



Brent School Streets Review

Stonebridge and OLOL Scheme Report

MP Smarter Travel

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Stonebridge and OLOL School Street

Background

In September 2020, a School Street scheme was introduced through an experimental traffic order on Wesley Road, as highlighted on the map below. The Stonebridge and OLOL School Street was created to reduce air pollution and improve road safety outside Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School (OLOL) and Stonebridge Primary School. This School Street is also intended to provide more space for social distancing, to help to ease the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

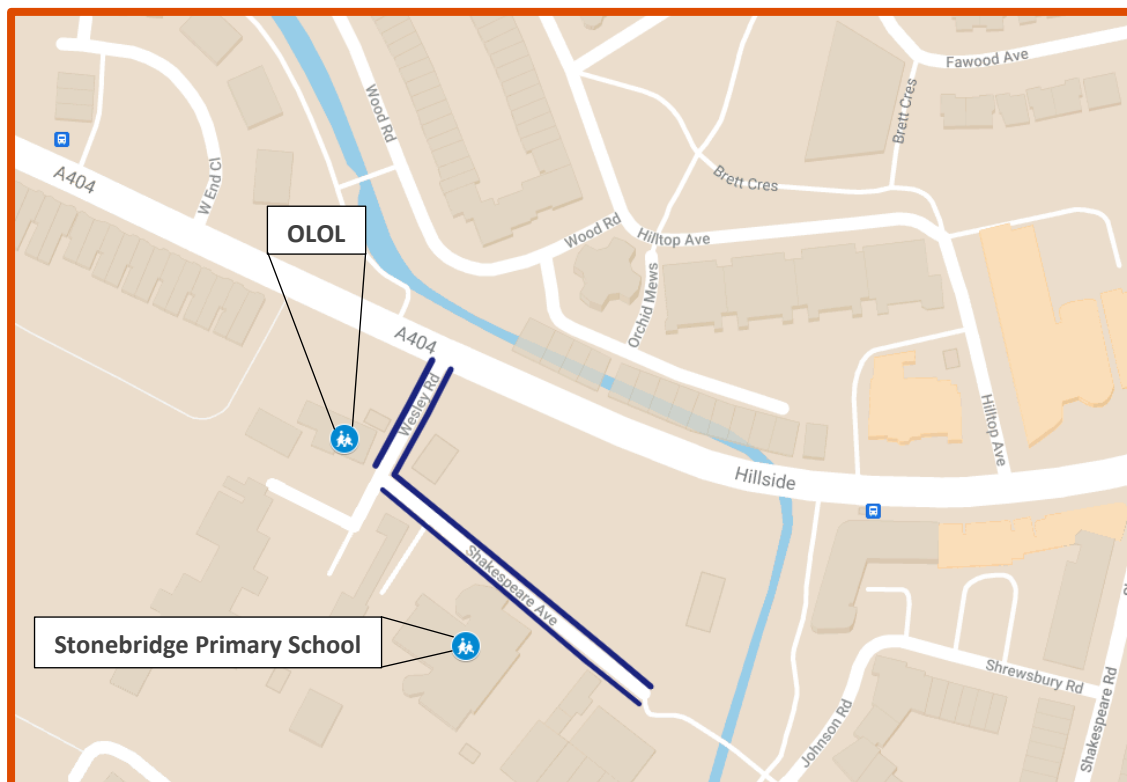


Figure 1 – Map showing location of the School Street, OLOL and Stonebridge Primary School.

Summary of Data Analysis

As part of Brent Council's Emergency School Street consultation process, the council collected multiple datasets including:

- Public consultation
- Parent & guardian consultation
- Air quality data
- School interviews
- Travel mode analysis
- Site observations

Below we present our analysis of these datasets, along with a recommendation as to whether the scheme should be made permanent.

Public Consultation

From August 2020 to July 2021, members of the public were invited to provide feedback on the experimental scheme. The Stonebridge and OLOL public consultation received five responses in total, all of whom live outside of the scheme. Three of these responses included a comment, all of which have been analysed thematically to highlight relevant comments.

The table below summarises the proportions of responses who were either for or against the School Street. Responses are then broken down into those that live in or outside of the scheme.

