

Response to the Transport Plan for the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Sustrans is the charity behind practical and innovative solutions to the UK's transport challenges. Our work includes Low Carbon Travel, Safe Routes to School, our health policy programme Active Travel, the National Cycle Network, and changing travel behaviour through individualised travel marketing (our TravelSmart programme).
- 1.2 Our aim is to change the UK's transport system and culture, so that:
- transport emissions that cause climate change are significantly reduced
 - people can choose more often to travel in ways that benefit their health
 - everyone has local access to the services they need to improve their quality of life
 - local streets and public spaces become places for people to enjoy
- 1.3 Sustrans has been developing practical solutions to transport, health and environmental problems for 30 years and is well-placed to advise on a range of walking and cycling projects. Our main project, the 10,000 mile UK National Cycle Network, was recently awarded the World Health Organisation Counteracting Obesity Award.
- 1.4 Our work in particular promotes walking and cycling, with a special emphasis on mobility for young people. We believe this to be integral to wider efforts within the Transport sector to reduce the UK's CO₂ emissions by at least 60% by 2050.
- 1.5 Sustrans has developed GOAL 2012 (Greenway for the Olympics And London), a proposal for a network of traffic-free walking and cycling routes connected by traffic-claimed, 'greened' streets. Whilst the priority is to complete networks to and around Olympic venues by 2012, the proposal outlines a wider network across London as part of the legacy for London, to be delivered by 2020. A key element of the proposal is a new Thames bridge for pedestrians and cyclists between Canary Wharf and Rotherhithe.
- 1.6 Sustrans is a member of the London 2012 Active Travel Advisory Group (ATAG).

2.0 Summary

- 2.1 The Plan lacks ambition for walking and cycling does not sufficiently recognise the role these modes could play:
- i) in realising the Games vision (3.4 on page 22) and
 - ii) meeting the Transport Objectives (3.26 on page 25).
- 2.2 The Plan does not sufficiently take into account the role walking and cycling could play in relieving pressure on the public transport system. Whilst mention is made in section 6.209 (page 78) the mode share targets and current funding arrangements suggest a mismatch between the stated aims and necessary commitment for deliverability.
- 2.3 There is little mention of transport mode integration (particularly of walking and cycling with other modes), bearing in mind that many journeys are likely to involve the use of more than one mode of transport.
- 2.4 The targets for walking and cycling are very low and appear not to have taken account of the increases in use of these modes already taking place in London, as well as the projected population growth in London forecast in the TfL document, “Transport 2025”.

3.0 Specific comments - Summary document

- 3.1 Page 1: The use of the phrase “public transport Games” diminishes the role that walking and cycling can play. We suggest the phrase “sustainable transport Games” is a more accurate reflection as walking and cycling are not public transport. This is mentioned a number of times in both documents and should be replaced in each instance.
- 3.2 Page 6: We very much support the key objectives underpinning the strategy. The final point ‘to achieve maximum value for money’ should take into account the economic appraisal guidance developed by Sustrans for the DfT. The guidance is consistent with the government’s New Approach to Transport Appraisal suite of tools, and is intended to form part of the DfT’s WebTAG series which advises on methods of economically appraising transport schemes. Sustrans’ were asked to conduct an appraisal of a proposed programme of walking and cycling schemes linking communities to schools. The results show them to have a benefit to cost ratio of 20:1. This is in stark contrast to the typical ratio of just 3:1 for other transport schemes such as rail and roads..
- 3.3 Page 6: We support the commitment that private car parking for spectators will not be provided at any venue, except disabled parking,

but would like to see this commitment extended to include the Olympic Park in Legacy Mode.

- 3.4 Page 7, Olympic Park Venues map: Many of the pedestrian routes for spectators should be marked as shared use routes for pedestrians and cyclists. We do accept that some may only be appropriate for pedestrians only but the Greenway is already shared use for both modes.
- 3.5 Page 10: We support the commitment to a network of new and upgraded walking and cycling routes and the other measures to promote the benefits of walking and cycling.
- 3.6 Page 13: “West Ham Station. Provision of an accessible walking route from the station along the Greenway into the Olympic Park” should read “West Ham Station. Provision of an accessible walking **and cycling** route from the station along the Greenway into the Olympic Park”

4.0 Specific comments - Full document

- 4.1 Page 17: [please see 3.4, above]
- 4.2 Page 30: We support the objective for 100% of ticketed spectators to arrive by public transport, walking or cycling, but would like to see greater understanding throughout the document of the role walking and cycling can play in integrated journeys involving more than one mode of transport.
- 4.3 Page 31, section 4.6: Other venues, such as the Wimbledon All England Lawn Tennis Club, although not ‘new’ venues, should be included in the ambition to maximise accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling in order to leave a true legacy at all venues, not just the Olympic Park.
- 4.4 Page 31, section 4.8: We support the ambition to promote walking and cycling to all venues but would like to see a firmer commitment to improve the physical environment in order to make walking and cycling a more attractive option. In many cases, trying to promote these modes without improving the physical environment will be ineffective, resulting in only a short-term increase in walking and cycling which will not be maintained after the Games are over.
- 4.5 Page 31, section 4.9: Whilst we reluctantly accept that contractual agreements with the IOC mean that chauffeur-driven vehicles must be available for certain members of the Olympic Family, this does not preclude the promotion of the use of public transport, walking and

cycling direct to the Olympic Family. Indeed, we believe it is important for these members to be encouraged to act as role models for the general public, particularly by choosing Active Travel when moving around the Olympic Park and between venues when appropriate.

4.6 Page 33, section 4.18: We support the commitment made to sustainability, but do not believe the Transport Plan as it stands can deliver true sustainability, particularly in the areas of climate change and healthy living. An increased commitment to fund walking and cycling initiatives will help deliver a truly sustainable and Low Carbon Games.

