

## APPENDIX B - CONSULTATION RESPONSES AND OFFICERS' COMMENTS

### Heath Street/East Heath Road/West Heath Road Junction: Proposed Improvements

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. A total of 110 consultation packs were distributed to addresses, local and statutory groups within the consultation area in Hampstead Ward. In addition, consultation leaflets with layout plans were sent to Ward Councillors.
- 1.2. The public consultation commenced on 30 November 2018 and ended on 4 January 2019. The extent of the consultation area is shown in Appendix A. A copy of the consultation pack is also included in Appendix A.
- 1.3. The consultation was also available online through the WeAreCamden.org portal. This allowed respondents to submit their feedback via an online questionnaire.
- 1.4. A total of 63 online, email and postal responses were received from individuals, groups and Ward Members. Response from City of London Corporation was sought after the consultation closed and is therefore not included in the tables below, however their response has been considered alongside all other responses.

2. The responses to the public consultation can be summarised as follows:

#### 2.1. Question - Do you agree with the proposed changes at the junction of Heath Street/East Heath Road / West Heath Road signal junction?

Consultation results for proposed changes at East Heath Road / West Heath Road / Heath Street (all responses)	
Support (individuals)	29 (46 %)
Oppose ( 3 groups and individuals)	31 (49 %)
No opinion ( ward member and individuals)	3 (5 %)

As can be seen from the above results there is no clear indication of support or opposition for the scheme.

2.2. **Responses from individuals**

2.3. Breaking down the total responses received we can analyse the level of support for the proposals from individuals.

Individuals	
<b>Support</b>	49%
<b>Oppose</b>	48%
<b>No opinion</b>	3%

Officers further analysed the particular issues raised in the responses by grouping comments into their dominant themes with their respective response rate shown below (Note: the numbers below show all respondents who opted to leave comment):-

Not enough cycling provision	Unnecessary pedestrian provision	Reduction in carriageway capacity	Impact on Whitestone Lane
7	7	10	3

2.4. Officers response to the comments received from individuals are as follows:-

**Not enough cycling provision**

It is recognised that there are competing pressures on the limited road space available and so while designing bus priority improvements genuine consideration is given to other road users, specifically cyclists and pedestrians.

In this case, to balance the benefits on journey time of buses, improvements for cyclists were proposed through the introduction of advanced cycle stop lines (ASL) on the northbound and eastbound approaches. The improved lane discipline, specifically on the eastbound and southbound movements also reduce the likelihood of conflict between vehicles and cyclists.

Following comments received during the consultation, including from CCC, officers considered additional provisions for cyclists, specifically the introduction of ASLs on the southbound and westbound approaches along with the introduction of a feeder lane on the eastbound approach. This has been modelled and the results indicate that this will reduce the bus journey time benefits as shown in the graphs below:-

**AM Peak Average Bus Delay per PCU (s)**

Direction	Existing	Proposed	Proposed Updated
southbound	46	30	34
northbound	28	23	24

**PM Peak Average Bus Delay per PCU (s)**

Direction	Existing	Proposed	Proposed Updated
southbound	41	27	31
northbound	46	34	41

The main aim of this scheme is to improve bus journey times and reliability and this can only be achieved with the support and funding of TfL's Bus Priority Programme. While incorporating improvements to cycling infrastructure is a key aim of the Council's Transport Strategy and is supported by TfL, this must be balanced with journey time savings for TfL bus services.

Officers have discussed the additional measures for cyclists with TfL. Given that the benefits to buses are reduced, TfL still consider that small benefit will help improve reliability and they acknowledge that there are also improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. TfL have therefore agreed to fund the scheme should it be approved. Officers are therefore recommending the revised scheme be implemented. Officers have shared the revised proposals with CCC and despite the fact that not all of their concerns are being addressed (such as the potential of 'left hook' movements) they are pleased that these new cycling facilities are now incorporated.

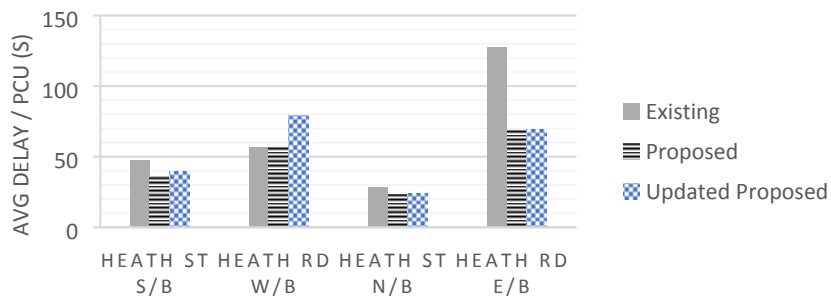
#### **Unnecessary pedestrian provision**

In this instance pedestrian facilities are already provided across all arms of the junction. The measures proposed to improve bus journey times and cycle provision means changes for pedestrian provision through a slightly different alignment. The main change being the widened footway by Whitestone Pond and the removal of the pedestrian refuge island on Heath Street together with the wider footway at this point. These measures are necessary to realign the junction to provide the benefits to buses and cyclists and does not diminish the benefits to pedestrians. It is argued that there is little demand for pedestrian facilities currently. However retaining these and providing additional footway space may help encourage more people to travel by foot and also future proof any future increase in pedestrian demand.

