

1. **Zero Carbon Headingley (ZCH)** is a group of people living and/or working in Headingley who are taking action to cut carbon emissions. We believe in thinking globally and acting locally. ZCH has already supported in principle the overall Leeds City Council '*Connecting Leeds transport strategy*'. This particular ZCH response focuses mainly on the proposals for the A660 and how they relate to this overall Transport Strategy. We have encouraged our members to make their own detailed responses to specific A660 proposals.

2. **Consultation process.** We welcome that '*Connecting Leeds*' is making significant efforts to improve consultation with affected communities.

3. Overall we welcome the aims of Leeds Safe Roads *Vision 2040* and recognise that overall proposals for the A660 will have a positive effect in reducing collisions and casualties. Moves to widen footways, create safer cycle lanes, improve bus reliability and make junctions safer are all important. The consultation will add to local knowledge and also has the potential to enable further detailed improvements to be made.

4. We note the **Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy Objectives** of

- Tackling Climate Change
- Delivering Inclusive Growth
- Improving Health and Wellbeing

These include a commitment to making Leeds Carbon Neutral by 2030. The Strategy says this needs a further reduction in emissions of 27% by 2025 and an additional 15% reduction by 2030 (or an 85% reduction since 2005).

5. We are concerned that Headingley Lane and Otley Road are seen by planners as a "**Traffic Corridor**", rather than as a busy road cutting through the heart of our residential communities. Many Headingley residents do not own a car and much of the motor traffic in Headingley results from people driving through on their way to somewhere else. The strong response to this consultation shows that local people want a reduction in motor traffic congestion (and its consequences). However, in themselves, measures to improve the ease of travel along the A660 produce mixed results for people living and working in Headingley. This, in part, is why there have been some animated responses! Our views about 'Getting Around in Headingley' are consistent with Section 11 of the **Neighbourhood Plan for Headingley** (<https://headingleyneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/HNP-Plan-Final-OCT-2022.pdf>) which was recently adopted after widespread consultation, and which should be considered alongside your proposals

6. In Headingley we remember the early days of COVID-19 when we could hear birds singing, smell baking bread in North Lane, and walk and cycle safely on local errands. We remember our 2019 street fair in North Lane when people of all ages enjoyed the bustle of a car free street. (ZCH aims to support a car free street fair in Weetwood later this year to mark Clean Air Day). We saw how people quickly adapted to cleaner air and safer streets. Zero Carbon Headingley is not against transport planning! Our concern is that we have gone backwards on air quality and at the present rate of progress we will not meet our 2030 (and longer term) targets.

7. It is essential that Council planners and elected members have a **joined-up approach to the Climate Emergency** as set out in your planning objectives listed above. At the consultation we were given no projections for the impacts of the A660 proposals on reductions in car ownership or car journeys, impacts on air quality and emission of pollutants, inclusive growth, green space and biodiversity. We want to see clear connections between A660 developments and the overall achievement of the Leeds Transport Strategy. We have had good engagement and support from local Councillors.

What achievements in wellbeing can our neighbourhoods expect to see by 2030 from big investments like this? What plans are in place to evaluate the changes made?

8, Leeds cannot meet the huge and urgent challenges we face through top-down 'consultation' where the Council alone defines the agenda. We need to move to a model of **CoProduction** where a wide range of partner organisations all contribute their experience and expertise to defining issues and working together on solutions. This requires a combination of political leadership and the appropriate involvement of statutory services, academics, employers, and community organisations. In short, we must mobilise all our resources. This would involve exploring ideas with a wider range of people before any formal consultation process. This includes a move towards wider Active Travel planning involving Community Committees such as Inner North West (Headingley, Hyde Park, Woodhouse and Weetwood). Planning would have much more potential if it involves a more participative approach with much wider publicity.

