



# The Art of the Possible: Best practice vs received wisdom

George Weeks

Wednesday 11 March 2026

# ALVIN TOFFLER

Author of POWERSHIFT and THE THIRD WAVE

*The future always comes too fast and in the wrong order.*

# FUTURE SHOCK

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Alvin + Heidi Toffler





# Bristol









**TRANSPORT  
FOR LONDON**



# THE ACADEMY OF URBANISM





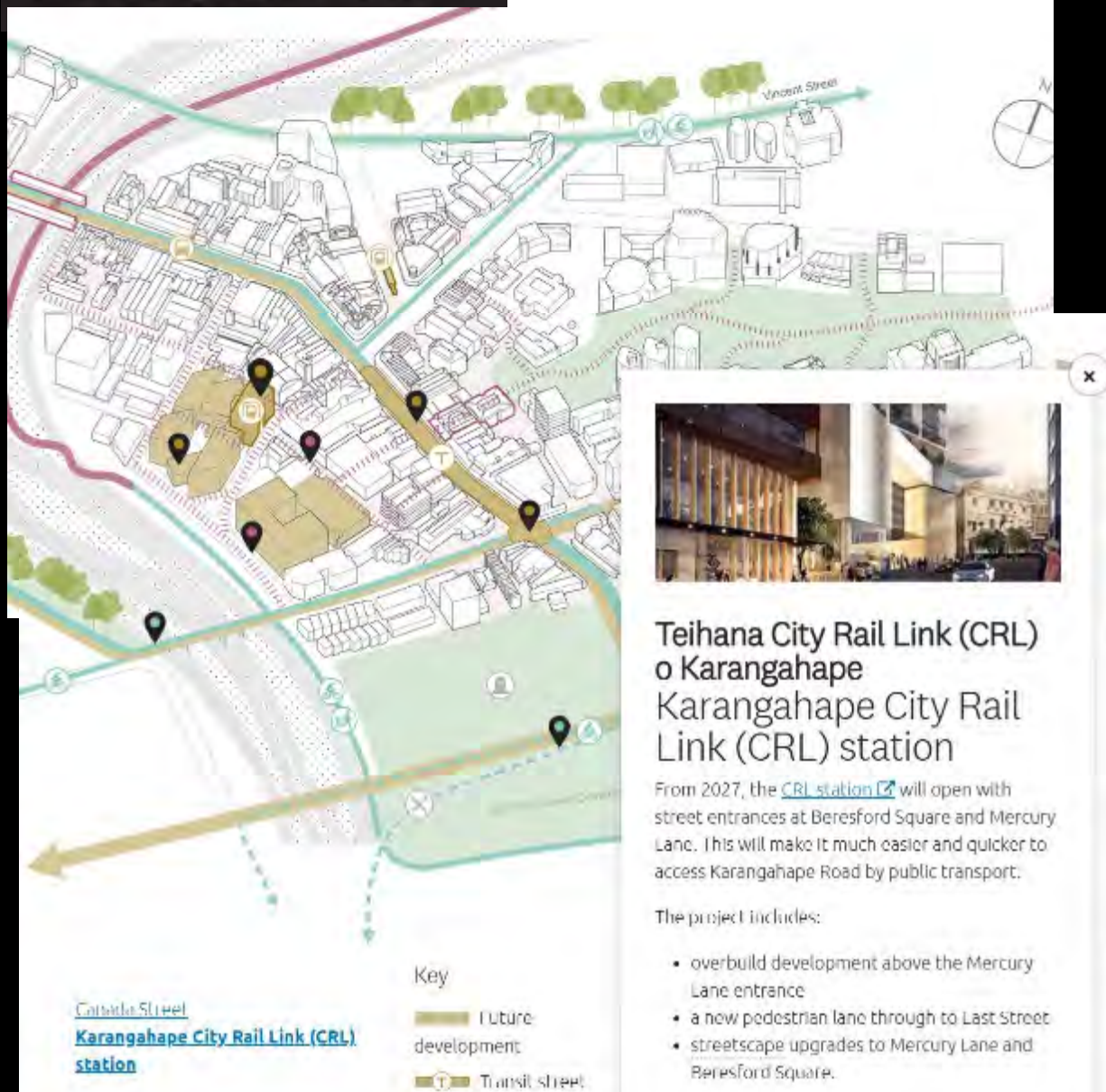


The City Centre Masterplan is the vision to ensure the heart of our city remains a vibrant, bountiful place for everyone.



# City Centre Masterplan 2020

# Karangahape



## Teihana City Rail Link (CRL) o Karangahape Karangahape City Rail Link (CRL) station

From 2027, the [CRL station](#) will open with street entrances at Beresford Square and Mercury Lane. This will make it much easier and quicker to access Karangahape Road by public transport.

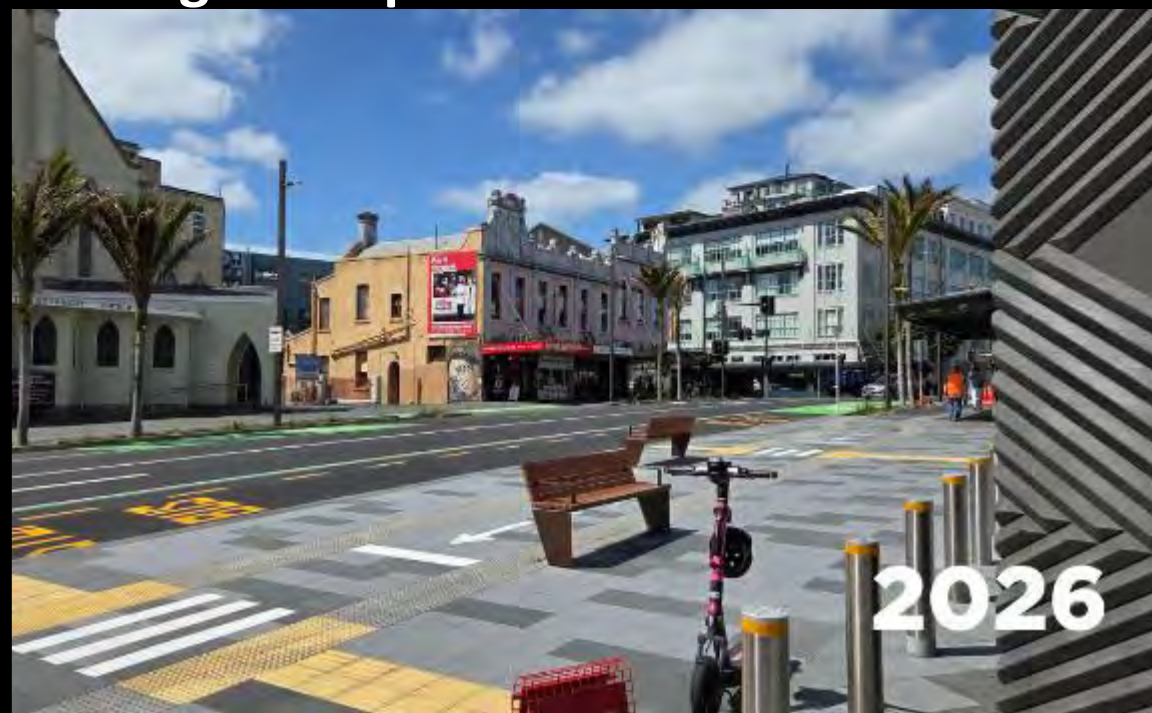
The project includes:

- overbuild development above the Mercury Lane entrance
- a new pedestrian lane through to Last Street
- streetscape upgrades to Mercury Lane and Beresford Square.



