

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: Hampstead Town
REPORT TITLE Heath Street/East Heath Road/West Heath Road Junction: Proposed Improvements (SC/2019/23)	
REPORT OF Executive Director of Supporting Communities	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Cabinet Member for Improving Camden's Environment	DATE 25 February 2019
SUMMARY OF REPORT <p>The purpose of this report is to provide details of proposals consulted upon to improve the junction of Heath Street/East Heath Road/West Heath Road. The proposals are intended to improve journey times for buses travelling through this junction, which is proposed to be achieved by modifying its operation by changing the signal timings and alteration of the kerb alignment. The changes proposed include some improvements for pedestrians and cyclists as well as a creation of a larger public space. The report discusses the responses to the public consultation, taking into account Camden's Transport Strategy objectives, and finally provides recommendations for approval by the Cabinet Member.</p> <p>This report is being presented to the Cabinet Member for Improving Camden's Environment in order to take a decision on whether or not the proposal recommended are implemented. The reason for this decision being taken by the Cabinet Member is that the value of implementing the scheme is over £100,000.</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</p> <p>The following documents have been used in the preparation of this report:</p> <p>Responses to the public consultation from households, businesses and stakeholder groups</p> <p>Contact Officer: Nick Howdle-Smith/Simi Shah Design Engineer/Design Team Manager Transport Strategy Service, 5 Pancras Square, London N1C 4AG Telephone:020 7974 5125/2066 e-mail: nick.howdle-smith@camden.gov.uk; simi.shah@camden.gov.uk</p>	
RECOMMENDATIONS That the Cabinet Member for Improving Camden's Environment:	

1. Having considered the results of the consultation set out in section 6 and Appendix B of this report, approves the revised design set out in Appendix C subject to compliance with relevant statutory requirements and detailed design; and
2. Delegate's authority to the Director of Regeneration and Planning to take any further decisions linked to the implementation of the scheme.

Signed:

David T. Joyce

David Joyce
Director of Regeneration and Planning (Supporting Communities)
Date: 14 February 2019

1. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The London Borough of Camden is working with Transport for London (TfL) to improve bus journey times and reliability across the borough. Following a review of various bus routes across the borough by TfL, the junction of Heath Street, East Heath Road and West Heath Road was identified as a location where bus journey times could be improved.
- 1.2 Buses 263 (operates every 12-14 minutes), 605 (operating at school opening and closing times only) and N5 (a night bus service operating at 2 per hour) service local transport routes that pass through the aforementioned junction which at peak times operates close to full capacity causing noticeable delays.
- 1.3 The staggered arrangement of the eastern and western arms of this junction is such that the western approach (West Heath Road) does not align with the southern (Heath Street) and eastern (East Heath Road) exits. This has an effect on the operation of the traffic signals as it causes onerous turning movements through the junction to reach East Heath Road and Heath Street. It also increases the risk of conflict between traffic heading in different directions.
- 1.4 The junction alignment together with the sequencing of the signals results in more time taken to navigate the junction which is having an effect on bus journey times. Early assessments of improving both suggests that bus journey and reliability can be improved. The assessment identified the impact these changes would have on pedestrians and cyclists and identified what improvements could be made for these modes.
- 1.5 This report provides details of the responses received during the public consultation undertaken between 30 November 2018 to 4 January 2019 on proposals to improve journey time and reliability for buses travelling through Heath Street/East Heath Road/West Heath Road signal junction. The proposals include some improvements for pedestrians and cyclists as well as the creation of a larger public space by Whitestone Pond.
- 1.6 This report also provides officers' consideration of the responses received to the consultation, including consideration of Camden's Transport Strategy (CTS) objectives, both published and emerging, and provides a recommendation on a way forward. Plans showing the consultation proposals are provided in the consultation document, in Appendix A.

