

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: Swiss Cottage & Belsize
REPORT TITLE: Proposed Signalised Pedestrian Crossing outside the new Swiss Cottage School. (CENV/2012/14)	
REPORT OF: Director of Culture and Environment	
FOR SUBMISSION TO: Cabinet Member for Sustainability	DATE: 25 January 2013
<p>SUMMARY OF REPORT: This report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Outlines the Council's proposal to introduce a new signalised pedestrian crossing on Adelaide Road, between Avenue Road and Winchester Road, to help cope with the increased numbers of pedestrians needing to cross Adelaide Road once the rebuilt Swiss Cottage Schools have been opened; currently planned for January 2013. To accommodate this new crossing, the westbound bus stop will need relocating approximately six metres east and three Pay & Display and two Car Club bays will need removing on the north side of the road. Unfortunately these cannot be replaced locally due to capacity constraints, hence there will be a loss in parking spaces. b) Seeks approval to implement the proposals outlined in the recommendations within this report. <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information The following documents were used in the preparation of this report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Assessment of pedestrian capacity at Adelaide Road / Avenue Road junction” with addendum RP01 – June 2010. By Robert West Consulting Limited. • Results of the public consultation “Building Schools for the future – Adelaide Road, proposed signalised pedestrian crossing”. <p>Contact Officers: Joanna Alker / Simi Shah Senior Engineer/Design Team Manager Transport Strategy Service Argyle Street WC1H 8EQ</p> <p>Telephone: 020-7974-2466 /2066 E-mail: joanna.alker@camden.gov.uk ;simi.shah@camden.gov.uk</p>	

RECOMMENDATION:

Approval is sought from the Cabinet Member for Sustainability to carry out the following works, subject to compliance with statutory procedures and detail design:

- Construct a new signalised pedestrian crossing on Adelaide Road between Avenue Road and Winchester Road to aid pedestrian movements to and from the rebuilt Swiss Cottage School.
- Relocate the westbound bus stop approximately six metres east to accommodate the new crossing.
- Remove three Pay & Display and two Car Club bays on the north side and replace with zigzags required for the new signalised pedestrian crossing.

These recommendations are based on a feasibility study carried out by Robert West Consulting, and the results of the consultation exercise, where there was majority support for the proposals.

Assistant Director:



Date: 16th January 2013

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Adelaide Road is part of Camden's Strategic Route Network. It is a very busy road, and experiences queuing during peak hours. The scheme location is between two busy signalised junctions; Avenue Road to the west, which is part of the Finchley Road (A41) gyratory, and Winchester Road / King Henry's Road to the east, where large numbers of vehicles join Adelaide Road from the nearby residential areas of Belsize and Primrose Hill.
- 1.2 As part of the Council's *Building schools for the future* initiative, Camden are rebuilding two schools on the site south of Adelaide Road, between Avenue Road and Harley Road. Swiss Cottage School was rebuilt and reopened in October 2012; its main pedestrian entrance is on Avenue Road and the school has increased in size as they have taken on students from Jack Taylor (which was previously housed adjacent to this school). The second school is the UCL Academy which is a brand new school. This school opens to year 7 and 12 students on Monday 14 January 2013, and will fill up year-by-year until it reaches capacity. The main pedestrian entrance is on Adelaide Road.
- 1.3 Opposite this site, on the north side of Adelaide Road, there are many Swiss Cottage public facilities such as the leisure centre, library and playground.
- 1.4 Consultants Robert West were engaged by Children's, School's and Families Directorate in March 2010 to assess the feasibility of siting a new pedestrian crossing across Adelaide Road, outside the new UCL Academy. Their findings concluded that a new crossing could be installed on Adelaide Road, between its junctions with Avenue Road and Winchester Road, without creating significant queuing at the pedestrian crossing or operate to the detriment of the wider highway network.
- 1.5 Robert West's report also analysed the trip distribution for staff and students travelling to the Adelaide Road school site by foot. Using this data it was able to highlight that with the schools proposed opening pattern, when the school is approximately 75% full in September 2013, the existing pedestrian crossing facilities at the junctions of Avenue Road and Winchester Road will not be adequate to meet predicted demand. It was therefore recommended that a new pedestrian crossing facility be implemented to meet this expected demand. This has been stipulated as a condition that needs to be met as part of the planning permission granted for the new schools.
- 1.6 Camden recognises that pedestrian safety is paramount, and that secondary school age children are a vulnerable age group. This proposal supports Camden's Transport Strategy objectives to improve road safety for pedestrians and increase the proportion of resident trips by walking, by implementing a controlled pedestrian crossing point on an acknowledged desire line, and by working with stakeholders to pre-empt locations of high risk.