Table 1 – Overall responses

Response	Count	Lives within scheme	Lives outside of scheme
Supports School Street	5	0	5
Opposes School Street	0	0	0

Table 2 displays the key issues pulled from the public comments, first split into code frames then themes. The themes have been colour coded to indicate whether they are in support or opposition of the scheme. Yellow comments represent themes that are neither supportive nor oppositional.

Table 2 – Public comment themes

Code Frame	Theme	Count
Traffic Levels	Concern about displaced traffic on other roads (e.g., Hilltop Avenue, Shakespeare Avenue and Lawrence Avenue)	1
Health	Support scheme for improving safety	1
General	Feels barrier is long overdue	1
	Request to widen Wesley Road	1
	Request for double yellow lines outside Tesco and road opposite on both sides to prevent congestion	1
	Request to add a disabled parking bay on main Harrow Road	1

Due to the low number of responses to the public consultation, there are no themes referenced by more than one individual. All but one of the themes are either positive or neutral, and every respondent voted in support of the scheme, so overall the public consensus was positive.

Parent & guardian consultation

The parent & guardian consultation yielded four responses, none of whom were residents of the scheme. All four respondents marked walking as their most regular form of transport. Only one respondent provided a comment, saying that the scheme is inconvenient, causes traffic and stress, and should be removed.

The table below shows the responses to the key questions of the parent & guardian consultation.

Table 3 – Parent & guardian consultation

Question	Response	Percentage
Overall, are you happy that the school participated in this scheme?	Yes	3
	No	1
Would you like the scheme to be made permanent?	Yes	3
	Yes (with changes)	0
	No	1

Key Concerns

Following analysis of the public and parent & guardian consultation responses, the following topic areas have been identified as key concerns.

Highways Changes

Within the public Stonebridge and OLOL consultation, a number of requests and suggestions were made for specific highways changes. These requests are listed within the table below, and will be addressed in the recommendation section.

Table 4 – Highways changes

Highways Change	Count
Request to widen Wesley Road	1
Request for double yellow lines outside Tesco and road opposite on both sides to prevent congestion	1
Request to add a disabled parking bay on main Harrow Road	1

Blue Badge Holders

None of the respondents within this consultation identified themselves as having a disability, and no respondents made any comments regarding disabled people.

Air Quality

As part of the Stonebridge and OLOL School Street scheme, Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels were monitored at the school over a twelve-month period from October 2020 to October 2021*. Figure 2 presents this data along with the modelled annual average for 2016 ([Annual Pollution Maps](#)) and the NO₂ concentration recorded in 2019 as part of the Breathe Clean programme, just before the scheme was implemented for reference.

*See Appendix A for full air quality datasets.

