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- Sustrans 'DIY Streets' community-led neighbourhood improvements
  - Strategic application of urban realm interventions to limit traffic and encourage social interaction
  - A limited palette of high-quality hard landscape materials
  - Project re-visit after 6 years
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# TURNPIKE LANE LONDON EDITION 2



In 2012, Interpave took a tour of an exemplary, recently completed project which aims to reclaim streets for residents using straightforward paving interventions designed with full community involvement. Interpave revisited and photographed the project six years later.

## Introduction

This case study considers a joint initiative between Haringey Council and the charity Sustrans (as part of the charity's 'DIY Streets' programme) to provide longlasting improvements to an established residential area of north London. The programme aims to empower local communities to develop tangible, sustainable and longlasting improvements within their neighbourhoods.

An essential component of the project is the use of precast concrete paving with a limited palette of colours and styles to establish local character and influence the way that drivers behave.



## Context

The project covered a neighbourhood of around 1000 households located to the southeast of Turnpike Lane Underground and bus stations. The area is bounded by busy roads and constrained by a disused railway line passing through it. Its distinctive character derives from an established network of streets fronted by two-storey Victorian terraces – some enjoying mature tree avenues.

Continuing community engagement revealed the problems that residents have to deal with everyday when using their streets, including:

- high vehicle speeds
- use of streets as 'rat-runs' by non-local traffic
- poor north-south pedestrian links,
- lack of community outdoor space
- anti-social behaviour.



## Strategy

The Sustrans DIY Streets initiative is rooted in good design for urban spaces to help restrict car use naturally and foster walking, cycling, play and other social activity. An integral element of the project was community engagement, giving the initiative back to residents and allowing them to create spaces for people to meet, socialise and play.

The project involved various initiatives such as the planting of 40 trees and improved street lighting, and also incorporated various other elements including community art, environmental improvements, smarter travel initiatives and events.

Central to the strategy, however, was a focus on the design and re-paving of key nodal points of the local street network to reduce traffic volume and speed while, at the same time, providing a better external environment for the community. This has been achieved – and without the need for dedicated 'Home Zones', extensive shared surfaces or designated 20mph areas.

Instead, a lighter touch has been applied to traffic calming. In fact, road-markings and signage are conspicuous by their absence. These nodal point interventions generally consist of raised junctions and important crossings at footway level.

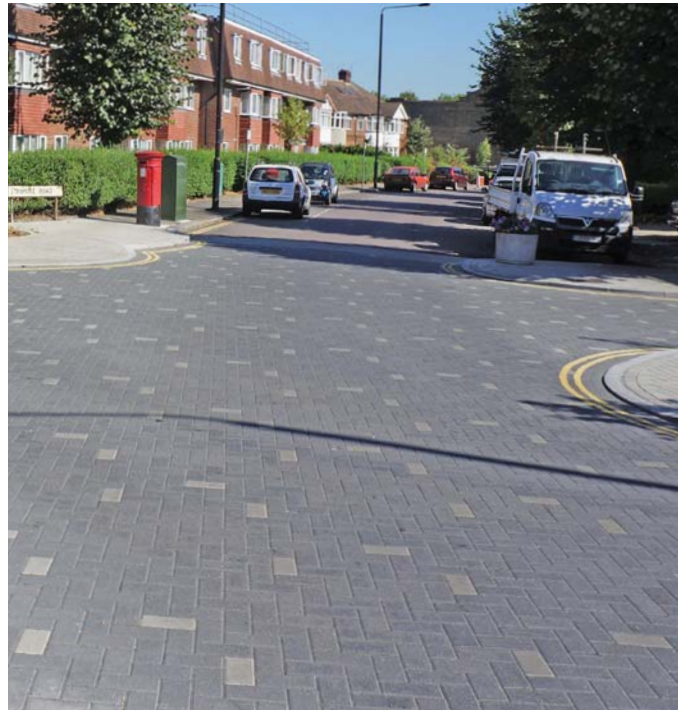
Here, the visual impact of different materials and treatments to highlight the feature is paramount to slowing traffic, rather than severe ramps or road markings. Each feature is individually designed, with full resident consultation, albeit using a limited palette of materials applied throughout.



## Paving Palette

Standard concrete block paving with chamfered edges is used to surface raised table and other features throughout the project. Following much discussion, the community chose grey blocks with a regular pattern of individual charcoal blocks interspersed. This effectively breaks up the appearance of the surface and clearly separates it from the amorphous black asphalt roads – particularly from a driver's viewpoint – without recourse to strong colours and patterns. Red 'brindle' blocks are also used to highlight crossing points in some cases. Actually, grey and brindle blocks were already used around the Borough and charcoal has now been added to the Council's materials stock to simplify maintenance.

Grey precast concrete flag paving is generally used for footways and paths, with concrete tactile flags in buff to meet the needs of blind and partially sighted people at crossings. Square edge granite kerbs are typical of the area and are used for raised tree planters and flush delineation within paving as well. Some stone setts were salvaged during the project and these have been re-used for details.



