



Liveable Streets – Brick Lane
Co-Design Workshops Overview Report

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets
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1. LIVEABLE STREETS

The Liveable Streets programme will make fundamental improvements to roadway infrastructure, open spaces and encourage sustainable travel behaviour for residents, businesses and visitors to Tower Hamlets.

The multi-million-pound programme aims to improve the look and feel of public spaces in neighbourhoods across the borough and make it easier, safer and more convenient to get around by foot, bike and public transport.

1.1 Brick Lane

Brick Lane is one of 17 areas that makes up the Liveable Streets programme. Figure 1, below, shows the extent of the scheme area referred to in this report.

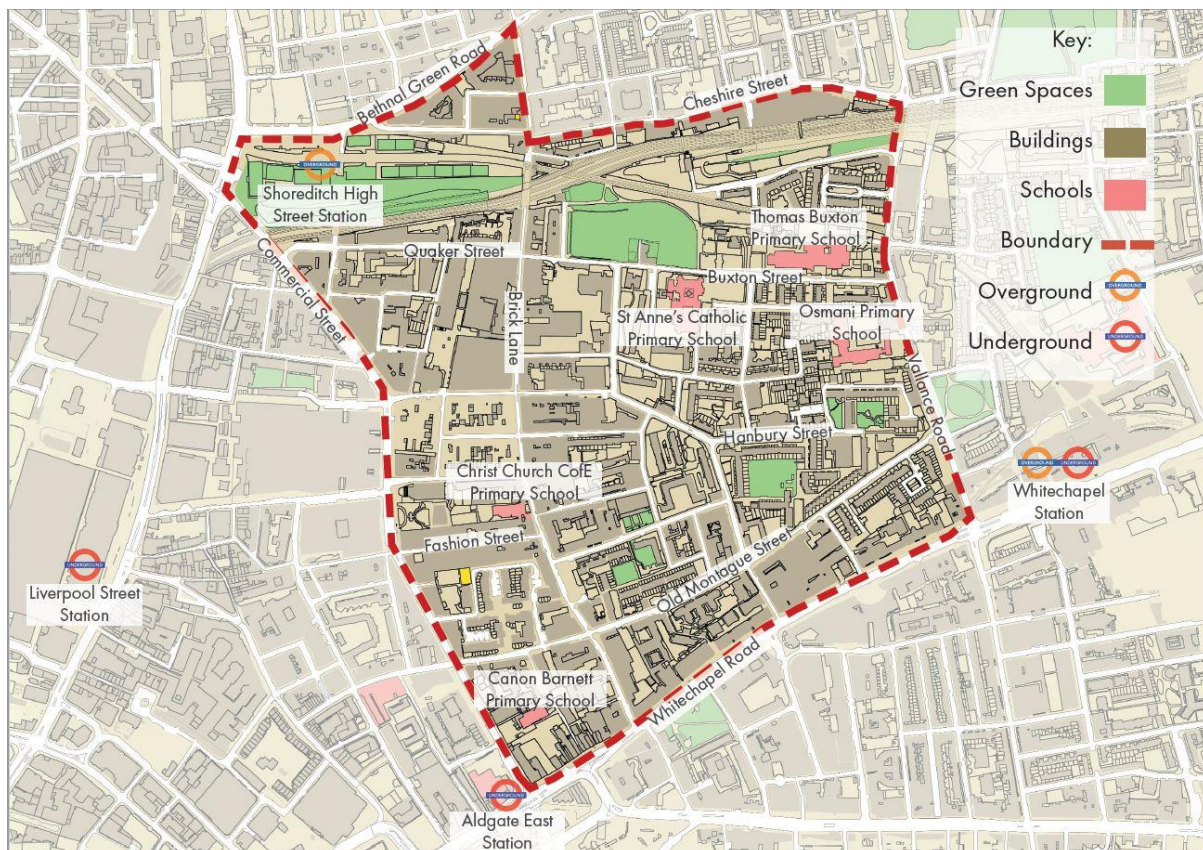


Figure 1: Brick Lane study area and surroundings

1.2 Stages of development

Each of the 17 areas is developed through ten stages, as shown in Figure 2. This report provides an overview of phase five, the ‘Workshop’ phase, of the Brick Lane scheme.