Auckland Libraries Heritage Collection

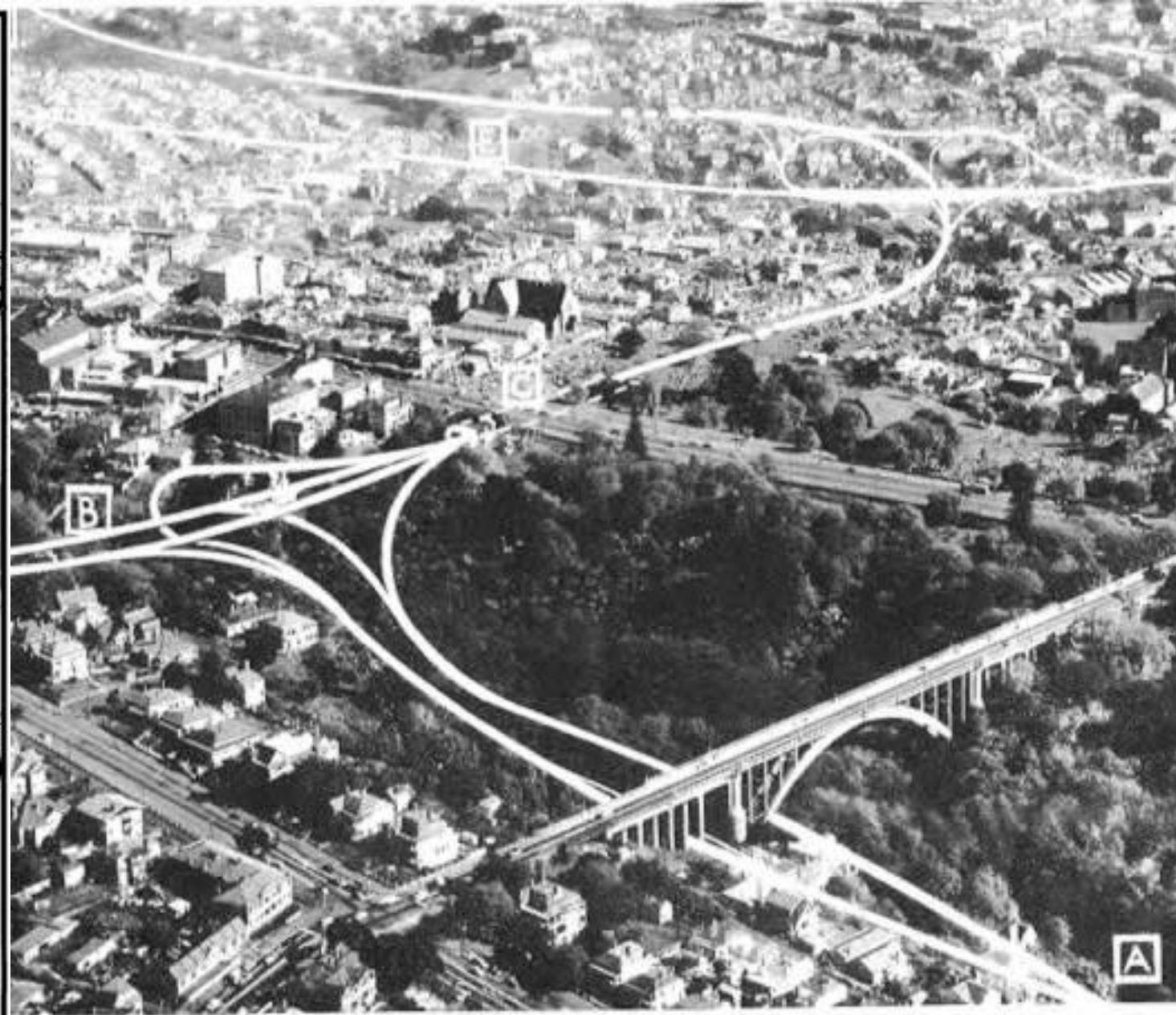
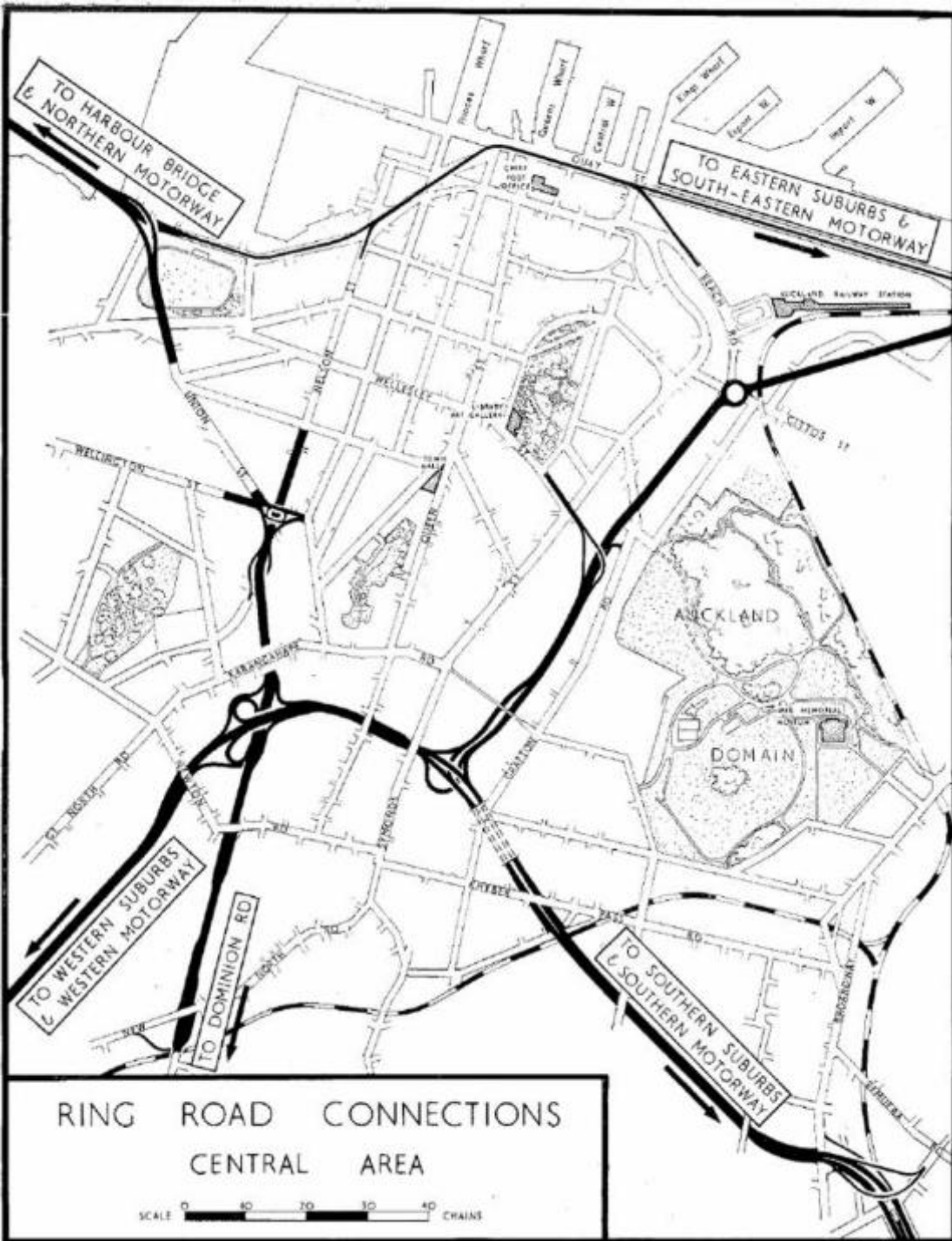
## Karanga-a-Hape Station Pitt Street



