



The Road Haulage Association

The Rt Hon Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London
City Hall
The Queens Walk
London
SE1 2AA

19th May 2020

Dear Mayor,

Re-introduction of Congestion Charge, ULEZ and LEZ

I write to register my disappointment at the decision by Transport for London (TfL) to reimpose the congestion charge, ULEZ and LEZ from 18 May. With businesses on their knees as a result of COVID-19, now is not the time for imposing costs, especially with no practical notice period.

In effect, hauliers were given less than one working day's notice to prepare for the reintroduction. This is not acceptable. I would ask you to please give an assurance that imposition of regulatory measures will be communicated well in advance in future.

I wish to object to the move in London to reallocate road space in cities to cyclists as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and without regard to the needs of other road users. I support the need to maintain social distancing to facilitate a return to work. There will be places where adjustments will need to be made, in particular relating to pavements on busier areas. However, this protection of social distancing on pavements does need to be done in a way that works for everyone and should include more measures than simply widening pavements (for example, relocating bus stops or introducing one way walking systems).

Overlooking the need to move goods around London will undermine the competitiveness and productivity of the city. Many measures which favour cyclists have impacts on other road users, especially freight operations that need to work to meet the demands of customers. Many of the individual measures we are seeing brought forward are "for the longer term" and disregard the need to collect or deliver goods.

I want to ask you to commit that all measures brought in to reduce road space (including all parking and loading bay changes) specifically assess the impact on the movement of goods for businesses and households in the area being modified.

We all want a sustainable environment, but it should not be at the expense of the economy and jobs. The economy will only recover with pragmatic leadership that clears away hurdles to help businesses back on their feet.

Finally, on the congestion charge, we would like all goods vehicles over 3.5t to be exempt from the charge. Please consider this urgently as everyone needs help during the recovery from the pandemic. Removing the charge on lorries will simplify operations and save money for the sector's customers.

The charge does not impact the volume of lorries entering the zone, so the stated policy objective is not undermined by removing the charge from lorries. With the wider time period and the operation of the London Lorry Control Scheme (currently suspended), the charge will become a tax rather than a way to manage demand.

I strongly urge the Mayor and TfL to reconsider the decisions on road space reallocation and congestion charging.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely

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

Richard Burnett
Chief Executive

CC.

The Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP, Secretary of State for Transport
Heidi Alexander, Deputy Mayor of London for Transport