2. PROPOSAL AND REASONS

- 2.1. The proposals which were consulted upon can be summarised as follows:
- 2.2. *Reconfigure the layout of the junction.*
 - 2.2.1. The staggered arrangement of East Heath Road and West Heath Road means that it is difficult to turn right or travel straight ahead when exiting West Heath Road, leading to unnecessary delays and increased risk of conflict

between vehicles. By straightening the east to west and north to south route for vehicles, drivers will be able to take a more direct path through the junction which will increase its capacity and reduce the risk of collisions. Traffic modelling undertaken for the junction suggests that this will increase the junction's capacity resulting in a reduction in delays for each southbound bus of 16s in the morning peak hour and 14s in the evening peak hour. Similarly, each northbound bus is predicted to see a reduction in delays of 5s and 12s in the morning and evening peak hour respectively.

2.2.2. By straightening the west to east route on West Heath Road an additional 90m² of footway space is created in the north western corner which also reduces the pedestrian crossing distance across West Heath Road by approximately 7 metres.

2.3. *Separate ahead and left turning movements on the southbound approach.*

2.3.1. Currently, when pedestrians cross East Heath Road all southbound traffic on Heath Street is held to prevent left turning traffic conflicting with pedestrians. By separating the ahead and left turning movements, the ahead movement, which is used by buses travelling straight towards Hampstead and beyond, can continue with only the left turning traffic held to allow pedestrians to cross East Heath Road.

2.3.2. The current alignment of the south-eastern corner of the junction with refuge islands on the southern arm also encourage ahead moving traffic to veer across the path of left turning traffic or undertake a late manoeuvre to reach the southbound exit. Removal of the refuge islands and building out of the footway will improve lane discipline and result in a slightly shorter pedestrian crossing distance over Heath Street.

2.4. *Other improvements*

2.4.1. Advanced stop lines for cyclists have been proposed on the southbound and eastbound arms of the junction, which will help cyclists get ahead of other vehicles when signals are red giving them priority when the signals turn green.

3. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

3.1. The following options are available and are discussed below:

- a) **Option 1** – Do Nothing
- b) **Option 2** – Implement all proposals as consulted upon
- c) **Option 3** – Modify the proposals based on feedback received as part of the consultation and implement the revised scheme.

3.2. Option 1 - Do Nothing

3.2.1. The “do nothing” option is not recommended as this would not address the issues that have been identified, as set out in section 2. One of the main objectives of the Mayor's Transport Strategy is to create healthier streets to get more people walking, cycling and using public transport. Improving bus

journey times and reliability is one way of achieving this. The “do nothing” option would result in losing this opportunity to deliver the Mayor of London’s Vision at this location and contribute to the delivery of the CTS. For these reasons, the “do nothing” option is not recommended.

3.3. Option 2 – Scheme is implemented as consulted

3.3.1. Implementing the scheme as consulted on is not recommended as several responses raised concerns about the lack of cycling improvements proposed.

3.4. Option 3 – Modify the proposals based on feedback received as part of the consultation and implement a revised scheme.

3.4.1. Officers have considered the feedback received from the public consultation exercise and recommend that the Cabinet Member for Improving Camden’s Environment approve Option 3, the revised proposals shown in Appendix C.

3.4.2. Having gone through a public consultation exercise with individuals, local and statutory groups, and in response to the comments received officers have made amendments to the design that was originally proposed and consulted upon. The proposals recommended for detailed design and implementation in Option 3 include adding advanced cycle stop lines (ASLs) on all approaches as well a new cycle feeder lane on the eastbound approach.

3.4.3. These amended proposals further support the Council’s policies set out in Camden’s Transport Strategy to encourage walking, cycling and public transport use and to reduce road danger. Therefore, officers recommend the revised proposals for progression to detailed design and implementation as they provide safer measures for cycling and retain the improved pedestrian facilities whilst still improving reliability for buses although with less reduction in their journey time. This provides a better balance between these three modes.

3.4.4. The proposed changes have been discussed with representatives from Transport for London (TfL) and although the revised proposals reduce the predicted journey time savings for buses, TfL are willing to continue funding the scheme as they also provide benefits for pedestrians through reduced crossing distance and additional benefits for cycling.