2026

Auckland isn't Europe!!





**MASTER TRANSPORT FOCAL POINT.**

The Grafton Gully and nearby areas will be the focal point of a network which will be among the most important in the Auckland Master Transport plan. The original Grafton Bridge was merely built to span a bush-clad gully. Among other things there will be a twin tunnel, nine chains long, with the rest "cut and cover" passes.

Main features of this view of the upper city; B, To Newmarket and Penrose; C, under Karangahape Road; E, Motone Newton gully to northern motorway. Th



















# Échangeur de la porte de Bagnolet



# Bilbao



# Bilbao Guggenheim



# Bilbao Metro



“Fosterito” Bilbao Metro station entrance

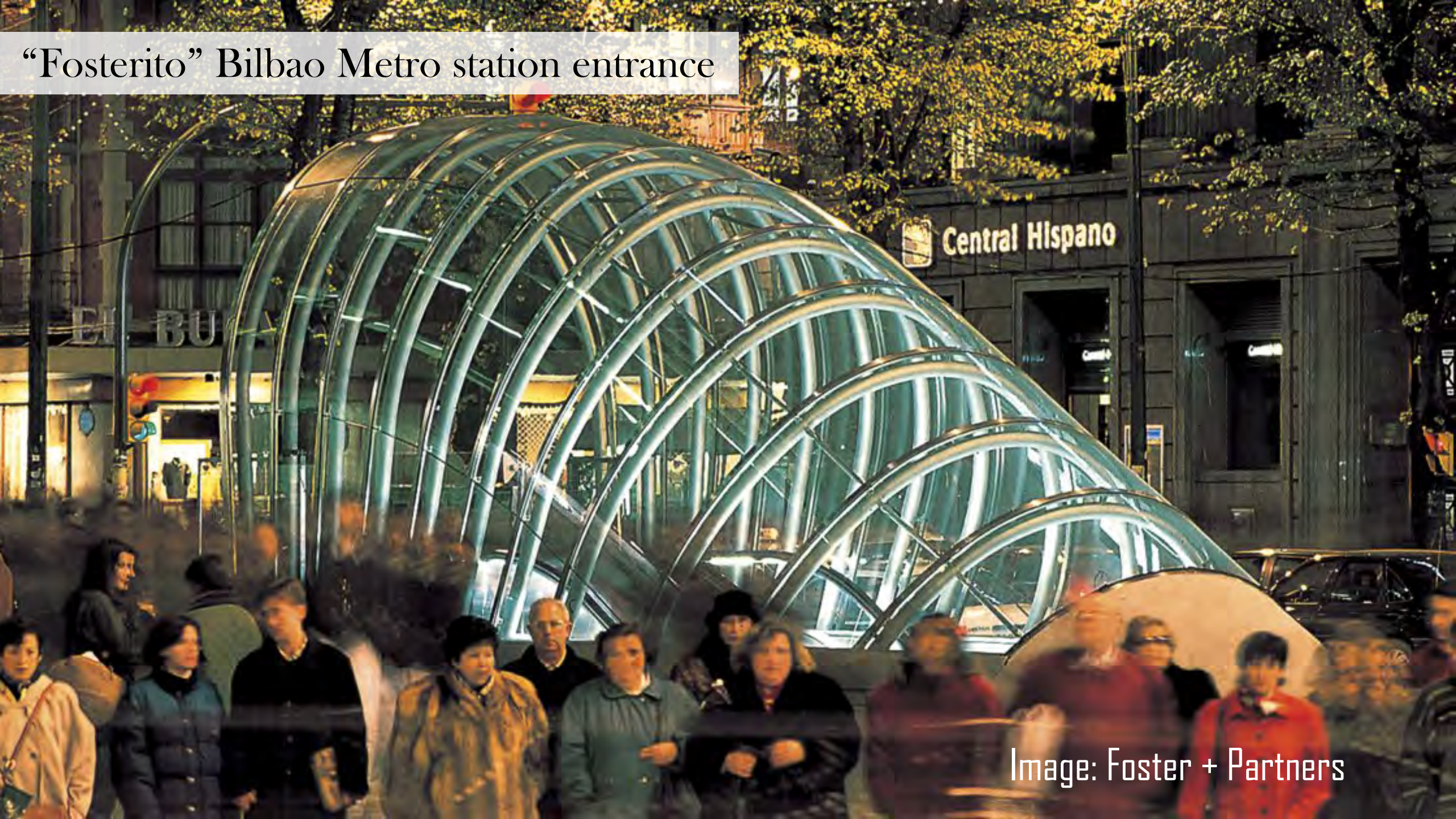


Image: Foster + Partners









“The Republic of Europe”

*Every city in Europe has fascinating stories to tell and historic artifacts to show*



*Every city in Europe has fascinating stories to tell and historic artifacts to show*  
*Milton Keynes (designated **1967**)*