2.0 PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Robert West's report demonstrated predicted pedestrian movements for staff and students attending the school. This included those travelling from the north, south, east and west. The analysis indicated that approximately 626 staff and students will need to cross Adelaide Road between Avenue Road and Winchester Road. It predicted that although some of these would use the existing facilities at the signalised junctions of Adelaide Road / Avenue Road and Adelaide Road / Winchester Road, 450 individuals would use the proposed pelican crossing by the time the school had fully opened in 2015. This equates to approximately 22 pedestrians on every green man phase during the morning peak (8am-9am).
- 2.2 The report noted that the existing facilities at the signalised junctions of Adelaide Road / Avenue Road and Adelaide Road / Winchester Road are not sufficient to safely cope with these expected additional pedestrians. Officers therefore recommend that in the interest of pedestrian road safety, a controlled crossing should be provided to cope with this additional demand.
- 2.3 Robert West have undertaken feasibility traffic modelling for the proposed pedestrian crossing, indicating its impact on the local road network. These have been shared with Transport for London and their response at this stage has been positive. Should the scheme be approved, the detail design of the new road layout, signal timings and revised traffic modelling will be developed in conjunction with Transport for London, to ensure that any negative impacts on the surrounding route network is kept to a minimum.
- 2.4 To accommodate the zigzags for the proposed signalised crossing, three pay and display bays and two car club bays will need to be removed from the north side of Adelaide Road. Unfortunately due to capacity constraints in the area, these cannot be relocated locally. ZipCar, the car club provider was informed pre-consultation and were offered, and accepted, two free bays in compensation, however they accepted that these could not be relocated locally due to lack of space in the vicinity.
- 2.5 Additionally the bus stop on the south side of Adelaide Road, immediately prior to the proposed crossing and outside the new school entrance, will need to be moved approximately six metre east to ensure adequate visibility of the new proposed signalised crossing.

3.0 CONSULTATION

Consultation Process

- 3.1 The consultation period was for one month and ended on 23 November 2012. Approximately 717 information letters were distributed to residents and businesses within the consultation area, local groups, statutory groups, and Ward Members. The letter informed the consultees of the proposals and directed them to the Council's website where a leaflet which included a drawing of the scheme was available to view online. Copies of the consultation letter and online consultation document can be found in Appendix A.

3.2 The consultation letter informed people of the proposed signalised pedestrian crossing, the slight movement of the bus stop and the removal of three pay & display and two car club bays.

Consultation analysis

3.3 A total of 13 responses were received, which represents a return rate of 1.8%. This low response rate may potentially be due to the change in the consultation process whereby the leaflet showing the drawings of proposals are now no longer sent to all consultees, but are only available online or on request.

3.4 Table 1 summarises the responses received:

Consultees	Proposed signalised pedestrian crossing including associated parking changes?		
	In favour	Opposed	No Opinion
Statutory Consultees	3	0	1
Local residents and businesses (within the consultation area)	2	1	0
Local residents and businesses (outside the consultation area)	1	3	0
Ward Members	0	1	1
TOTAL	6 (46%)	5 (39%)	2 (15%)

Analysis of Results

3.5 Analysis of the results received from the consultation indicates that the majority of respondents (46%) supported the Council's proposal to implement a signalised pedestrian crossing on Adelaide Road, between Avenue Road and Winchester Road.