3.4.5. A comparison of the journey time delay for buses using the junction in its current layout, with the proposed design as consulted upon and the updated design as recommended are shown below for both AM and PM peak times. These show that for the morning peak, buses currently experience a 46s delay on average in the southbound direction. This reduces to 30s with the proposals consulted upon (hence 16s benefit) but increases slightly to 34s delay with the revised proposals now recommended.

3.4.6. A dis-benefit of the new proposals, which now include ASLs on all arms of the junction, will be realised by the increased delay times on East Heath Road westbound approach (as shown in the graph below). This is balanced by the improved level of service for cyclists, pedestrians and bus passengers,

encouraging more people to alter their travel choices away from motor vehicles and towards more sustainable modes of transport.

4. WHAT ARE THE KEY IMPACTS / RISKS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?

4.1. Key Impacts – positive

- Holistic benefits for all road users and upgrade of junction including additional footway space
- Improved journey times and reliability for buses
- The scheme will achieve the aims of both the Mayor's and Camden's Transport Strategy by providing changes that will help encourage more people to walk, cycle and use public transport
- Improved road safety by reducing the risk of collision on Camden's roads

4.2. Key Impacts – negative

- Disruption to road traffic and increased noise levels during the construction stage. Effective communication with residents is needed to mitigate complaints during this period and ensure effective construction management plan and programme is in place to ensure works are not delayed.
- Increased delay times for vehicles on East Heath Road westbound approach. As Camden further implements policies contained within its Transport Strategy overall car use will reduce thereby improving travel choices, decreasing congestion and improving air quality.

4.3. Risks

4.3.1. If there is an unforeseen delay to the scheme, TfL have agreed to fund the cost incurred in 2019/20 from a new allocation, as carry over is not permitted for this programme.

4.3.2. Delays to the project and projects delivered under/over budget affect Camden's ability to apply for future funding from TfL.

5. LINKS TO OUR CAMDEN PLAN

5.1 The proposals meet one of the focus of Our Camden Plan which will help achieve Camden 2025 ambitions, including:
Providing Clean, Vibrant and Sustainable Places, by making it easier for people to travel more by foot or by bike. Although the proposals main aim is to improve journey time for buses, there are improvements proposed for walking and cycling which will help meet the Camden Plan.

6. CONSULTATION / ENGAGEMENT

- 6.1. A total of 110 consultation packs were distributed to addresses in the consultation area (as detailed in appendix A), and local and statutory groups. In addition, consultation leaflets with layout plans were sent to Ward Councillors.
- 6.2. The public consultation commenced on 30 November 2018 and ended on 4 January 2019. A copy of the consultation package is also included in Appendix A.
- 6.3. The consultation was also available online through the WeAreCamden.org portal. This allowed respondents to submit their feedback via an online questionnaire.
- 6.4. 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 it is summarised under 6.13 below and considered alongside all other responses.
- 6.5. The responses to the public consultation can be summarised as follows: (See Appendix B for the full responses received including officer comments).

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 %)

- 6.6. The majority of responses from individuals were from those who reside at a private address in the Hampstead area.
- 6.7. Of those individuals who object to the proposals, most of the comments received raised concerns regarding:-
- a lack of cycling provision
 - perceptions that the proposals will create more congestion
 - unnecessary pedestrian provision and
 - a negative impact on vehicles using Whitestone Lane
- 6.8. Three responses were received from local/ statutory groups; these were from the Camden Cycling Campaign (CCC), Heath and Hampstead Society and Church Row Association.
- 6.9. **CCC** responded to the consultation with concerns regarding potential for left hook manoeuvres on the northbound and southbound approaches. They also

argue that more cycling facilities should be incorporated into the junction such as advanced stop lines (ASL) on all approaches and a cycle feeder lane into the proposed ASL on West Heath Road. According to TfL's Strategic Cycle Analysis, Heath Street is in the top 5-10% of the busiest cycle connections in London and CCC is concerned that the proposals do not make enough provision for cyclist demand at this location. Finally, they argue that Whitestone Lane has been prioritised over the need of cyclists.