*“it’s a pity we aren’t an historic European capital,  
where they don’t need to think about car parking*



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European cities have very different land use and transport conditions to NZ



Image: VisitMonaco.com

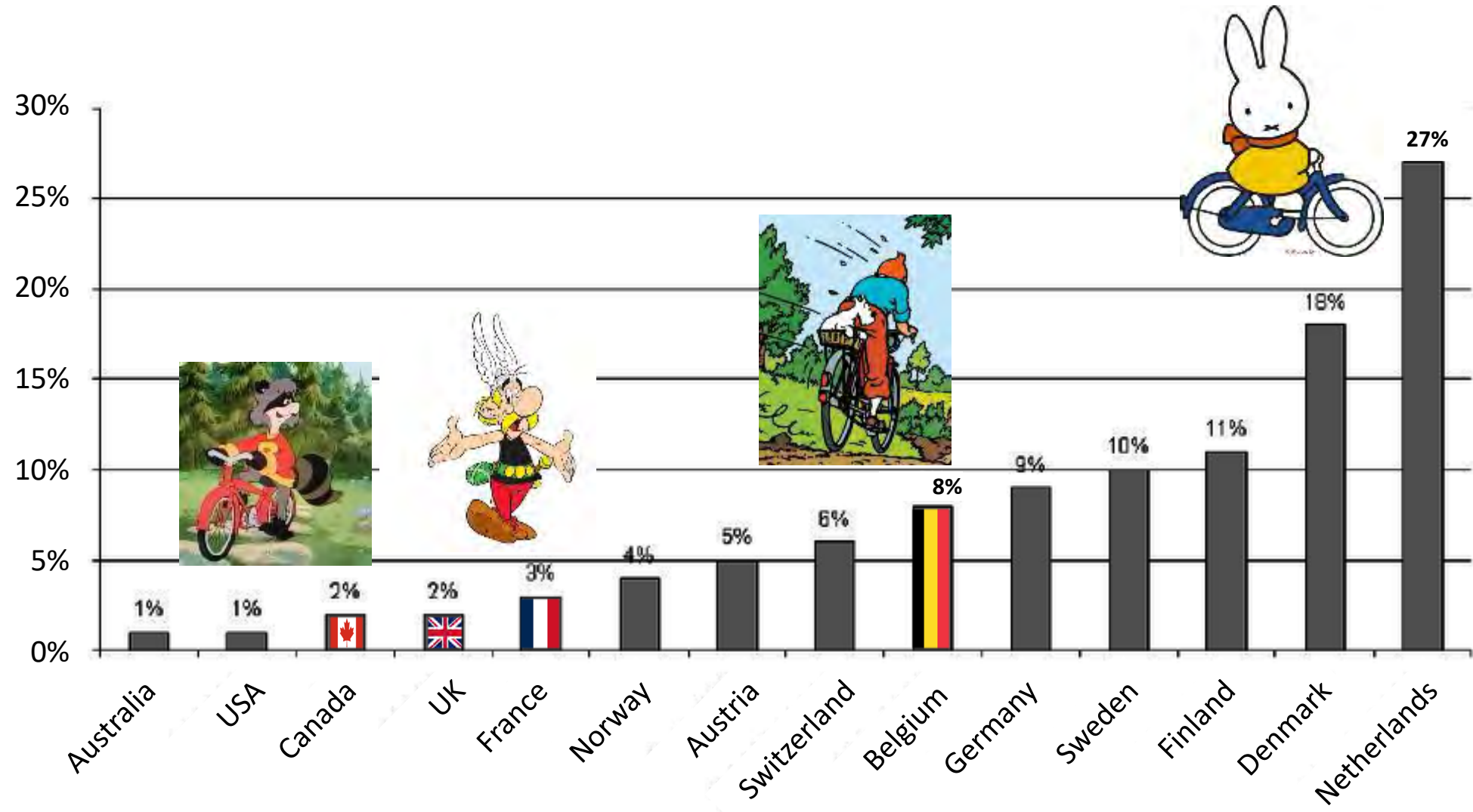
European cities have very different land use and transport conditions to NZ



*In Europe, cycling is so widespread that you can also suffer from bike-overload*



# *In Europe, cycling is so widespread that you can also suffer from bike-overload*



Bicycle Share of trips in Europe, North America and Australia (Pucher & Buehler, 2008)

*“The European buyer drives narrower roads, pays a lot more for fuel and has to find a place to store the car in more crowded cities”*



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*Japan and Europe do not purchase utes for personal use like we do in Aotearoa*



*Japan and Europe do not purchase utes for personal use like we do in Aotearoa*





# “The Republic of Europe”





# “The Republic of Europe”





“How can you govern a country which has 246 varieties of cheese?”



Charles De Gaulle



# Finland

Most similar country in Europe to NZ by:

- Population density
- GDP/capita
- Urbanisation rate







New Zealand's road safety levels declined in 2021 with an increase in road crash casualties – image © courtesy of Mike Woolf

New Zealand has seen its road safety situation worsen, with more serious injuries and deaths in 2021 than 2020. The official figures show that there were 2,323 serious injuries and 320 road deaths in 2021. This compares poorly with the figures of 2,175 serious injuries and 318 fatalities in 2020.

The figures come from the Road to Zero Monitoring Report 2021. Both New Zealand's Ministry of Transport and the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) are vowing to address the issue and reduce the casualty rate.

# TE ARA MATATIKA

## THE FAIR PATH

Why transport matters for equity, and how Aotearoa New Zealand can fairly transition to the connected low-traffic cities we need for a decarbonised future  
A REPORT BY HOLLY WALKER  
NOVEMBER 2021



- Transport policy and investment will need to focus on two things:
- 1. Making the transport system work better for those who are currently disadvantaged.**
  - 2. Reducing our collective dependence on cars as our main form of urban transport.**



## TE TAI ŌHANGA THE TREASURY

### Productivity is New Zealand's biggest economic challenge

Productivity and labour force participation are the key drivers of economic performance, higher wages and higher living standards. With an unemployment rate that is around the lowest in the world the biggest gains in New Zealand's future economic performance will to have to come from productivity growth.