## Long-term performance

A primary reason for the project's success is its considered approach to paving detailing and the exemplary, consistent quality of installation (carried out by VolkerHighways). During Interpave's re-visit in 2018, it was clear that the precast concrete paving continues to perform well, delivering the original aims of the project.



## Langham Parade

Although at the edge of the site (and close to Turnpike Lane Underground and bus stations), this area is at the heart of the community with a group of local shops. It is now characterised by a raised section of street linking junctions and signalling a shared surface, enhanced by tree planting, and adjacent pavements have been widened.

With reduced traffic, this area has now come alive with a new café enjoying pavement seating. Residents have even persuaded the famous American urban artist, Shepard Fairey, to decorate the gable end of a shop wall overlooking the Parade.



## Break Point

These raised tables are used strategically to break up longer runs of asphalt street and to slow traffic, while also providing a level crossing point. The ramps are gradual and it is the impact of visual contrast on drivers that reduces speed. To reduce costs further, in some instances narrower block-paved strips are used level with the carriageway simply as a visual and textural contrast (as shown on page 3).



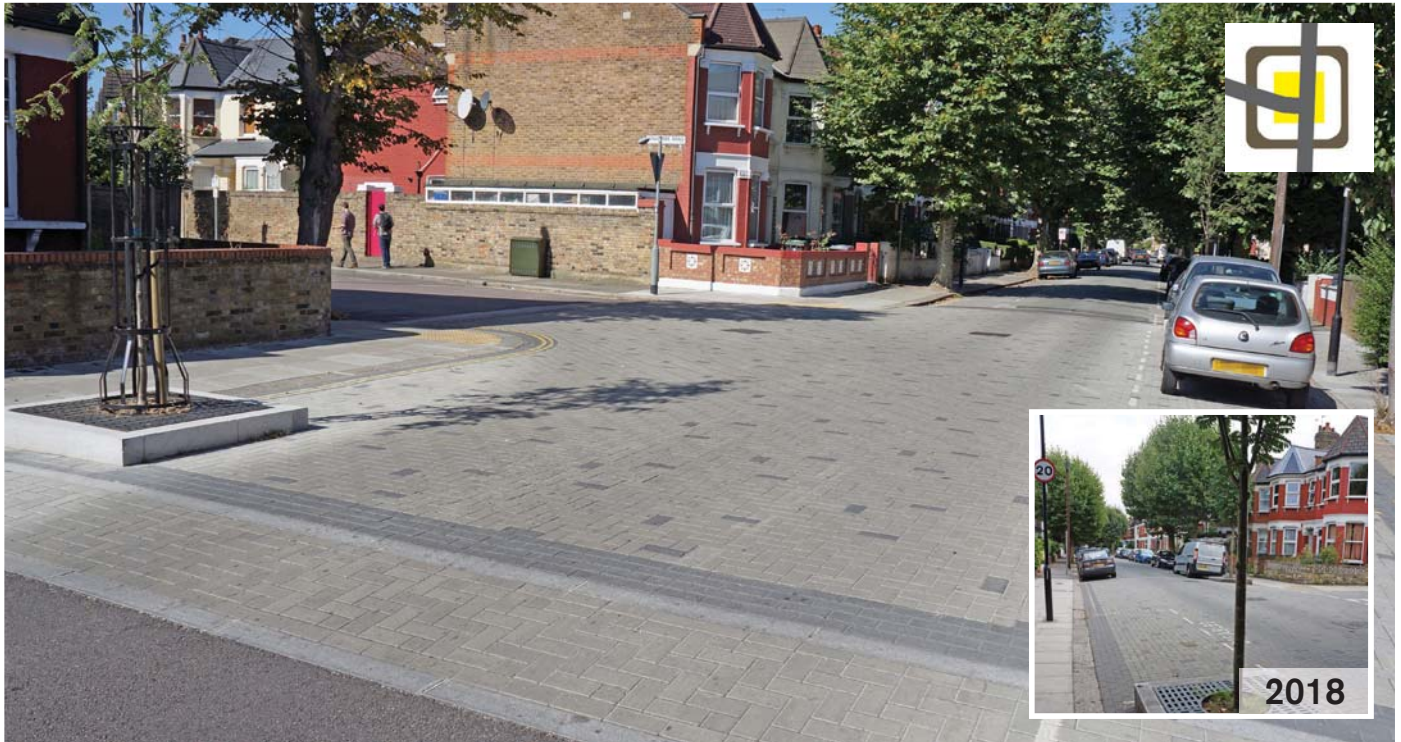
## X-Junction

Although the same language of patterned block paving is used for this raised junction, it was felt that existing traffic priorities (with some markings and signage) should be retained for safety reasons. Nonetheless, the block paving and tree planters effectively slow traffic down and enhance the area.



## T-Junction

This junction is raised, again with gradual ramps and no markings. Trees with raised, granite planters are introduced to signal the junction and continue the avenue feel of the street.



## Simple gateway

Other, secondary gateways to the neighbourhood are announced with a simple strip of block paving level with the carriageway, flanked by raised tree-planters.