4.7 Pages 40-44, The Olympic Route Network: We would like to see a number of caveats, such as:

- The ORN should not impact negatively on public transport provision, in particular on bus lanes and the flow of buses.
- The ORN should not impact negatively on pedestrians or cyclists, either by limiting space allocated for those modes or by reducing their safety
- Any legacy of the ORN should benefit walkers, cyclists and public transport (particularly buses).
- The ORN should not result in increased capacity for private motor vehicles after the staging of the Games
- Any junction improvements to increase capacity (section 5.45) should only be for the period of the Games. As part of the Games legacy, any additional road space should be re-allocated to benefit pedestrians, cyclists and buses.

4.8 Page 48, Figure 6.2: This table does not give a clear picture of how people might arrive at each venue. The percentages for walking and cycling should be separated out and much more ambitious targets developed, in line with large increases in the levels of cycling already taking place in London. There is a danger that provision for walking and cycling will be inadequate if these modes are simply classed as 'other'. It does not reflect the ambition for a sustainable, Low Carbon Games with Active Spectators.

4.9 This table also does not reflect the fact that many journeys are likely to involve more than one mode of transport. For example, will spectators arriving at West Ham Station and then walking to the Olympic Park be classed as arriving by rail or as 'other'? The Plan does not suggest that there has been sufficient consideration for integrated journeys.

4.10 Pages 50-64, Rail Strategy: There is no mention of integration of cycling with rail provision here, yet this would help relieve pressure on the three 'Olympic Park Gateway Stations' (page 50). We would like to see a stated ambition to provide adequate cycle parking at any stations

undergoing refurbishment or improvement, particularly as a legacy benefit to the local community.

4.11 Page 54, section 6.64: [please see 3.4, above]

4.12 Page 65, Figure 6.12: [please see 3.4, above]

4.13 Page 74, section 6.178: Any negative impact from construction or Games operation on bus lanes (which are also used by cyclists) must be mitigated by reducing road space for private motor vehicles, rather than by re-routing bus routes or cycle lanes. We would like to encourage the use of waterways for movement of construction materials which would help to reduce any negative impact of construction traffic during construction and de-construction phases.

4.14 Page 81, Figure 6.20: This map actually shows more than the just London Cycle Network, and should be re-labelled “London Cycle Routes”, as it appears just above the key. There are also some mapping errors on the National Cycle Network. GIS tables showing the correct alignment are available from Sustrans on request.

4.15 Page 83: We support the target setting process, but would like to caution against relying too much on past events in London or elsewhere as ‘evidence’ of demand, as these are unlikely to reflect the rapidly changing levels of cycling already being seen in London. It is worth reflecting on the fact that ambitious Mayoral targets for increases in cycling have been met early and so new targets are now being developed. The current modal share targets (page 48) will therefore need to be revised to take into account the likely background increases in cycling by 2012.

4.16 Page 83, section 6.214: We support the Active Spectator concept but suggest that it should be ‘fundamental’ to encouraging physical activity, rather than as ‘an extension’ which suggests that it is a peripheral concept. Sustrans is unaware of specific evidence demonstrating that hosting the Olympic Games will encourage a sustained increase in everyday physical activity amongst the large numbers of people currently insufficiently active. Therefore the Active Spectator Programme must be stated as central to achieving increased levels of physical activity as a result of hosting the Games.

4.17 Page 83, section 6.217: For the reasons stated in 4.16, we strongly support the Active Neighbourhoods concept and would like to see an increased commitment to delivering this based on existing best practice.

- 4.18 Page 88, section 7.5: Wimbledon is cited here as having ‘tried and tested transport arrangements which will only need minor adjustments’. The local streets each summer are clogged with motor traffic and local parks are boarded over to provide car parking, a situation which runs contrary to the stated aims of the Transport Plan. More consideration must therefore be made to transport arrangements at existing venues in and out of London. Sustrans is in the process of developing a network of Greenways for walkers and cyclists to this venue with the support of the relevant Local Authorities.
- 4.19 Pages 92 – 148, Competition Venues: This section does not mention walking or cycling as transport options for any venue. Whilst it might seem obvious that people will walk to and between venues particularly within the Olympic Park it is our experience that a lack of planning for pedestrian access in new developments and regeneration projects often results in a poor environment for those on foot. It might be less obvious that spectators may arrive by bike, but this points to the need to carefully plan good cycle access and cycle parking at the early stage of venue design. Again, we often find that cycle access is an afterthought and the result is very often inadequate. If the Active Spectator Programme is to become a reality, walking and cycling must be at the heart of all venue design. This will help to ensure a strong legacy and will be better value for money than attempting to ‘retrofit’ good pedestrian and cycle facilities after the Games are over.
- 4.20 Page 180: Station improvements and procurement of new rolling stock must take into account the need to ensure a fully integrated transport network. This means adequate, safe and secure cycle parking at stations and the provision of space for cycles to be carried on mainline and DLR trains.

5.0 Conclusion

Whilst there is a clearly stated headline aim to properly provide for pedestrians and cyclists, Sustrans believes that this aim has not filtered down to those involved with designing venues and the associated infrastructure. This is particularly evident in the fact that walking and cycling is not mentioned at all as transport options for accessing each of the venues.

Whilst more funding for walking and cycling than is currently proposed is undoubtedly required to properly deliver an effective Active Spectator Programme and a Low Carbon Games, many of the suggestions we have made simply require attention to be paid to them now, with no or minimal extra cost. Of all the transport projects associated with the Games, walking and cycling is by far the most cost-effective and helps to ensure that

London 2012 leaves a positive environmental and public health legacy long after the Games are over.

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