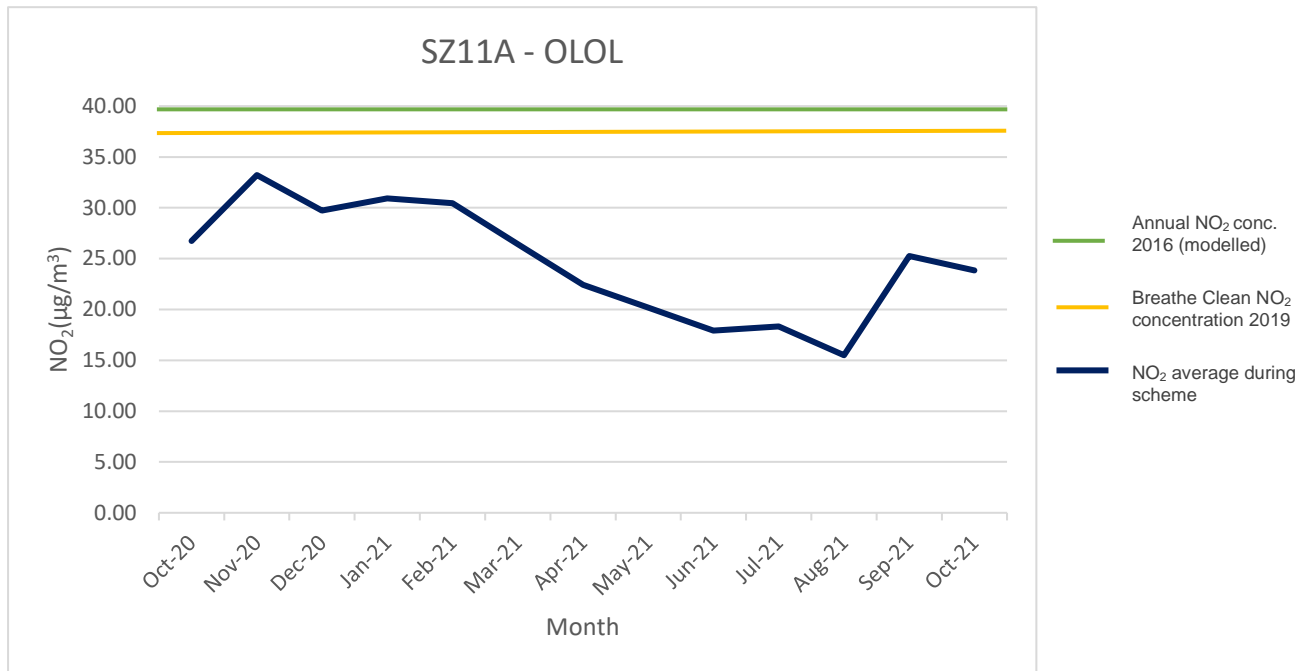


Figure 2 – NO₂ concentration at OLOL (Wesley Road)

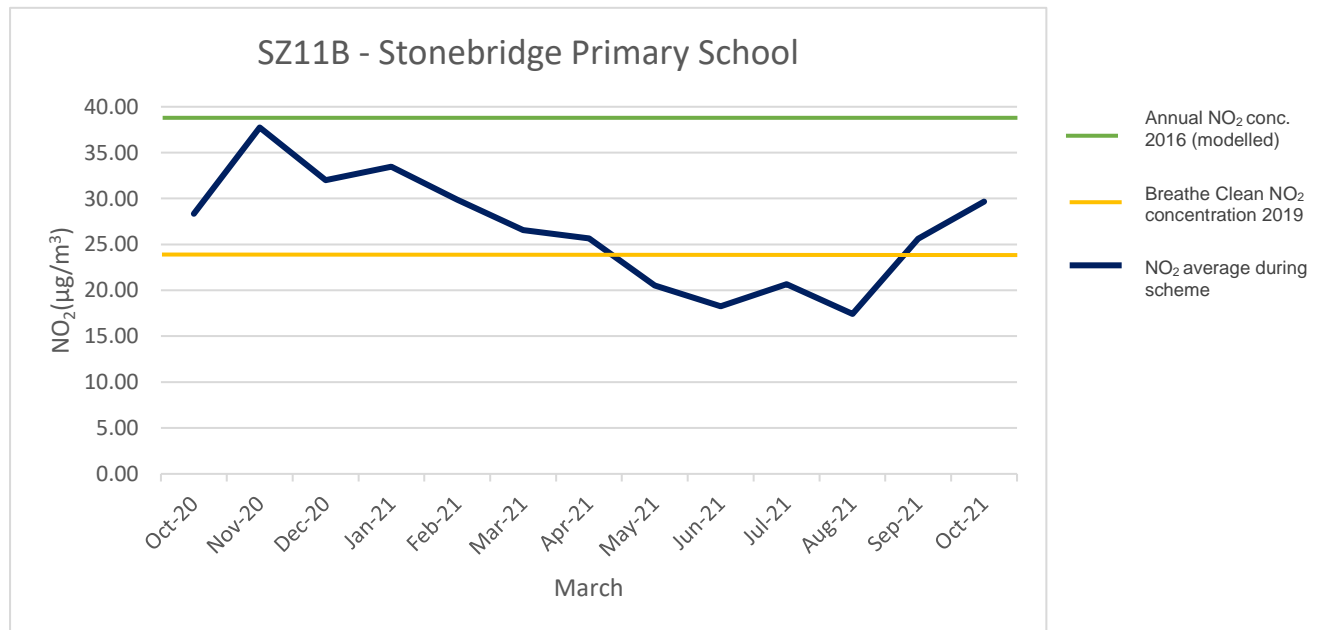


Figure 3 – NO₂ concentration at Stonebridge Primary School (Shakespeare Avenue)