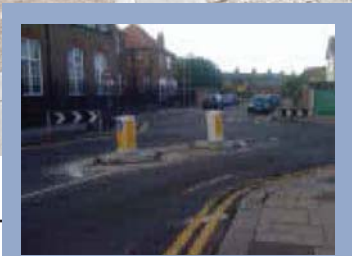


## Y-Junction

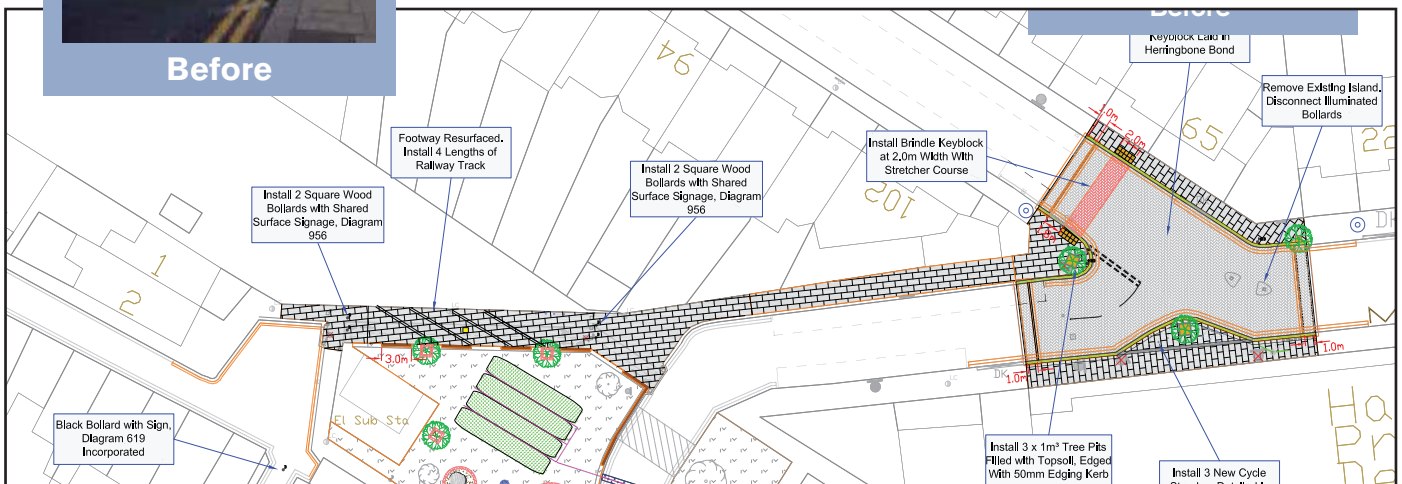
Here, busier roads intersect forming a Y-junction. The previous pedestrian crossing with central 'refuge' and traffic priorities (with extensive signage) have been replaced with concrete block and flag paving, including a brindle coloured pedestrian crossing strip reinforced with tactile paving. The shared surface is further delineated by flush granite kerbs, tree planters and bike racks. The street now has a much more open feel and forms a forecourt to the landmark building behind.



2018



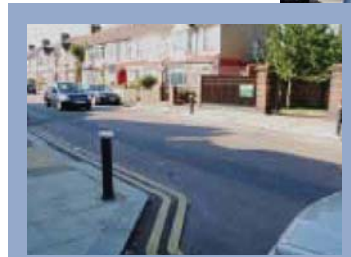
Before





## Park Entrance

Although not a traffic junction, the entrance to a local park close to some corner shops created the need for a safe pedestrian crossing point. Here, the road is narrowed and treated with a raised, block paved table.



Before



## Junction and Gateway

Apart from Langham Parade, other 'gateways' to the neighbourhood are highlighted with paving and landscape interventions. As an important access point, the Stanmore Road junction has been designed on a circular theme incorporating raised and level planters. Here, the community-designed block pattern uses charcoal and grey block reversed.



## Outcomes

The street works described here form part of an overall project which included a range of other initiatives. For example, a landscaped open space has been created where the old railway used to run and railway lines inset into the concrete flag paved path provide a reminder of this local identity.



## Precast Concrete Paving

- Visually attractive and able to deliver distinctive local character
- Helping to deliver 'Manual for Streets' and other guidance
- Capability for clear differentiation between distinct areas
- Accessible to all with consistent slip and skid resistance
- Durable and maintainable with reliable product supply
- Sustainable – in every sense.

**a diversity of shapes, styles, finishes and colours for contemporary design**

## Precast Paving and Interpave

Interpave is the Precast Concrete Paving and Kerb Association, promoting and developing concrete products – ranging from domestic uses to the most taxing heavy industrial applications. The Interpave website [www.paving.org.uk](http://www.paving.org.uk) provides the definitive source of background and technical information with project case studies celebrating the transformative power of inspired hard landscape in our cities.

## Acknowledgements

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Photos and case study by Hodsons. [www.hodsons.com](http://www.hodsons.com)

# Interpave

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