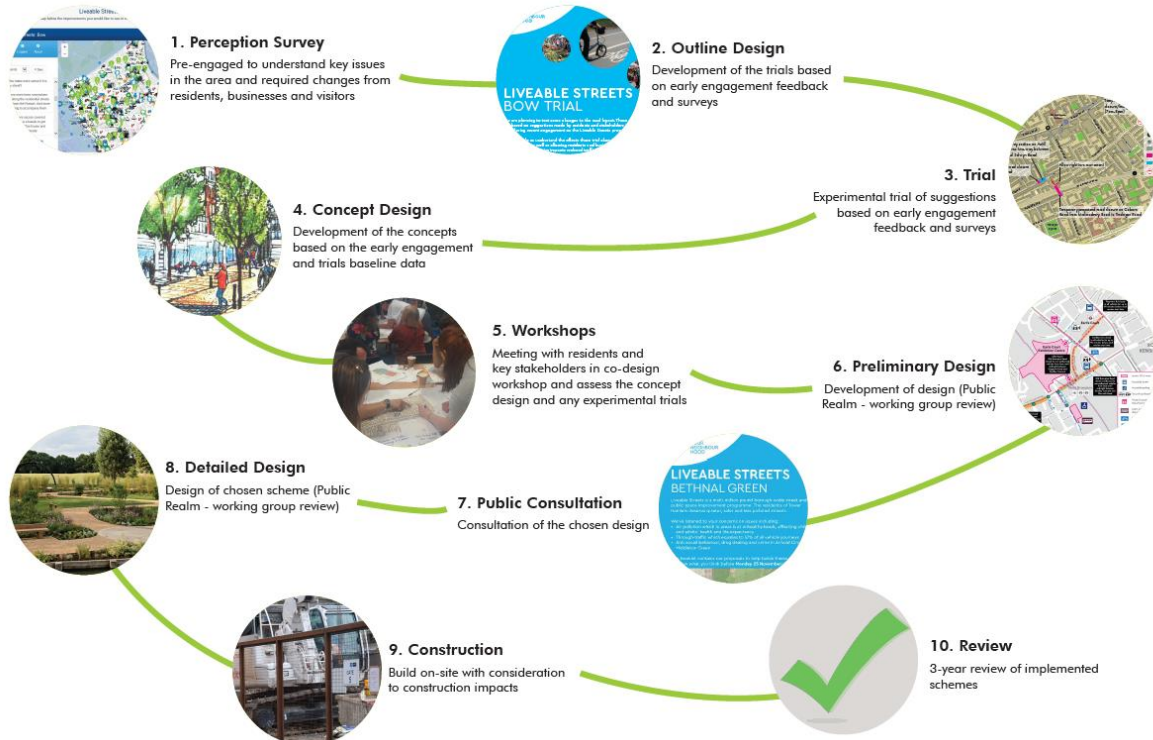


Figure 2 – Project Stages

2. CO-DESIGN WORKSHOPS OVERVIEW

2.1 Workshops

During the period from 25th January 2020 to 5th February 2020 we held three workshops to engage residents and businesses. A dedicated session for local businesses was held on 29th January 2020. Leaflets to promote the events were delivered to all residential and business addresses within the scheme area and to ensure productive sessions, all workshop attendees were asked to RSVP in advance to confirm attendance.

Details of the workshop locations and number of attendees are provided below:

- Saturday 25 January 2020 – resident workshop (*14 attendees*)
Brady Arts & Community Centre, Hanbury Street, E1 5HU
- Wednesday 29 January 2020 – business workshop (*23 attendees*)
Christ Church Primary School, 47A Brick Lane, E1 6PU
- Wednesday 5 February 2020 – resident workshop (*22 attendees*)
Christ Church Primary School, 47A Brick Lane, E1 6PU

2.2 Workshop overview

The core aims of the Liveable Streets Co-Design Workshops were to:

- increase awareness of the scheme
- share background information
- discuss potential options for improvements
- gather feedback to inform further scheme development

The workshops included two exercises to engage residents and businesses on the proposals. The first exercise focused on traffic management and the second exercise explored methods to improve the pedestrian environment, public spaces and cycling.

2.3 Workshop structure

The workshop was structured in three parts:

1. Presentation - this was provided by the Liveable Streets programme director, to outline the aims and objectives of the session and useful information to help achieve that. It also included:

- workshop session overview, including the 'house rules'
- early engagement results
- details of the survey data collected
- examples of potential schemes

- the proposals for each exercise and the rationale for their development

2. Group exercises - workshop attendees were divided into groups of up to seven people, each with a dedicated facilitator in place to provide support in explaining the material, help with discussions and get feedback on the proposals. Detailed information on the structure and outcomes of the traffic and public realm exercises is outlined further this report.

3. Feedback - after each exercise each group had the opportunity to feedback their comments and share their discussion with the wider group.

2.4 Outcomes of Early engagement

Early engagement for Brick Lane was completed in September 2019 and the analysis of resident feedback produced the following priorities:

- Road closures / less traffic
- Improved cycle infrastructure including cycle lanes
- Improved public realm and greening
- A cleaner environment with places to sit
- Better driver behaviour

These themes, and the comments received during this stage of development, were used to inform and shape the proposals for the workshop.

3. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS – EXERCISE 1

3.1 Aims of exercise

The first exercise explored how the traffic management in the area could be improved to fit into the project aims. This included:

- Addressing the high levels of cut through traffic
- Making improvements to cycling
- Ensuring better driver behaviour

3.2 Proposals

Each group was provided with a plan showing a series of proposals for discussion. The proposals included: road closures, one-way streets, timed closures, pedestrianised streets, cycle route improvements and cycle parking.

In order to help with evaluating the design, attendees were provided with a wide range of supporting documents which included: early engagement results, air quality data, collisions data, anti-social behaviour information, traffic survey results, pedestrian and cyclist counts and traffic management examples.

Attendees were encouraged to write, highlight and draw their ideas and feedback onto the plans. The plans were displayed on large sheets of paper to ensure that everyone had a clear view. Each table had at least one facilitator to guide the discussion and answer any questions.

3.3 Feedback on the proposals

Overall, there was a feeling of support for the proposals. The main topics of discussion were the proposed road closures along Brick Lane that would be required to pedestrianise the area and the proposed road closures on Hanbury Street.

Whilst there was some opposition to road closures, it is important to note that many of the attendees were supportive of the proposed road closures. Others supported the idea of road closures but had alternative ideas about the best locations for these.

The main points from the session are summarised below:

- Pedestrianisation of Brick Lane was supported by most businesses.
- The road closure on Hanbury Street was supported by many residents, however, some thought the exact location was not correct. Others opposed road closures in general and particularly on Hanbury Street.
- Concerns were raised regarding access for emergency services.
- Waste collection in the area should be improved, especially in the retail areas.

Feedback from local businesses

The key points raised by local businesses were:

- Brick Lane should be pedestrianised with areas set aside for al fresco dining.
- Access to businesses via motor vehicle could be provided on a timed basis (likely to be between 5am -11am daily) however, many restaurants could be serviced without direct vehicle access.
- Loading bays should be provided for mopeds delivering food from the many restaurants – this a key part of the restaurants trade.
- Request for the proposed servicing routes

Feedback from resident groups

The key points raised by resident groups were:

- Many residents support a reduction in through-traffic in their neighbourhood and the Brick Lane area, however, there were some residents who opposed the closure on Hanbury Street.

4. PUBLIC REALM, WALKING AND CYCLING - EXERCISE 2

4.1 Aims of Exercise

The second exercise concentrated on three main aims:

- Improving the environment to encourage more people to walk and cycle
- Increasing accessibility to public transport
- Improve the look and feel of public spaces

4.2 Proposals

Attendees were presented with a series of design proposals to improve public spaces, including updating existing pedestrian and cycle facilities. Attendees were encouraged to document their feedback onto the plans.

Supporting documents were provided to the attendees. These included existing bus and cycle routes and examples of successful interventions across London. These documents acted as a reference guide to aid discussions on public space design, such as pocket parks, street lighting and pedestrian facilities.

Attendees were asked how they would like the public spaces to be designed and encouraged to think about paving, seating, pocket parks, street furniture, lighting and planting.

4.3 Feedback on the proposals

Overall, there was support for improving the look and feel of public spaces across Brick Lane as well as creating more pedestrian and cycle facilities.

The main points from the session are outlined below:

- Public toilets were requested by both residents and businesses.
- More cycle parking was requested to be available in the area, including residential cycle hangars.
- Public realm improvements in the area with more greening.
- Pedestrianisation of Brick Lane was supported between Fashion Street and Fournier Street outside Christ Church Primary School.
- Improve anti-social behaviour and other crime issues in the area.

Feedback from local businesses

The key points raised by local businesses were:

- Improve public realm throughout Brick Lane.
- Improve lighting and signage, in particular, the Osbourne Street signage should be updated to state 'leading to Brick Lane'.

- Consideration of how the pedestrianised area should be enforced needs further development.

Feedback from resident groups

The key points raised by resident groups were:

- General improvements regarding the streetscape, lighting, refuse collection and wayfinding in the area.
- Concerns were raised around anti-social behaviour on Underwood Road by the junction of Vallance Street.
- Consideration of how the pedestrianised area should be enforced needs further development.

4.4 Next steps

All feedback from residents and businesses will be carefully reviewed and considered to inform the next phase of design. Concept designs will be developed to reflect this feedback and will then be submitted for a full public consultation later this year. The timescales for the consultation will be communicated to residents and businesses within Tower Hamlets in advance of the consultation to ensure meaningful engagement on the proposals.