3.6 The summary of the results also shows that the majority of those who were opposed to the scheme did not live within the consultation area, and two lived the opposite side of Avenue Road so are unlikely to be regular users of the crossing.

3.7 All local residents who responded in favour of the scheme (included those outside the consultation area) lived on the south side of Adelaide Road. Officers consider that these respondents could probably see the crossing being beneficial to themselves as well as the school, as it could improve the link between their properties and the public services and transport facilities to the north of Adelaide Road.

3.8 All those who responded with no opinion to the proposals were not local residents or businesses, although one was from a Ward Member.

Summary of comments received

Comments from Ward Members and Statutory Consultees

Comments from Ward Members

- Cllr Freeman, although he did not state his approval or objection to the proposals, commented that the proposed crossing would generate a lot of interest locally and there would be negative comments about the loss of parking.
- Cllr Bucknell responded in objection to the scheme, stating that during the morning rush it is likely that there will be a large number of pupils wanting to cross at once. This he felt could lead to 'jay walking' between vehicles, adding that a better alternative would be to retain the existing crossing with railings in between which would deter 'jay walking'.

Comments from Camden Parking Services

- Parking Services commented that although they do not want to see the loss of any paid for parking as it services the shops, sports centre and library, they could not see any viable alternate locations.

Comments from the Camden's Environmental Officer for Swiss Cottage

- No concerns were raised with the new crossing, which they felt would be well received.

Comments from Camden Cycling Campaign (CCC)

- CCC stated that they were in favour of a new signalised pedestrian crossing to help the children cross the road safely to the new school. They however were surprised that this was a two stage crossing with a pedestrian island in the centre, adding that a single stage crossing would have been preferable, particularly for those cycling to school.
- CCC added that they were not sure that the removal of five parking bays on the north side was sufficient; stating that there are usually more vehicles parked on that side of Adelaide Road (sometimes coaches). Therefore any remaining parking would create a nasty 'chicane' effect for east-bound cyclists approaching the central island.
- Their final comment was that they noted that the bus stop on the south side of Adelaide Road was going to be moved east. They felt this would result in buses blocking the inside traffic lane very close to the junction, which will make it difficult for west-bound cyclists.

Comments from the Fire Brigade

- The Fire Brigade had no objections to the proposals

Comments from Local Residents and Businesses

- Two residents responded in favour of the proposals as they felt the existing crossing on Adelaide Road at the junction with Winchester Road is hazardous. One commented that children already cross here on their own so a dedicated pedestrian crossing would help.

- One resident, although in favour, was concerned that the crossing would cause excessive queuing down King Henry's Road and Harley Road. They suggested that closing Harley Road at King Henry's Road might reduce this queue.
- The majority of resident objectors felt that the area already suffered from congestion and another set of traffic lights would magnify this issue. One resident stated that these crucial details should have been worked out before the layout of school was finalised.
- Three residents were concerned that the crossing at the proposed location would cause delays / traffic congestion. Reasons cited for this included its proximity to the existing two sets of traffic lights and also the fact that the crossing is located at the exact point where the traffic from four lanes of cars (three roads) are narrowed down into two lanes, which already leads to queues during rush hours and other busy periods. Alternatives proposed by the residents were:
 - Retiming the existing two sets of traffic lights, which are both close to the new Academy's entrance, for the extra pedestrians.
 - Placing the crossing at the other side of Winchester Road to cross Adelaide Road and then a further pedestrian crossing across Harley Road.
 - Assessing what the congestion was like after the school had opened before installing the measure.
- Residents queried whether any assessments had been carried out on the proposed crossings effect on the traffic and why the school was not forced to have an entrance in Harley Road or Avenue Road. In addition to this, it was queried why the guard railing between the two junctions had ever been removed (Adelaide Road junctions with Winchester Road and Avenue Road) and requested its reinstatement for safety reasons.
- Two residents commented on the bus stop relocation stating that the crossing would not be completely visible to traffic approaching from the east, and that traffic congestion would be further increased as the buses would no longer stop within a bus layby.
- Two residents were concerned about the removal of the parking bays on the north side of Adelaide Road. They believed this would make it impossible for school buses and coaches to drop off passengers at the leisure centre and would increase difficulty of access for people with mobility issues.

