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Torrington Place to Tavistock Place Public Inquiry. Statement of case from Will Norman, London's Walking and Cycling Commissioner

I am London's Walking and Cycling Commissioner, appointed by the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan. I am submitting evidence in support of the Camden (Torrington Place to Tavistock Square) (Prescribed Routes, Waiting and Loading Restrictions and Loading Places) Traffic Order [2017]. This experimental traffic order is part of a walking and cycling scheme developed in partnership with, and funded by, Transport for London, who I am employed by.

The draft Mayor's transport strategy (MTS) puts people's health and quality of life at the heart of how we plan transport in our city. Our transport system helps to shape the city and has a big impact on quality of life. Street space defines what the capital is like as a place to live and work. Creating a city for all Londoners requires an approach to transport that will help London to grow in a way that benefits everyone. In recent years, there have been important changes in the way people travel, but car use is still too high for a growing city. People remain dependent on their cars in large part because street environments are not designed to promote walking and cycling. The draft MTS contains a target that by 2041 80 per cent of journeys will be made by sustainable modes – by foot, bike or public transport. To achieve this, by 2041 70% of Londoners will need to live within 400m of a high-quality cycle route.

The Tavistock Place scheme represents an exemplar approach to redesigning our streets to enable more people to walk and cycle. It is an exemplar of the Healthy Streets Approach, which underpins the draft MTS. More than 40 per cent of Londoners do not achieve the recommended 150 minutes of activity a week and 28 per cent do less than 30 minutes a week. Lack of physical activity is now one of the biggest threats to our health, increasing the risk of developing a range of chronic diseases including diabetes, dementia, depression and the two biggest killers in London – heart disease and cancer. We urgently need to design physical activity back into our everyday lives. Active travel – walking more, cycling more, using public transport more – provides the easiest and most affordable way for us all to get more active and live healthier lives.

In addition to these health benefits, all the evidence shows that more active travel will reduce air and noise pollution, help combat social isolation, ease congestion, make us safer and bring economic benefits to businesses – large and small – across the Capital.

Before the trial, 43 per cent of the road space on this corridor was dedicated to vehicles, yet only 16 per cent of people were travelling in vehicles on the route. The changes have reduced the share of the space given to vehicles to 21 per cent, and increased the space given to cyclists from just 13 per cent to 33 per cent. 43 per cent of people moving along the corridor do so on cycles. This reallocation of road space means the corridor is more efficient because private motorised vehicles are an inefficient means of moving people in London. The proportion of street space that cars take up in central London is almost double the proportion of kilometres travelled by people in cars. TfL's new East-West and North-South cycle superhighways demonstrate this. The new cycling infrastructure moves an average of 46 per cent of the people travelling along the routes, despite occupying only 30 per cent of the road space. Two weeks after opening, the East-West and North-South Cycle Superhighway corridors were moving five per cent more people per hour than they could without cycle lanes.

This road corridor also suffers from a poor road safety record, particularly due to collisions between motor vehicles and both cyclists and pedestrians. Before the trial, there were 57 collisions in three years, twelve of which resulted in serious injuries. The changes have reduced the dominance of motor traffic, making people feel safer and making it easier for pedestrians to cross the road. Reducing road danger is also at the heart of the draft MTS. The Mayor, through TfL, the boroughs, police and enforcement authorities, will adopt Vision Zero for road danger in London. The Mayor's aim is that no one is killed in, or by, a London bus by 2030, and for deaths and serious injuries from road collisions to be eliminated by 2041. Designing streets that encourage lower speeds is key to making this happen.

The changes introduced with the trial provide a safer and more attractive cycling facility with more capacity to accommodate existing and future cyclist levels. As such, the trial improves conditions for existing cyclists, while also encouraging new cyclists. There have been significant increases in cycling east-west along the route in the morning and afternoon rush hours (up to 52%). Feedback received during the trial indicates that some cyclists who previously avoided the route now use the cycle lanes for commuting, shopping and leisure trips, including families with children, older people and those with disabilities.

Cleaning up London's toxic air and reducing Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) is a top priority for the Mayor. The main source of NO₂ is motor traffic. Monitoring information at the three sites in the project area (Gordon Square, Russel Square and Tavistock Place) where nitrogen dioxide emissions have been

measured indicates significant improvements in air quality, following implementation of the trial, of between 9% and 20%.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Will Norman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Will Norman

Walking and Cycling Commissioner