) arrangements to ensure better "churn" have been put in place and the number of disabled parking spaces doubled. These new arrangements continue to be monitored through normal processes.

Mark Hodgson, October 2018

# Appendix I - Pre-scheme Consultation, August 2015



#### Consultation questionnaire

Please include your name and address, and state whether you are a local resident, trader or visitor to Eltham town centre. This information will not be passed on or used for any other purpose.

Name	e:					
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	Str	4 - Footscray Roa ongly support opose	Suppo	ort gly oppose	☐ Neither support nor oppos	e
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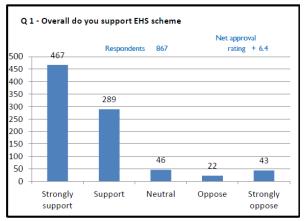
# Appendix I – Pre-scheme Consultation, August 2015

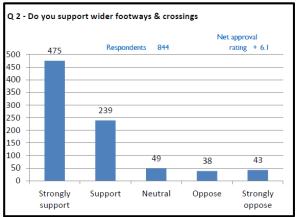
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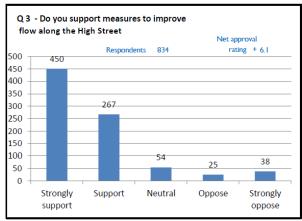
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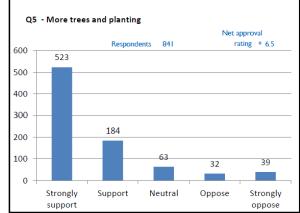
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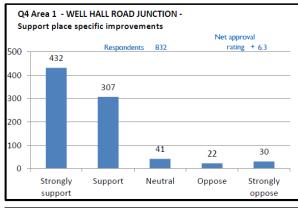
# Eltham Town Centre Major Scheme Response to Public Consulation

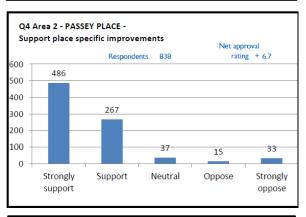


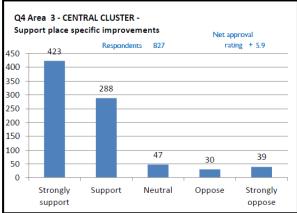


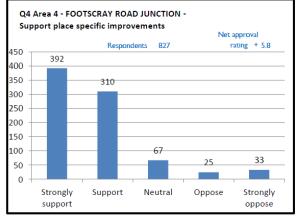






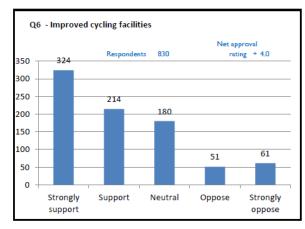


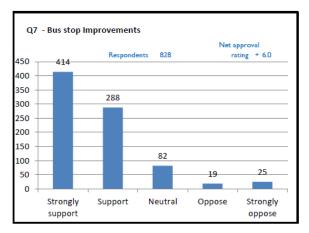


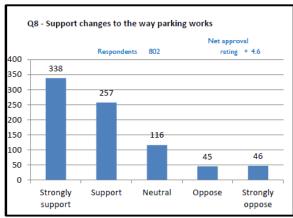


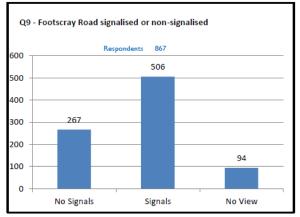
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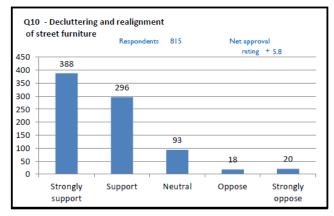
### Response to Public Consulation

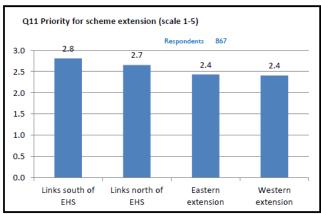












### Appendix 2 – Project Evaluation Survey Consultation Material

# Eltham High Street Public Realm Improvements

Project Evaluation Survey June 2018



Strategic Transportation, DRES, Floor 5 The Woolwich Centre 35 Wellington Street, Woolwich, London SE18 6HQ

15 June 2018

#### Dear Residents and Traders

Apart from the section of street outside the new cinema site (that will be reconstructed early next year), the public realm improvements to Eltham High Street and Passey Place have been completed for some time.

The Council is now carrying out a series of 'after studies' to assess the extent to which the project has met its primary objectives to:

- Make Eltham High Street a place, not just a traffic 'connector'
- Improve vibrancy and attractiveness and reduce a fear of crime
- Improve access to shops and services
- Raise the Town Centre profile and enhance civic pride
- Support the local economy and make Eltham a destination of choice
- Promote inclusiveness and social interaction
- Reduce collision injuries
- Encouraging walking and cycling
- · Assist bus movements and enhance the safety and comfort of passengers

It is important for the Council to understand how users of the High Street view the measures that have been implemented, so we are now conducting a 'Project Evaluation Survey'. This involves asking people to complete a short questionnaire indicating their level of agreement with a number of statements relating to the above objectives.