9. We are unclear about the timescale for implementing the changes and what plans are in place to evaluate changes? We are concerned that there is no appendix giving details of the projected impacts of your proposals such as traffic counts; modelling changes on the A660 and on important junctions in nearby neighbourhoods; there are no projected impacts on the mix of A660 traffic over time, including scooters and more delivery vans; and there is no projection of "traffic evaporation".

Without such information it is difficult to make many meaningful choices.

We have asked our members to make their individual comments on many specific proposals. However, we have some general points:

A. We would welcome a **20mph speed limit** between Alma Road and Shire Oak Road. We believe that all of the A660 between the city centre and the Lawnswood roundabout should have a 20 mph speed limit.

B. We welcome all the proposals for **continuous crossings/pavements**. These would play a significant part in reducing "rat running" and on reducing traffic turning off and on to the main roads, which increases risk of collisions. They would also help to protect Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, provide level surfaces for pedestrians, and support an active travel culture. Will you make sure that SatNav companies are alerted to the existence of continuous pavements and avoid including them as part of their shortest or fastest routes?

C. In general we welcome more **time for pedestrians to cross** the A660 at traffic lights, with the timing of traffic lights corresponding to the time it takes for pedestrians (and cyclists) to cross.

D. We welcome measures to increase the **priority for buses** through bus gates,

traffic signals and we also like the idea of 'Yield' markings painted on roads to encourage traffic to allow buses to move off quickly from bus stops. This will need enforcement through cameras and fines.

E. **Other road space reallocation.** Why are **Heavy Goods Vehicles**, which take up a lot of road space and intimidate cyclists, still allowed to take through routes along the A660, rather than the slightly longer route around the Outer Ring Road? We have been asking for this for years.

F. There are simply too many pedestrians and cyclists (and now electric scooters, which are becoming more common) to safely share space at the bus stop and pedestrian crossing at the **Arndale Centre/Headingley Central**. We suggest a two-way cycle route behind the shops (on land that was originally considered for the trolleybus). This, in particular, needs further public consultation after more detailed proposals from Connecting Leeds.

G. **School streets.** It was disappointing there were no integrated plans to facilitate the development of school streets and safer travel to and from local schools in Headingley.

H. All proposals should be reviewed to take account of the congestion across Headingley (including on the A660) caused by **Headingley Stadium events**, and also groups (many from outside Headingley) taking part in the "**Otley Run**" with a range of dangerous and anti-social behaviours, which severely disrupt community life and encroaches on public space.

In summary, while many of the Connecting Leeds proposals should contribute to an incremental change in meeting Leeds Transport Strategy objectives, Zero Carbon Headingley considers additional measures are urgently needed to meet emissions targets by 2030. These include:

i. **A Clean Air Zone** within the Leeds Outer Ring Road, aimed at reducing levels of carbon and NOx emissions, and particulates, to meet latest targets.

ii. The enforcement of new government legislation on **pavement parking**.

iii. **Workplace Parking Levies** and **employee public transport passes** provided for employees by employers.

iv. **Congestion charging and differential road pricing** for all motor vehicles (unless they have a specific exemption) the proceeds to be invested into bus services and related measures.

v. **Finance** - apart from some environmental and safety gains, the current proposals seem to just relate to securing a government Active Travel grant. In order to meet Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy targets for 2030 and beyond, our **suggestions above** would not only change behaviour, but also generate income that could be invested in public transport, green spaces and low traffic neighbourhoods.

vi. All Connecting Leeds proposals should have an **impact statement** including the anticipated reductions in car use and improvements in road safety and air quality.

vii. **CoProduction** of future proposals such as Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, fostering of 20 minute neighbourhoods, and the links to public transport, cycle networks, and travel between other neighbourhoods such as Headingley, Weetwood, Kirkstall, Meanwood, Burley, Woodhouse and further afield. Otherwise, there could be a perception that planning is mainly to allow traffic to travel faster through the residential communities of Headingley.

viii. We note that Leeds is not on track to meet our emissions targets and consequently no infrastructure developments in Headingley should be used to increase **capacity at Leeds Bradford Airport**.

Zero Carbon Headingley