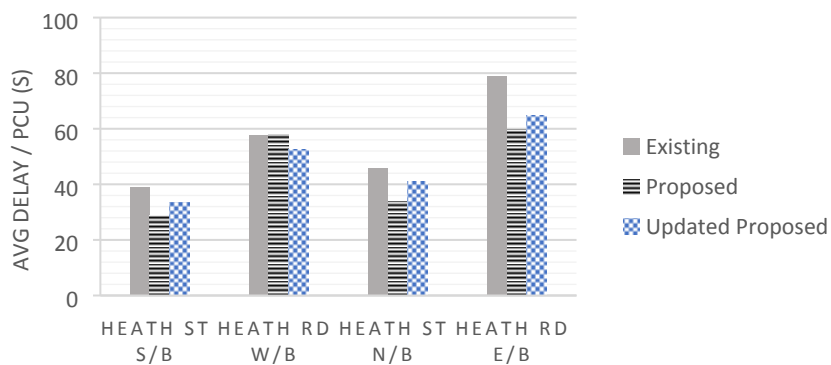
#### **Reduction in carriageway capacity**

It is assumed that the new junction layout allows less space for motor vehicles – therefore will decrease capacity of vehicles travelling through it. In fact, moving the stop lines on each arm closer together and reducing the space between the traffic signals means that on each sequence of the traffic signal cycle, more vehicles can pass through the junction in the same amount of time. Additionally, aligning the junction geometry to allow vehicles a straighter navigation through the junction allows vehicles to travel through more efficiently as opposed to the current layout which provides a course for vehicles that is not straight across, and leads to conflict with other turning vehicles. We have provided the data from the modelling below to show the impact on the junction operation using the (1)existing, (2)proposed option as consulted and (3)updated proposal now recommended with the Advanced Stop Lines on each arm of the junction:-

## AM AVERAGE DELAY BY APPROACH



## PM AVERAGE DELAY BY APPROACH



This shows that the revised proposals now recommended are expected to improve the operation of the junction across most arms; however, with the introduction of the Advanced Stop Line on East Heath Road the delay times would be increased slightly but this will be mitigated by the improved level of service for cyclists, pedestrians and bus passengers and will help encourage more people to alter their travel choices away from motor vehicles and towards more sustainable modes of transport.

### Impact on Whitestone Lane

Currently vehicles exiting the northernmost access road to Whitestone Lane emerge on Heath Street beyond the stop line and drivers do not have visibility of any traffic signal when joining with traffic. This is a historic situation at this junction but also a situation that carries a safety risk, although officers accept that this has not resulted in any collisions. However, during any changes proposed to a signal junction, consideration has to be given to remove any conflicts and allowing a non-signal exit within the boundary of a signalised junction is not considered safe or a standard arrangement and this conflict should be addressed if possible. The new layout ensures that a vehicle exiting Whitestone Lane will have view of the traffic signal head and can exit the access road knowing when the southbound traffic flow on Heath Street is on red or green.

### 3. Local, and Statutory Groups

3.1. Breaking down the 3 responses received we can analyse the responses received from Local/Statutory groups only.

Local and Statutory Groups	
Support	0%
Oppose	100%
No opinion	0%

3.2. A summary of the main comments received from local/statutory groups and officers' responses is below:-

<b>Camden Cycling Campaign</b>
<p>The Camden Cycling Campaign (CCC) object to the proposals on the following grounds:</p> <p>Their main objection relates to the potential for hook turns across cyclist's paths on both the northbound and southbound approached to the junction. They consider these to be critical failures and state that they are unable to accept any designs that include critical failures.</p> <p>CCC stated that the junction should be included within the Cycling Action Plan and that their response to the draft Cycling Action Plan stated this. With this in mind the junction should be redesigned to ensure it is safe and comfortable for cycling and that north and southbound approaches are wide enough to provide cycle lanes and dedicated signal stages for cyclists.</p> <p>CCC suggest that East Heath Road should have an ASL and that West Heath Road should have a feeder lane.</p> <p>CCC question the benefits of the scheme given the relatively low frequency of the 268 bus. They argue that the improvement will be marginal to buses while providing an increase in capacity for general traffic which they suggest contrasts with Camden's road user hierarchy.</p>
<p>Officer response:</p> <p>*As above under section 3.3</p>