Officer Comments

- In response to Cllr Bucknell's and a resident's comment the predicted pedestrian flow analysis has indicated that the existing crossing would not be able to cope with the additional demand during school opening and closing times once the school has opened to 75% of students in September 2013. The over-saturation of these crossing points may similarly lead to 'jay walking' at the junctions, which would cause extra disruption to the road network by restricting in-flow from the side arms. Additionally Camden's current policy is to reduce street clutter, and a programme is in place to remove guard railing, following a safety audit, where possible. Safety audits are undertaken prior to any removal of guardrail to ensure that it is safe to do so.

- Although straight across pedestrian crossings are preferred for pedestrian convenience, providing one at this location as suggested by (CCC) would not be possible. The carriageway width is greater than 11metres, which guidance from Transport for London recommends you consider staggered crossings, also the site is so close to other signalised junctions, it would cause disruption to the broader road network. By providing a staggered, two stage crossing, and linking it to the neighbouring signal junctions, the crossing would function better with the surrounding route network to ensure traffic continues to flow as smoothly as possible.
- In response to CCC's comments to remove more parking from the north side and that the bus stop would block one westbound traffic lane - the proposals are to remove all parking bays on the north side. Therefore there will be no parking bays in the vicinity of the new crossing. The bus stop on the south side is to be moved approximately six metres east to ensure that there is adequate visibility for the new crossing. When a bus is in situ the nearside lane will be obstructed, forcing traffic to use the single offside lane. Although this will restrict traffic flow, this situation already exists at the existing bus stop. The remaining carriageway width will be approximately 4 metres. *Local Transport Note 02/08 - Cycle Infrastructure Design*, recommends a minimum carriageway width of 3.8 metres to allow a car to overtake a cyclist safely at 20mph, which would be the expected speed in this situation. Therefore Officers consider that this design will function as it does currently and is designed to recommended cycle standards. Additionally, the central island will site secondary traffic signals, which will ensure that approaching drivers receive good visibility of the signals, whether a bus is at bus stop or not.
- Regarding the comment that the crossing would be beneficial as the existing facility on Winchester Road is unsafe; this issue has been raised previously by local residents through Ward Members, independent of this consultation. Many pedestrians want to cross on the western arm of the Adelaide Road / Winchester Road junction as this is on the desire line for those accessing the public facilities and transport links in Swiss Cottage. Unfortunately this arm has conflict issues as right turners from Winchester Road are held up by those exiting King Henry's Road, so do not clear until the red light appears. This clashes with the green man on this west arm, which has then disappeared once pedestrians have yielded to this clearing traffic. Camden have attempted to improve this junction for pedestrians by proposing to fund the installation of 'Countdown' as part of the Swiss Cottage Area Based Scheme, which informs pedestrians how many seconds they have left before the traffic receives a green signal (even once the green man has disappeared). This will be on site and functioning by Spring 2013. The new crossing, to the west of this junction, will also improve facilities for those travelling to and from the facilities in Swiss Cottage as it will give them the choice to use this crossing facility instead of the junction facility which many consider precarious.
- For the requested closure of Harley Road at its junction with King Henry's Road, a recent scheme, a more mitigated approach is now complete, involving narrowing this junction and tightening the corners to enhance the fact that Harley Road is a side road to King Henry's Road. Officers presume that vehicles using Harley Road and King Henry's Road all come from the Primrose Hill area. It is

likely that should Harley Road be closed, they would divert to King Henry's Road, therefore not reducing the numbers of vehicles needing to exit the southern arm of this junction. It may also increase queues on King Henry's Road. This proposal therefore requires greater consideration and cannot be considered as part of this scheme. It would need its own independent consultation as those affected would be beyond this scheme's consultation area. It has therefore been added to the scheme request list to be considered independently, but is unlikely to be prioritised against other competing demands soon.