### Early onset type 2 diabetes: increasingly common and associated with higher risks

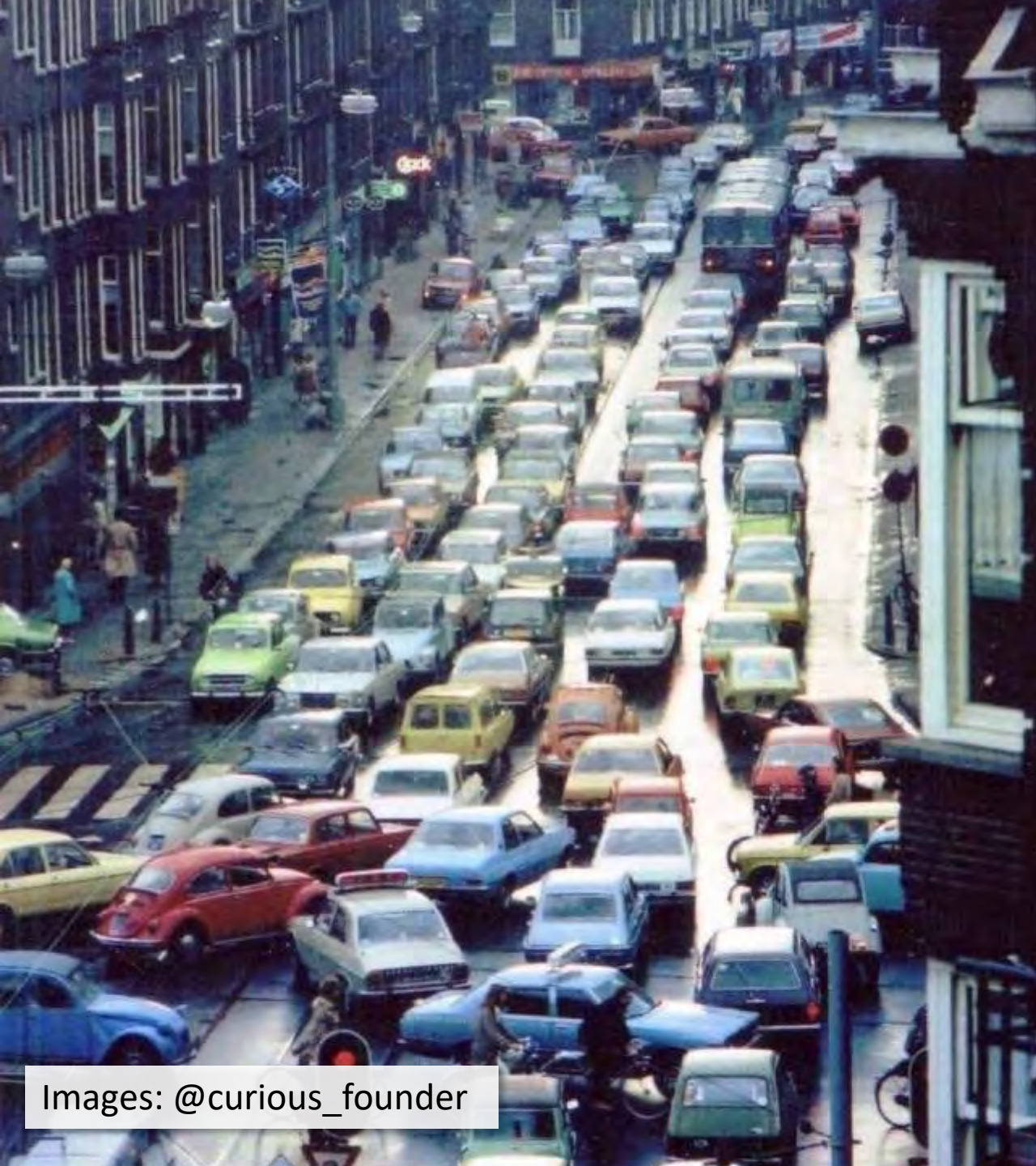
New Zealand has a diabetes problem, fuelled in part by one of the highest rates of obesity in the world.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 5% of the total population has type 2 diabetes; this is predicted to increase to 7% of the population by 2040 (equating to an estimated 430,000 people with type 2 diabetes).<sup>2</sup> The prevalence of diabetes

*By being sweet to the pedestrian and the cyclist you hit five birds with one stone:*

- 1. you get a **lively** city,*
- 2. you get an **attractive** city*
- 3. you get a **safe** city*
- 4. you get a **sustainable** city, and*
- 5. you get a city that's **good** for your health.*