This material is being delivered to all premises in the area shown overleaf. You are kindly asked to complete the attached questionnaire and return it in the prepaid postage envelope provided, to arrive before 16 July 2018.

Alternatively you may complete it on line at <a href="www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/consultations">www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/consultations</a> or scan and email it to <a href="john.bowden@royalgreenwich.gov.uk">john.bowden@royalgreenwich.gov.uk</a>.

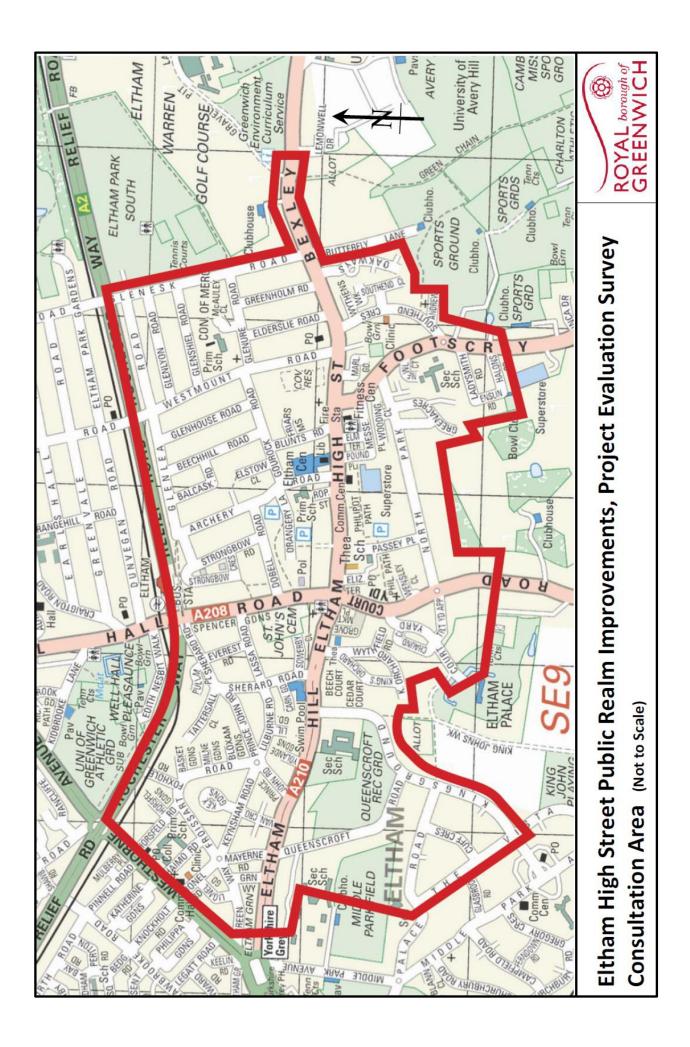
We thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Mark Hodgson

Head of Highways

If you require this document in larger print please call 020 8921 6114



# Appendix 2 - Project Evaluation Survey Consultation Material

# Eltham High Street Public Realm Improvements

Project Evaluation Survey June 2018

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I am now more likely to walk to the Eltham High

I am now more likely to cycle to the Eltham High

Street area rather than come by car

Street area rather than come by car



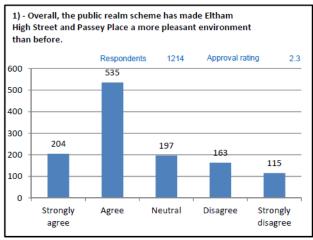
Strategic Transportation, DRES, Floor 5 The Woolwich Centre 35 Wellington Street, Woolwich, London SE18 6HQ

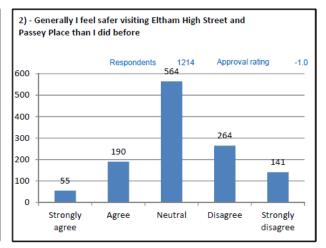
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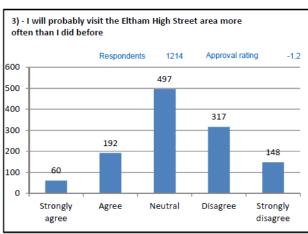
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Please tick one box against each of the following statements		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree						
1	Overall, the public realm scheme has made Eltham High Street and Passey Place a more pleasant environment than before.											
2	Generally I feel safer visiting Eltham High Street and Passey Place than I did before											
3	I will probably visit the Eltham High Street area more often than I did before											
4	The trees and street gardens have improved the street scene											
5	The wider footways have created a more pedestrian-friendly place											
6	The new cycle lanes have created a more cycle-friendly place											
7	The bus stops work better than before											
8	Crossing the road is easier than before											
9	Traffic conditions have generally improved											