- In response to the comments of the residents regarding traffic congestion, the pedestrian crossing will only stop traffic if pedestrians are waiting to cross; this will predominantly be at school opening and closing times. The morning peak will clash the most with traffic flow due to the number of students needing to cross. However Camden Officers have agreed with Transport for London to minimise disruption by linking the crossing with the adjacent signals on both sides. Officer's view is that as many of those opposed did not live locally to the proposed crossing or lived to the north side of Adelaide Road where all local facilities and public transport links exist. It is unlikely that they would regularly use the facility as a pedestrian hence their traffic based responses.
- Regarding the proposed alternatives, retiming the two existing traffic signals to increase the time available for pedestrians crossing, particularly Adelaide Road / Avenue Road would have a detrimental effect to the other arms of the junction. This will affect the Swiss Cottage gyratory, and the traffic flows on Finchley Road (A41). The traffic impact of this design would therefore have greater negative effect than installing a new signalised crossing as proposed. The proposal to provide an additional crossing facility east of Winchester Road may reduce traffic impact, but this would not be in the desire line for students of the new school, many of whom will be walking from the public transport facilities in Swiss Cottage, which is west of Winchester Road.
- Regarding the proposal to wait and see if there is a problem before we install a facility - during the planning process Camden have been made aware of the predicted number of students expected to travel to the new school, and where they will be travelling from. Predominantly these will be from the public transport facilities in Swiss Cottage, north of Adelaide Road. Child pedestrians (under 16's) are a vulnerable road user group and traffic modelling has shown that the existing pedestrian facilities close to the school are not adequate to meet this new demand, hence officers are responding to this information pro actively to ensure that there is a safe environment for the users of the new school. In addition, the planning permission granted stipulates that increased provision needs to be provided by the time the school is 75% full.
- In response to the comments about the bus stop, it is being relocated further from the proposed crossing to ensure that visibility is adequate. Additionally, there is no lay-by for the existing bus to stop; at present the bus stops in the nearside traffic lane and this will not change. It will however be moved approximately one car length closer to the Winchester Road junction, but this is not expected to significantly increase congestion.
- Regarding the comment that coaches need to park in the pay & display bays on Adelaide Road to take school children to and from the leisure centre, Officers

accept that parking in the area is difficult, particularly for large vehicles. Even now it is not guaranteed that coaches can park in this location as the pay & display bays may be in use. To accommodate the proposed signalised crossing zigzags are required to provide a 'clear zone' either side of the facility. Unfortunately, it is therefore necessary to remove this parking facility and the adjoining car club bays.

- Two residents suggested that the school could have been planned differently, particularly that the entrances could have been placed elsewhere. If the school entrances were not placed on this busy road, a significant number of pupils would still have to cross Adelaide Road to use the public transport facilities, shops, library and leisure centre in Swiss Cottage.
- Many of those opposed to the scheme did not live locally to the proposed crossing.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS / NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 For the reasons set out in Section 2 and 3 of this report, officers recommend that the proposals be implemented as consulted upon.
- 5.2 Should approval be given, these recommendations will be implemented before September 2013. This would be subject to compliance with statutory procedures, agreed traffic modelling with Transport for London and detail design.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The cost payable to Robert West consultancy for the feasibility and modelling work is £45-50,000. £27,500 has already been paid using cost code ER714GE070 during 2011/12, the remaining £22,500 will be payable from the cost code CEBS 9269, both of which are cost centres held by Children, Schools and Families for the Building Schools for the Future project.
- 6.2 The construction works for the scheme, are estimated at £200,000, and will also be funded by cost code CEBS 9269. Any additional funding required will come from Children, School's and Families capital works budget.
- 6.3 All funding will be available until the end of 2013/14 financial year.

7. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

- 7.1 Finance has been consulted on this report and are content with the financial implications outlined above. There are no further comments at this time.

8. COMMENTS OF THE BOROUGH SOLICITOR

- 8.1 The Borough Solicitors Department have been consulted and do not have any comments on this Report

Attachments

Appendix A – Consultation documents

Appendix B – Consultation responses