Jan Gehl **Cities  
for People**





Images: @curious\_founder

# AMSTERDAM ANNO 2000...

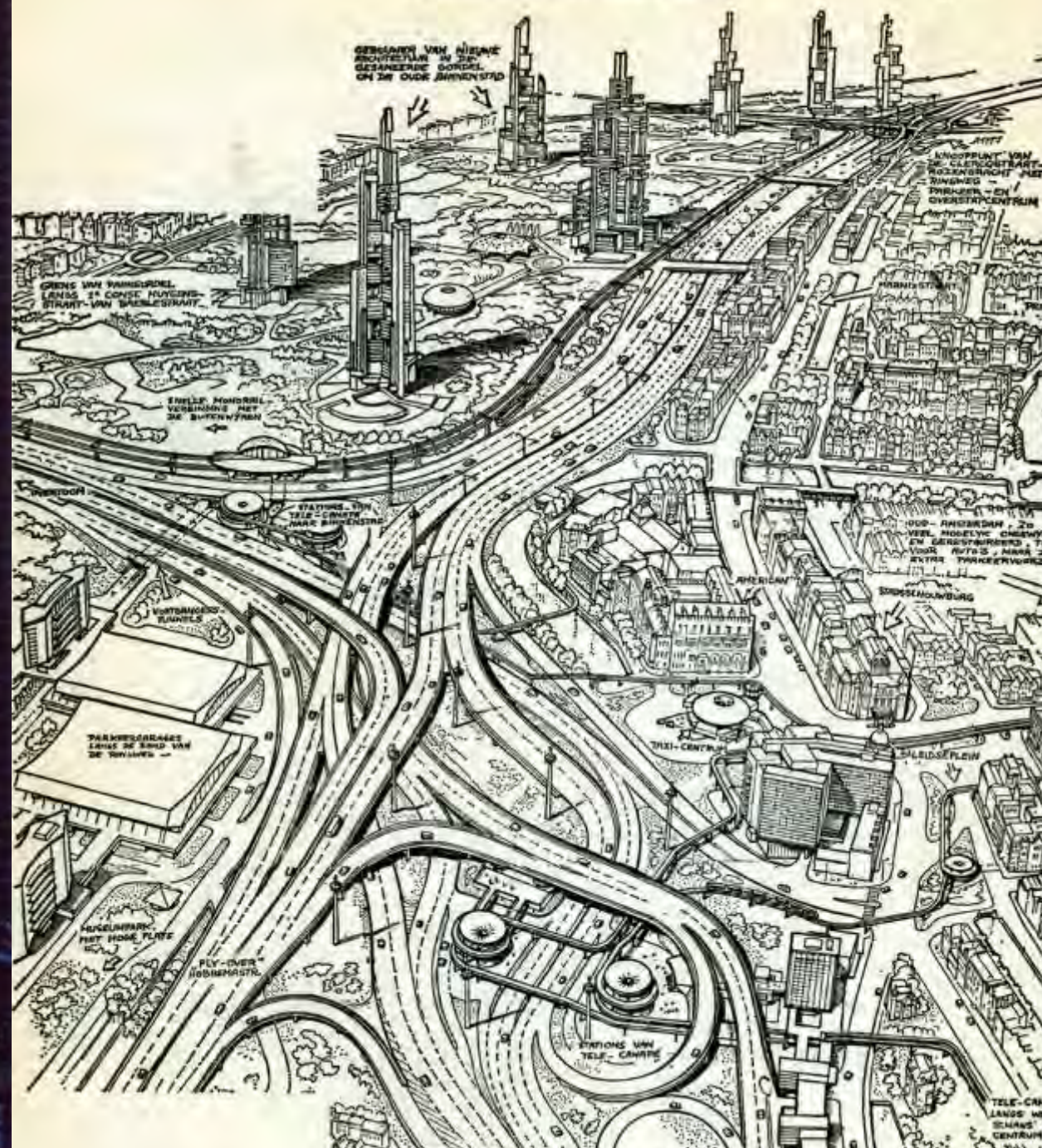




Image: @fietsprofessor



Image: @fietsprofessor

Utrecht



Image: @curious\_founder

# Utrecht



Image: @fietsprofessor

# Utrecht



Image: @fietsprofessor

# Taupō



Image: Taupō District Council

# *Turning the Tide – from Cars to Active Transport*



*“Too much driving is harming us and the environment – a decisive mode shift is needed to favour public transport, walking and cycling.”*

**Key Policy Recommendations  
for Active Transport in New Zealand**

# Viceroy's FILTER the Smoke!

As your Dentist,  
I would recommend  
**VICEROYS**

He's one of the busiest men in town. While his door may say *Office Hours 2 to 4*, he's actually on call 24 hours a day.

The doctor is a scientist, a diplomat, and a friendly sympathetic human being all in one, no matter how long and hard his schedule.

Companies sell what's profitable and legal to sell

Reach for a  
**LUCKY**  
instead of a  
sweet

**LUCKY STRIKE**  
CIGARETTES

"It's toast"

What cigarette  
do you smoke, Doctor?

According to a recent Nationwide survey:

## MORE DOCTORS SMOKE CAMELS THAN ANY OTHER CIGARETTE

DOCTORS in every branch of medicine—113,897 in all—were queried in this nationwide study of cigarette preference. Three leading research organizations made the survey. The gist of the query was—What cigarette do you smoke, Doctor?

*The brand named most was Camel!*

The rich, full flavor and cool mildness of Camel's superb blend of costlier tobacco seems to have the same appeal to the smoking tastes of doctors as to millions of other smokers. If you are a Camel smoker, this preference among doctors will hardly surprise you. If you're not—well, try Camels now.

Your "T-Zone" Will Tell You...

T for Taste...  
T for Throat...  
that's your proving ground for any cigarette. See if Camels don't suit your "T-Zone" to a "T."

**CAMELS** Costlier Tobaccos



# COCAINE TOOTHACHE DROPS

Instantaneous Cure!

PRICE 15 CENTS.

Prepared by the

**LLOYD MANUFACTURING CO.**

219 HUDSON AVE., ALBANY, N. Y.

For sale by all Druggists.

(Registered March 1885.)

See other side.

# Waltham Forest Mini-Holland

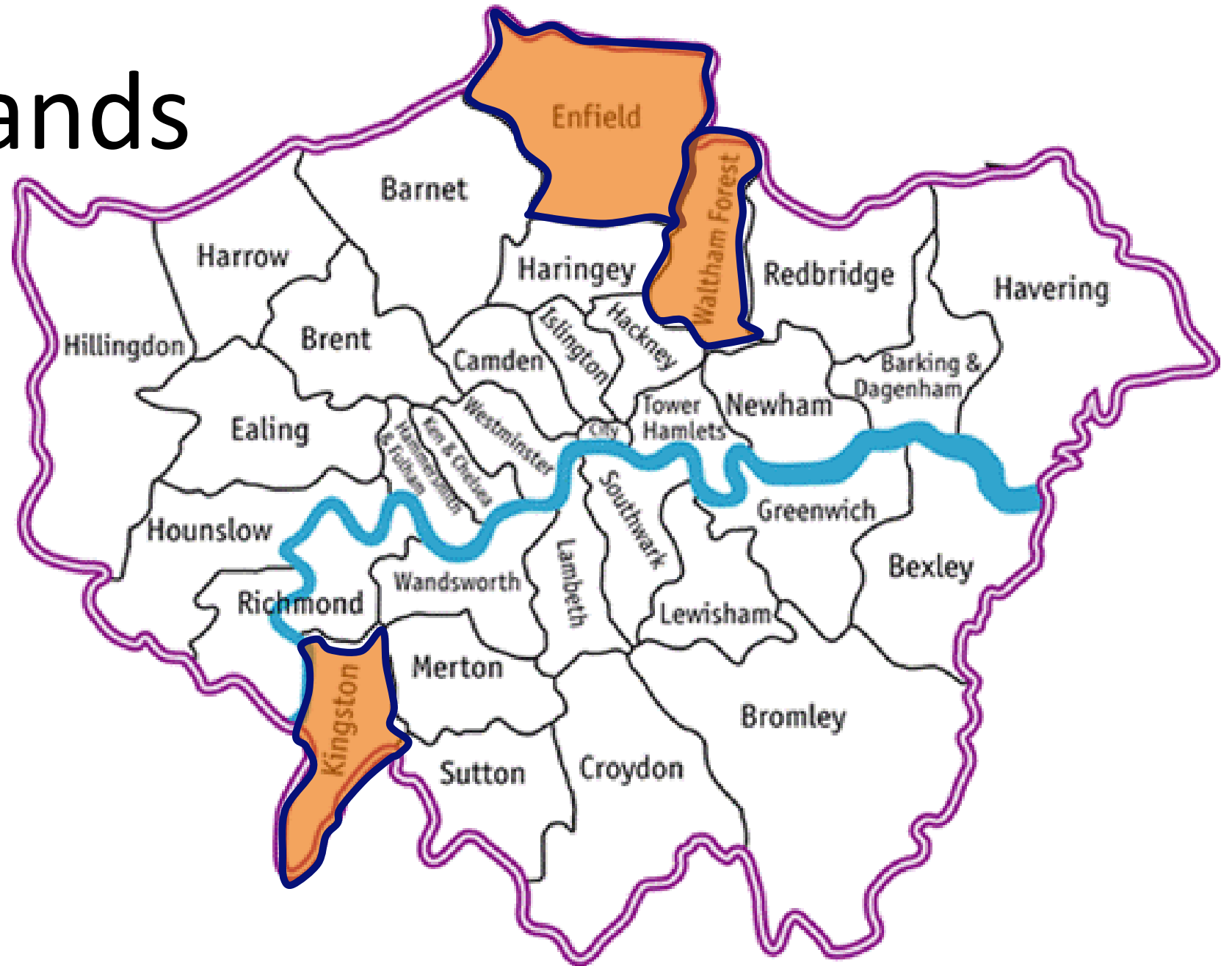


# Mini-Hollands

**TOTAL:**

**£80m**

Transform  
streets for  
walking and  
cycling



## 1) Filtering in residential streets



## 2) Protected cycleways on main roads





- KEY**
- Road closed except Buses and Cycles. All parking suspended
  - Road changed to two-way working
  - Road changed to one-way northbound
  - Business loading area
  - Reclaimed public area
  - Boundary
  - Existing one way working



