Dear Mike Barton,

FORMAL COMPLAINT RE NO ENTRY SCHEME ADDISCOMBE COURT ROAD/ CANNING ROAD IMPLEMENTED 10th JANUARY 2018

I live at (insert address) and I wish to complain about this scheme because (insert how it has affected you).

The no entry to Addiscombe Court Road/ Canning Road scheme was approved by councillors at a meeting on 11th October 2017. The decision was unfair and the process was flawed. The Highways department is under a duty to analyse traffic problems and recommend evidence based solutions. Councillors should then scrutinise this information, take into account representations made by the public and make decisions in everyone’s best interests. This did not happen for the following reasons:

1. The report from the Highways department was flawed. It’s remit was too narrow, for instance there was no mention of the residential area that was losing access to Lower Addiscombe Road at peak hours, so no mention of the longer journeys, increased pollution and congestion. The resulting road system is confusing and makes little sense, it is now commonplace to observe motorists (including refuse vehicles) regularly breaking the law eg by breaching peak hour restrictions/ flouting no entries. This law breaking is being tolerated in an area shared by the tram where safety should be paramount. The report did not identify that there is no main road for northbound traffic or that this scheme would simply displace huge volumes of traffic onto one or two other residential roads, in particular, Elgin Road.
2. The map used which was in the public domain during the consultation shows Clyde Rd as two way, giving the false impression that it would carry part of the northbound traffic. It is, of course, one way. Any councillors acting on this information would have acted on flawed and misleading data
3. Councillors relied on a public safety issue to close Addiscombe Court Road to northbound traffic. However, Mike Barton (Highways) and Steve Iles (Head of Roads) have both admitted that TFL/ Tramlink were never contacted about this issue. That means that solutions such as an enforcement camera/ barrier were never properly explored. Closing Addiscombe Court Road to northbound traffic was therefore not a last resort and should not have been recommended on the basis of safety.
4. The Highways department failed to take into account its own traffic data collected at the tax payers expense. The data was left out of its report so it was never presented to decision making councillors. This unused data did not support its recommendations. The Highways department view is that it did not look at the data because it did not commission it to inform the scheme, it was simply obtained to collect “before and after” data as it now plans to monitor the same roads again with the scheme is in place. This is an irrational approach to the use of data and it does not stand up to scrutiny. It demonstrates that the Highways department did not have an evidence based approach when developing this scheme. During the public consultation, residents from HOME residents association obtained and undertook an analysis of the data which was presented to the Highways department and councillors. It demonstrated that Elgin Road was already the busiest of these residential roads and objections to the scheme were raised in light of this data; there is therefore no reasonable excuse for the Highways department to fail to have analysed the data to inform the scheme.

5. Local democracy was not respected: residents of Canning Road who responded to the public consultation did not support the closure of their road to northbound traffic.

6. Councillors did not seriously consider the 84 written objections which pointed out many of the issues set out above, therefore they did not scrutinise the flawed information presented to them by the Highways team which lead to poor decision making.

To conclude, Councillors said in respect of traffic displacement onto Addiscombe Court Road that “lessons had been learnt...the council did not want to create similar situations elsewhere” but this is exactly what has been allowed to happen. This is as a result of the mediocre work of the Highways department and the lack of scrutiny from council decision makers, resulting in an unfair decision which has negatively impacted on me.