NO₂ concentration at both schools within the Stonebridge and OLOL Scheme gradually decreased during the time the scheme was in place, in line with expected seasonal variations in NO₂ levels, with the concentration at OLOL remaining well below both baseline readings. While the data from both schools follows the same trend, NO₂ concentration at Stonebridge Primary School mainly sits above the Breathe Clean reading from 2019. Stonebridge Primary's Breathe Clean reading was taken across March and April. As the school's Breathe Clean and 2020/21 data bisect in April, we can presume that current air pollution levels are similar to 2019.

It is important to note that this data represents NO₂ levels over the course of the scheme post-implementation, rather than being proof of scheme impact. There are multiple factors at play including meteorological conditions, school holidays and COVID-19 restrictions, which will have impacted the data.

School Interview

Through interview, MP Smarter Travel found that OLOL has had a generally positive experience of the scheme, with more details of the interview shown in the table below. The school requested that a more permanent barrier or a camera be added to the scheme, to resolve the problems the school have had with providing the staff to monitor the barrier.

Table 5 – Interview summary (OLOL)

Overall Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided space for social distancing • Large increase in active journeys to school (park and stride, bus & walk, bikes and scooters) • Huge road safety improvements
Concerns/drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties with school staffing the barrier, so some people end up moving the cones and ignoring the scheme
Requests for continuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more permanent barrier or the addition of cameras

The interview with Stonebridge Primary School revealed similar results, with the school also requesting cameras, to take the pressure off school staff. Stonebridge Primary School also stated that they believe they would have seen an increase in social distancing, were it not for the building works within the School Street zone making it more difficult for children and parents to socially distance.

Table 6 – Interview summary (Stonebridge Primary School)

Overall Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huge improvements in safety (was reportedly very poor prior to scheme's implementation) • Reduction in confrontations between drivers
Concerns/drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last-minute implementation with little information from the council, not enough engagement and support. • Struggling to provide the staff, takes staff away from the school gates, scheme is starting to slip out of control
Requests for continuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camera monitoring to alleviate monitoring responsibilities • Better signage

Travel Mode Analysis

Students at OLOL were surveyed before (May, 2017) and after (September, 2021) the implementation of the scheme, to identify any changes in travel modes. Active travel increased by 10% while public transport use decreased by 14%. This decrease could be as a result of people avoiding public transport due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the increase in active travel, car use also increased, by 4%.

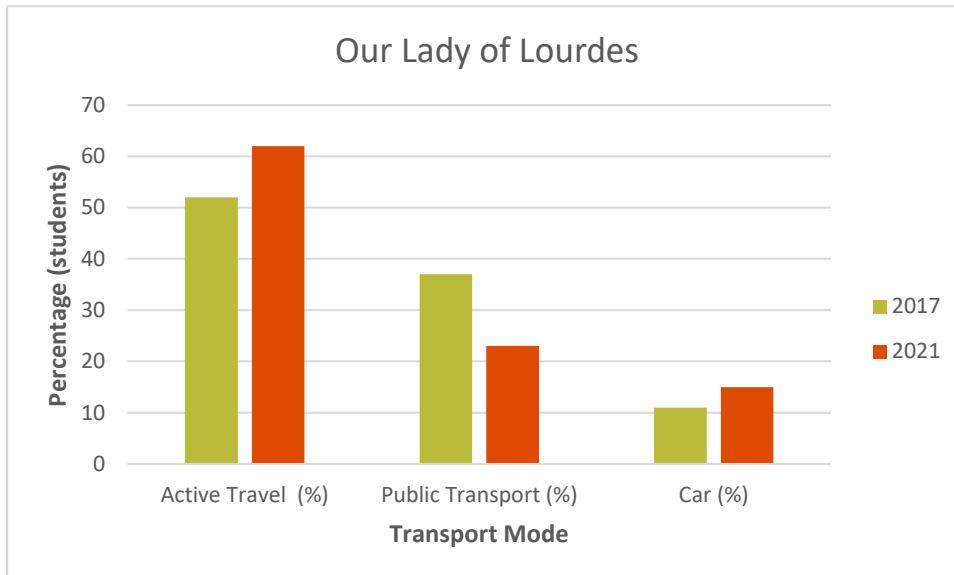


Figure 4 – Graph of travel modes of students at OLOL in 2017 compared to 2021.