Section of Orford Road closed. All parking suspended.

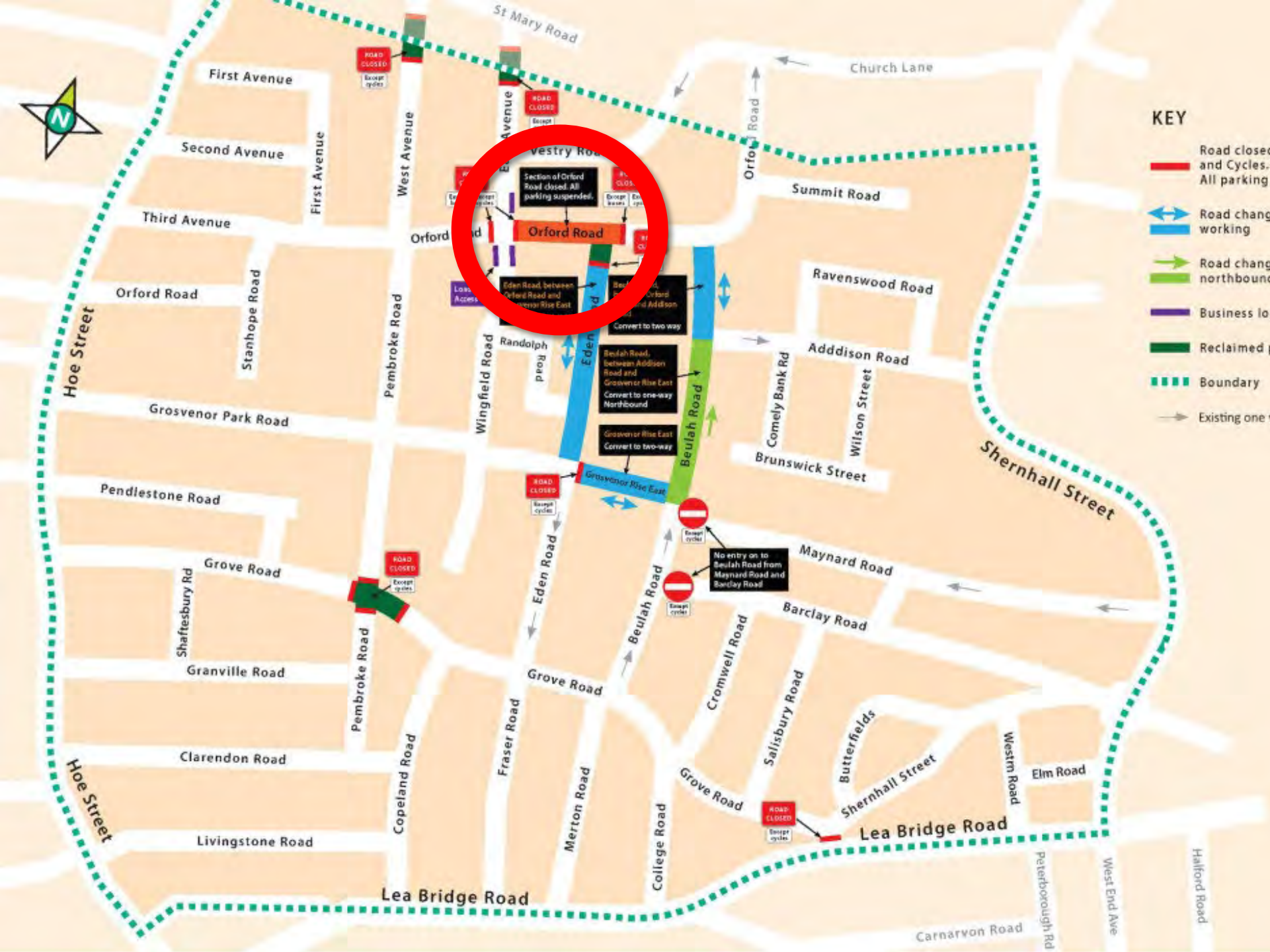
Eden Road between Orford Road and Grosvenor Rise East

Beulah Road between Addison Road and Grosvenor Rise East

Beulah Road, between Addison Road and Grosvenor Rise East

Grosvenor Rise East

No entry on to Beulah Road from Maynard Road and Barclay Road



Orford Road, E17

Fact-finding



Image: Enjoy Waltham Forest

Orford Road, E17

Before



Orford Road, E17

After



Orford Road, E17

Before



Orford Road, E17

After



# Walthamstow Square, E17

Before



# Walthamstow Square, E17

After



Francis Road, E17

Before (2016)



Francis Road, E17

After (2022)



Winner



Lea Bridge Road, E17

Before (2014)



Lea Bridge Road, E17

After (2017)











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**Cycle Sisters is a thriving Muslim women's cycling group based in Waltham Forest.**



**Bike Hangar**



Annual fee: £40



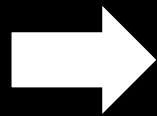


RESULTS?