<b>Heath and Hampstead Society</b>
<p>The Heath and Hampstead Society (HHS) sent a detailed response in objection to the proposals as they feel that restricting movements and narrowing the lanes will add to congestion in the area.</p> <p>HHS also believes the proposals will make it more difficult to turn right out of the top of Lower Terrace.</p> <p>HHS supports the introduction of separate left turn and ahead traffic signals on the southbound approach.</p>

Officer response:

Officers met with a representative of HHS during the consultation period to explain the rationale for the proposed changes. The proposals as consulted on have been specifically designed to improve overall capacity at the junction with the aim of improving bus journey times and reliability and have undergone a traffic modelling exercise to test its ability to achieve this aim. By bringing the stop lines closer to the junction and realigning the eastbound approach to create more direct paths through the junction the traffic signal timings can be adjusted to reduce the amount of queuing and hence reduce congestion.

The proposals maintain all existing legal movements and the predicted benefits to traffic travelling eastbound on West Heath Road should improve conditions for vehicles exiting Lower Terrace in both the AM and PM peaks.

The wider footway adjacent to Whitestone Pond is a result of bringing the stop lines closer to the junction and realigning the eastbound approach and is not a proposal in its own right i.e. the footway is not being widened at the expense of other road users.

Officers have met with HHS more recently and understand fully the concerns surrounding the extensive work undertaken previously at Whitestone Pond and how the new scheme, especially the wider footway on the pond side, will align with the original kerblines and how the materials will match what was carefully selected and implemented as part of the previous project. Officers have provided assurance that materials used on the extended footway will be matched to those previously used as far as possible and the scheme aligned as seamlessly as possible to works undertaken previously.

### **Church Row Association**

The Church Row Association objects to the scheme on four grounds:

1. Whitestone Ponds were completely reconfigured in 2012 and it seems a complete waste of tax payer's money to redo it.
2. TfL's key argument "The proposed tightening of the junction increases capacity, which assists in reducing delays to general traffic" simply doesn't make sense.
3. TfL's modelling was found to be misleading on CS11, and it is likely to be the same here.
4. The expectation is that this will increase congestion in Heath Street and as a result increase pollution in Hampstead Village.

Officer response:

1. The ultimate aim of the scheme is to improve bus journey times which has been achieved through the reconfiguration of the junction to provide greater capacity. Specifically, realigning the eastbound approach so that it better aligns with the southern and eastern arms reduces the time it takes to pass through the junction while also reducing the risk of conflict between vehicles. This reconfiguration has provided an opportunity to widen the footway on the north western corner but this is not an objective in its own right and has not come at the expense of any other road user or proposal.
2. The existing junction is very large due to the unusual arrangement of the western arm which creates a distance of more than 52m between the northbound and southbound stop lines. The longer this distance the greater impact this has on the amount of green time available to all movements. By tightening the junction i.e. reconfiguring the kerb alignment to bring all of the stop lines closer to the intersection of the two roads, the distance between the northbound and southbound stop lines is reduced by approximately 14m. This has a direct impact on the capacity of the junction. The revised design which now includes Advanced Stop Lines for cyclists on each arm of the junction does predict slight increase in delays for traffic for the westbound approach on East Heath Road but this will be mitigated by the improved level of service for cyclists, pedestrians and bus passengers and will encourage more people to alter their travel choices away from motor vehicles and towards more sustainable modes of transport.
3. The council has commissioned external consultants to undertake the traffic modelling for this project which has been checked by TfL. It is also not in TfL's interest in this instance to fund the scheme if it did delay buses. By improving journey time for buses, in this instance it also aids general motor traffic simply because there is no dedicated bus lane meaning buses use the same lanes as general traffic. The modelling is based on detailed surveys of existing traffic flows and uses established methods that are proven to show an accurate prediction of traffic flows post scheme implementation. We have no reason to believe that those predictions would be unreliable and the modelling has been checked and approved by TfL who are responsibility for the operation of all traffic signals across London..
4. Refer to point 2 above.

**City of London Corporation**

**City of London Corporation** responded as follows following discussion with the Members of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee:

- They supported the proposals to improve the arrangements for pedestrians to cross the various roads, proposals to provide waiting boxes for cyclists and improvement to bus journey times.
- They stated that it was critical that any changes to the landscape and public realm are completed in such a way as to match the existing materials and design around Whitestone Pond and the pathways adjacent to the Heath.
- From an access hierarchy the proposals generally increase the area of

footway, however, they objected to the widening of the carriageway to create the cycle filter lane, this they stated should be accommodated within the existing carriageway.

Officer response:

Officers acknowledge the major transformation undertaken at Whitestone Pond around 2010 and will make every effort to match materials to those used previously.

The proposal to provide a cycle feeder lane on West Heath Road would be very useful for cyclists to get ahead of motor traffic on approach to the signals allowing them to exit the junction ahead of motor traffic which will help improve their safety. The presence of utility plant on the footway will dictate the extent of which this provision can be accommodated.