Site Observations

The Brent Officer site observation of the Stonebridge and OLOL scheme was carried out in May 2021. The following observations were made:

- School Street ran smoothly, site manager only let teachers through (no residents currently)
- Upon completion of the development the scheme will need a camera

The recommendation made by the officer was to have a camera installed before residents move into the new development on Wesley Road. A higher volume of cars needing to enter the school street will make it easier for others to abuse the scheme and drive in under the guise of being residents, and will also pose an increased risk to child safety.

Conclusion

The summaries below assess how effectively the aims of the scheme have been met.

Providing Space for Social Distancing

According to both school interviews, the scheme did provide space for social distancing (or would have, were it not for the development happening on the road). This is a positive indication that this aim has been met.

Improves Air Quality

Ideally, data would be collected for at least a year before and after the implementation of the scheme. This would enable changes to be identified and more reliably attributed to the School

Streets scheme. However, for this set of implementations, this was not possible. Stonebridge Primary School's March and April's AQ data is very similar to levels recorded during the Breathe Clean project, suggesting that air quality may not have been significantly reduced by the scheme since 2019.

Encouraging Active Journeys to School

Although the mode split data from OLOL indicates a slight increase in car use (4%), it also indicates a greater increase in active travel (10%), suggesting that this aim has been a success at this school. OLOL said in their interview that they had seen a large increase in the number of students undertaking active journeys to school, be it through park and stride, bus and stride, scooting, cycling or walking. Stonebridge Primary School said that they already had a large number of students undertaking active journeys to school, so the scheme's impact had not been obvious.

For OLOL, this aim has been a success, while for Stonebridge it remains undetermined.

Reducing Private Vehicle Use/Resident Views

While OLOL seems to feel that there has been a reduction in private vehicle use for taking children to school, Stonebridge Primary School said they feel like parents are still driving just as much, but dropping their children off slightly further away. There will likely be an increase in private vehicle use on Wesley Road after residents move into the new development that is currently under construction.

No residents responded to this consultation because, at the time of consulting, there were no residents living within the scheme.

Recommendation

Based on the data analysed, we are recommending that this school street scheme is made permanent. Both schools cited "huge" improvements to the safety of children outside the school gates and were enthusiastic to continue. This is accompanied by a small yet entirely supportive public response, and only one oppositional parent & guardian response.

We recommend that a camera is installed to enforce the scheme in order to take the pressure off of school staff. Both schools also requested cameras during their interviews with MP Smarter Travel.

We also recommend further data collection and analysis of the following:

- Observation of footfall and crowding at pick-up and drop-off (social distancing)

For highways changes (see table 4) we recommend consultation with highways engineers to discuss additional disabled parking bays and widening Wesley Road.

Appendices

Appendix A – Air quality data

Table A1 – Air quality data for OLOL

Baseline LAEI 2016 Annual mean NO ₂ (µg/m ³)	Breathe Clean data (4-8 week snapshot) (µg/m ³)	NO ₂ reading from Diffusion Tube - RAW DATA (µg/m ³)												
		Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
39.58	37.6	26.73	33.22	29.72	30.91	30.46	26.43	22.43	20.20	17.91	18.33	15.50	25.26	23.84

Table A2 – Air quality data for Stonebridge Primary School

Baseline LAEI 2016 Annual mean NO ₂ (µg/m ³)	Breathe Clean data (4-8 week snapshot) (µg/m ³)	NO ₂ reading from Diffusion Tube - RAW DATA (µg/m ³)												
		Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
38.56	24.0	28.36	37.74	32.01	33.48	29.87	26.55	25.64	20.54	18.28	20.67	17.43	25.61	29.67