# Early research

- 9 mins more cycling per week
- 32 mins more walking per week

*“This scientific evidence is testament to some of the political decisions we made and some very progressive highways engineering.”*





Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

# Journal of Transport & Health

journal homepage: <http://www.elsevier.com/locate/jth>



## Major investment in active travel in Outer London: Impacts on travel behaviour, physical activity, and health

Rachel Aldred<sup>a,\*</sup>, James Woodcock<sup>b</sup>, Anna Goodman<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Director of the Active Travel Academy, School of Architecture and Cities, Westminster University, 35 Marylebone Road, London, UK

<sup>b</sup> Centre for Diet and Activity Research, MRC Epidemiology Unit, University of Cambridge, London, UK

<sup>c</sup> London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London, UK

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Keywords:

Cycling  
Walking  
Infrastructure  
Interventions  
Evaluation  
Physical activity

### ABSTRACT

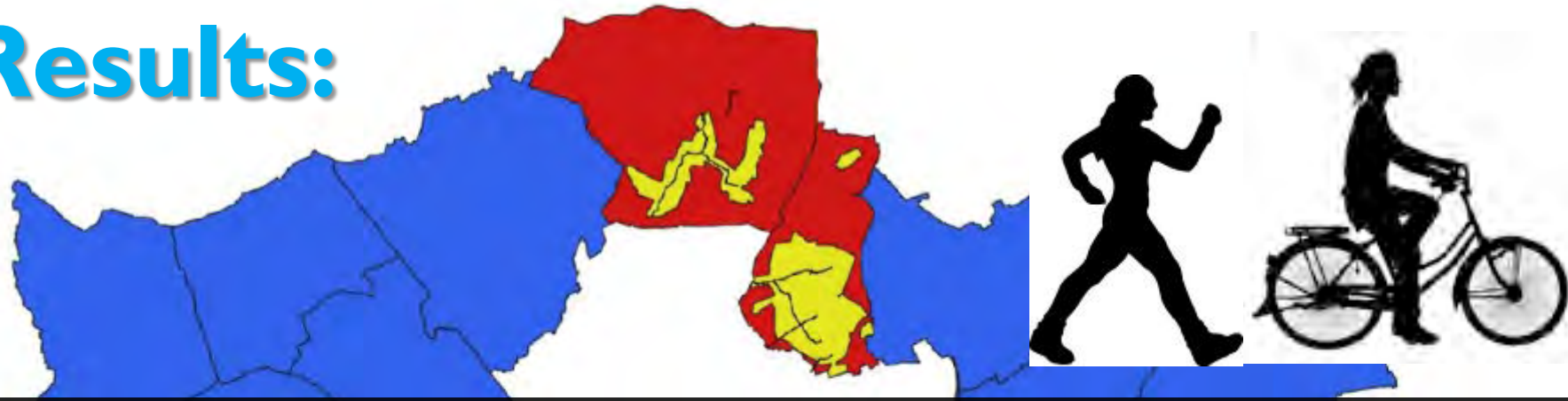
**Introduction:** This paper analyses three years' data from the People and Places longitudinal study. The study examines the travel behaviour impacts of major investments in active travel infrastructure in three Outer London boroughs (the 'mini- Hollands programme').

**Methods:** The People and Places survey, conducted annually in May-June, treats the mini-Holland interventions as a 'natural experiment'. Participants in other Outer London boroughs form a control group. The survey had over 3,000 respondents at baseline (May-June 2016). Three follow-up waves each had over 1400 repeat respondents. A difference-in-differences analysis was used to compare changes in active travel uptake in intervention and control groups. Further analysis

## Key research question:

*Is residential proximity to [Mini-Holland] interventions associated with change in levels of active travel?*

# Results:



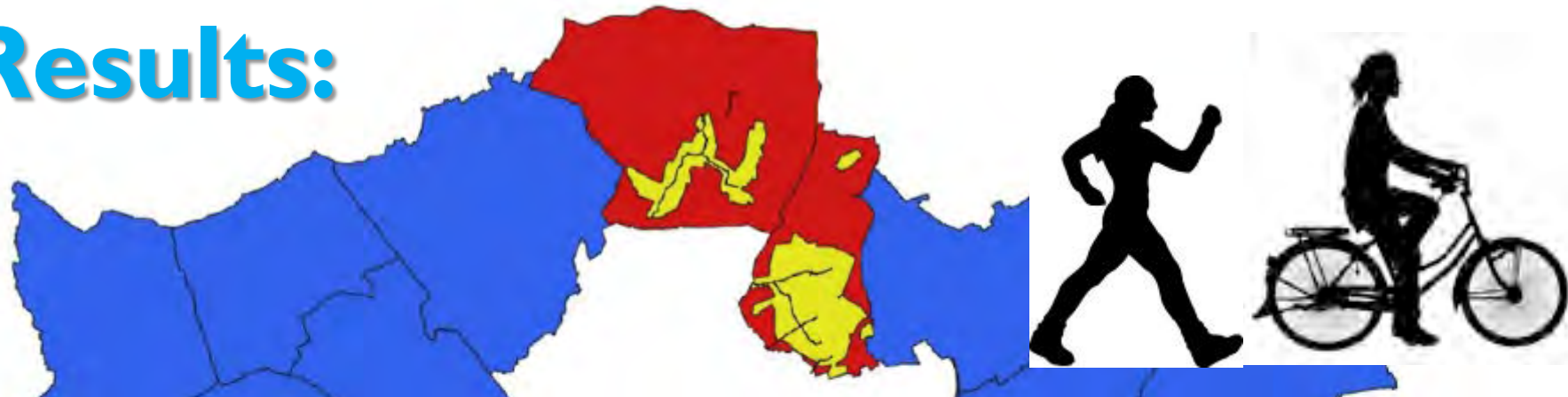
**41.0 extra minutes physical activity**

This study provides evidence that Outer London's mini-Holland interventions have led to sustained increases in active travel.



Fig. 6. Location of high-dose areas and routes in the three boroughs that were complete by mid-2019 (Wave 3).

# Results:



Most observed effects are higher closer to interventions (high-dose area or under 2 km from routes, compared to low-dose area or 2–5 km from routes), increasing confidence that the changes were caused by the intervention.

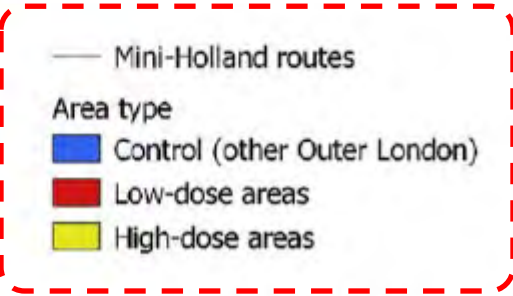


Fig. 6. Location of high-dose areas and routes in the three boroughs that were complete by mid-2019 (Wave 3).



ELSEVIER

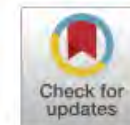
Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

## Journal of Transport & Health

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/jth](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/jth)



Impacts of active travel interventions on travel behaviour and health: Results from a five-year longitudinal travel survey in Outer London



The 20-year health economic benefit from the Mini-Holland areas was calculated at £1,056m, from a programme cost of around £100m.

The most effective interventions (low traffic neighbourhoods) provide a twenty-year per-person physical-activity related benefit of £4,800 compared to a per-person cost of £28-...£112.

but no local intervention; active travel infrastructure but no low traffic neighbourhood; low traffic neighbourhood, usually also with proximity to active travel infrastructure). Finally, the article