- 6.10. **Heath and Hampstead Society** response stated that they objected to the changes on the grounds that they would exacerbate congestion rather than reduce congestion as stated in the consultation material. They also raised an objection to altering the public space around Whitestone Pond which last underwent major changes in 2010.
- 6.11. **Church Row Association** also raised concerns that works around the pond had been completed relatively recently and other improvements were not necessary. They also questioned the validity of traffic modelling and whether or not any tangible benefits would be realised from the new junction design.
- 6.12. **Councillor Simon Pearson (Swiss Cottage)** provided no opinion on the proposals but suggested that if CCC objected to them then the proposals should be reviewed.
- 6.13. **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.
- 6.14. No other responses were received from local ward members.
- 6.15. Officers acknowledge that minimum changes were proposed for cycling due to the impact these would have on journey time for buses. The scheme is being funded from a bus priority programme of TfL aimed at improving journey time and reliability for buses. However having considered the responses received from individuals and those from CCC, officers undertook further traffic signal modelling to assess the impact of additional cycling measures on bus journey times. Although these reduced the predicted benefits to buses from 16s to 12s in the morning peak hour, following discussions with TfL, they agreed to fund the scheme as it still provides an improvement to bus reliability and

acknowledged that the revised changes provided improvements for cyclists. The additional changes include advanced stop lines for cyclists on each arm of the junction with a cycle feeder lane on West Heath Road. These have been discussed with CCC who have commented that they were pleased with the additional improvements for cyclists. The extent of the feeder lane on West Heath Road will be determined by the constraints of utility plant present on the footway.

- 6.16. Officers have met with a representative of the Hampstead and Heath Society who explained their concerns especially surrounding works undertaken around Whitestone Pond. They have requested that should the scheme proceed then works undertaken in consideration of the materials used previously and new works to sympathetically align with these. Officers have provided assurance that where possible materials such as the York stone provided on the footway around Whitestone Pond and the bonded gravel used on the footway elsewhere on the junction will be matched to that used previously.
- 6.17. A more detailed analysis of the consultation responses received and officers' comments can be found in Appendix B.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The recommendations in this report are being considered in the Council's capacity as the Local Highway Authority for the Borough. The Highways Act 1980, Part V, authorises the Council to carry out works of improvement to highways, including the provision of proper and sufficient footways for the safety and accommodation of pedestrians (section 66).
- 7.2 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, Part I, empowers the Council to regulate or restrict traffic on roads within the Borough by Traffic Regulation Order, for a range of purposes. The 1984 Act also contains powers in relation to pedestrian crossings on roads (Part III) and traffic signs (Part V).
- 7.3 Under section 122(1) of the 1984 Act, the Council has a duty to exercise its functions under the Act to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians), so far as practicable having regard to the matters listed in section 122(2). These include the importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles.
- 7.4 Under section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, the Council is required to prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety, to carry out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles, to take such measures as appear to the Council to be appropriate to prevent such accidents, including giving training and advice and other measures taken

in the exercise of its powers for controlling, protecting or assisting the movement of traffic on roads.

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The estimated cost of this proposal is £210,000 and would be funded from Transport for London (TfL) Bus Priority Programme secured for financial year 2018/19.
- 8.2 The funding for this scheme, needs to be spent this financial year (2018/19). Should the scheme not proceed, or the cost is lower than anticipated, the funding will be returned to TfL as it cannot be reallocated to another scheme or programme.

9. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 9.1 Should this scheme be approved for implementation, the next steps will be to complete detailed design, and work with TfL to coordinate the signal works with the necessary highway works. It is proposed that implementation works would begin in early March 2019 and complete by end of March/April 2019.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Consultation Documents

Appendix B – Consultation Responses and Officer Comments

Appendix C – Revised Scheme Proposal

REPORT ENDS