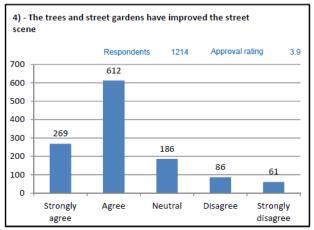
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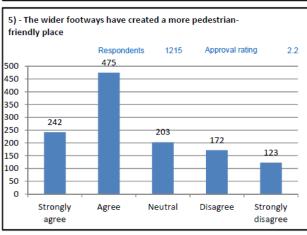
# Appendix 3 - Response to Project Evaluation Survey, July 2017

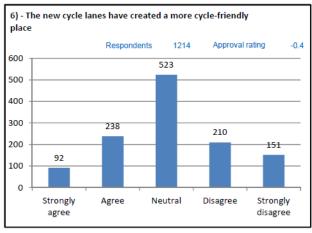


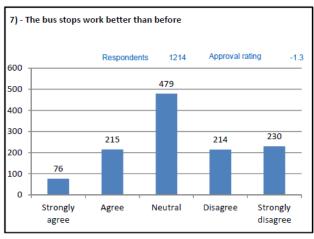


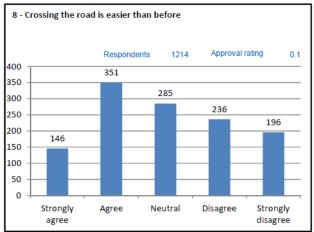


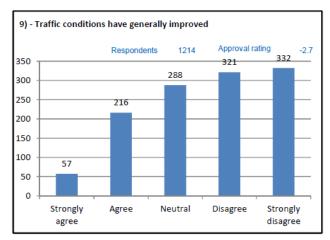


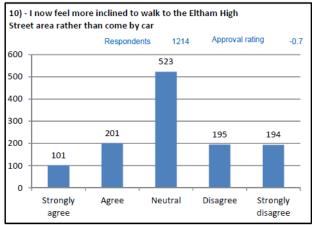


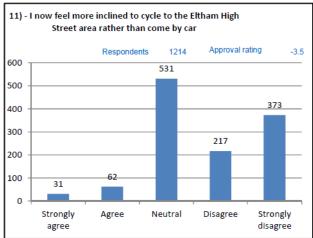


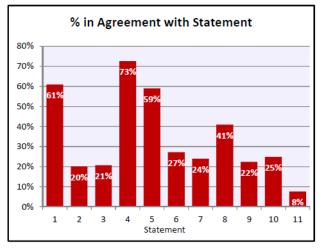












# Appendix 4

# Eltham High Street Public Realm Improvements Response to Project Evaluation Survey, Summer 2018 Summary of Issues attracting adverse comments

Number of respondents: 1214

#### Regarding Statement 1:

	Poor choice of paving (staining)	Other design issues (various)	Utilities reinstatements
Number	122	12	21
% of respondents	10.0%	1.0%	1.7%

#### Regarding Statement 2:

	Poorly defined parking	Illegal vehicle encroachment	Remove parking from High Street	Anti-social behaviour (Passey Place)
Number	163	151	15	55
% of respondents	13.4%	12.4%	1.2%	4.5%

#### Regarding Statement 3:

	Less (free) parking	Insufficient disabled parking	Other issues (various)
Number	104	18	12
% of respondents	8.6%	1.5%	1.0%

#### Regarding Statement 4:

	Wooden "ELTHAM" sign	Stone "ELTHAM' plinth	Appearance &  Maintenance	Spilt seats on Planters
Number	89	38	48	14
% of respondents	7.3%	3.1%	4.0%	1.2%

#### Regarding Statement 5:

	Wider footways encourage parking	Wider footways encourage cycling	Wider footways reduce road space & cause more	Obstructions & pedestrian congestion
Number	23	12	12	21
% of respondents	1.9%	1.0%	1.0%	1.7%

### Regarding Statement 6:

	Cycle Lanes cause more traffic congestion	Cycle lanes are under-used	Cycle lines unsafe or obstructed	Issues with cycle lane past TESCO
Number	31	37	54	15
% of respondents	2.6%	3.0%	4.4%	1.2%

### Regarding Statement 7:

	Crowded bus stops	Stop relocation from McD. to M&S	Other bus issues (various)
Number	22	101	14
% of respondents	1.8%	8.3%	1.2%

### Regarding Statement 8:

	Well Hall Rd loss of refuges	Striped crossing features	Signalise the proposed 'courtesy' crossing	Pedestrian timings
Number	31	28	26	18
% of respondents	2.6%	2.3%	2.1%	1.5%

### Regarding Statement 9:

	Speeding / enforcement	Double parking / enforcement	Footscray Rd signals	More congestion / too many signals	Refuge near NISSAN dealership	Rat-running
Number	16	103	55	44	67	17
% of respondents	1.3%	8.5%	4.5%	3.6%	5.5%	1.4%