

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: Hampstead Town
REPORT TITLE Heath Street / Hampstead High Street Public Realm Improvements	
REPORT OF Executive Director Supporting Communities	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Cabinet Member for Improving Camden's Environment	DATE 28 February 2019
<p>SUMMARY OF REPORT</p> <p>The purpose of this report is to provide details of proposals consulted upon on changes at the junction of Heath Street and Hampstead High Street and along Hampstead High Street itself in order to improve bus journey times and provide some improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. The report discusses the responses to the consultation including officer views taking into account Camden's Transport Strategy objectives and finally provides recommendations for a decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Improving Camden's Environment. 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: 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> <p>RECOMMENDATIONS</p> <p>That the Cabinet Member for Improving Camden's Environment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having considered the results of the consultation set out in section 6 and Appendix B of this report, approves the amendments detailed in Option 3 in Section 3 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: 18.02.19

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 Hampstead High Street and Heath Street was identified as a location where bus journey times could be improved.
- 1.2. Buses 268 and 46 operate regular services 7 days a week and the 603 operates a school time service. All services run through Hampstead Village and pass through the aforementioned junction, which at peak times operates close to full capacity causing noticeable delays.
- 1.3. The carriageway on the Hampstead High Street approach to the junction is marked as one lane, however it is wide enough for two vehicles to wait at the stop line. Vehicles approaching the junction will typically wait in single file which reduces the capacity of the junction as only a single vehicle can pass through at a time.
- 1.4. Another cause of congestion along Hampstead High Street is the narrow carriageway caused by parked vehicles adjacent to the Greenhill embankment which makes it difficult for two large vehicles, particularly buses, to pass each other which contributes to congestion and queuing along Hampstead High Street, especially during peak periods.
- 1.5. The existing zebra crossing on Hampstead High Street by Oriel Place is very popular and results in vehicles, including buses, frequently stopping to allow pedestrians to cross. This often results in queues along Hampstead High Street as vehicles are unable to reach the junction with Heath Street when the lights are green.
- 1.6. Other issues identified at the junction include narrow footway widths along the western side of the junction and a very narrow pedestrian crossing across Holly Hill as well as existing pedestrian crossings not fully accommodating established desire lines.
- 1.7. This report provides details of the responses received during the consultation undertaken between 10 December 2018 and 23 January 2019 on proposals to improve journey time and reliability for buses travelling through Hampstead High Street/Heath Street signal junction. The proposals include changes at the junction, conversion of the zebra crossing by Oriel Place into a signalised crossing and parking changes further along Hampstead High Street.

This report will also provide officers' consideration of the responses received to the consultation, including consideration of Camden's Transport Strategy 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. PROPOSALS AND REASONS

The proposals at the junction can be summarised as follows:-

2.1. Reconfigure the Hampstead High Street approach to the junction

2.1.1. Altering the line marking on the Hampstead High Street approach to the junction allows the existing single westbound lane to be converted into two westbound lanes. The new lanes will be marked as one ahead/left turn lane and one dedicated right turn lane which provides the best layout for junction efficiency and minimises the risk to cyclists.

2.2. Converting the existing zebra crossing by Oriel Place to a signalised pedestrian crossing.

2.2.1. The conversion of the zebra crossing to a signalised crossing leads to further benefit for buses due to the ability to be able to coordinate it with the junction. This ensures that traffic is not held at the crossing while the green light is in operation at the Hampstead High Street / Heath Street junction.

2.3. Introduction of a new diagonal pedestrian crossing at the junction

2.3.1. The route between the southern side of Holly Hill and the Tube station is an acknowledged pedestrian desire line that is regularly used by pedestrians aiming to get from the station to the western side of Heath Street. This is being formalised through the introduction of a new pedestrian crossing between the south western corner and the north eastern corner of the junction. All of the existing crossings will also be widened to accommodate more pedestrians.

2.3.2. There is also space available to widen the footway on the western side of Heath Street by up to 1.8m. The majority of this widening is proposed at the south-western and north-western corners of the junction and will help provide more space for pedestrians

2.4. Restricting parking and loading along the southern side of Hampstead High Street during peak hours

2.4.1. By preventing parking and loading between 7-10am and 4-7pm Monday to Saturday along the southern side of Hampstead High Street (adjacent to Greenhill) the carriageway space available along this critical section will be wide enough to allow buses to travel in both directions without having to wait

for the other to pass. This will relieve congestion during the busiest part of the day while still providing parking facilities during off peak hours.

2.5. *Other improvements*

2.5.1. Adding advanced cycle stop lines to all approaches to the junction, including a new 35m long mandatory cycle lane on the northbound approach.

2.5.2. KEEP CLEAR markings will be added to the Heath Street northbound lane in front of Holly Bush Vale to prevent southbound right turning vehicles from blocking traffic.

2.6. The proposals for the junction and conversion of the zebra crossing have undergone an assessment using specialist traffic signal modelling software. This indicates that these changes will likely result in significant savings in bus journey time and therefore reliability of this service benefiting bus passengers and making public transport an attractive option. The provision of a new pedestrian crossing at the junction will make it safer for those pedestrians who are already informally crossing along this desired line and make it possible for others to cross the junction in one stage instead of having to cross two roads to reach the same point. Small improvements have been proposed for cyclists, unfortunately more cannot be accommodated without impacting on bus journey times.

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 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 also provide improvements for pedestrians especially at the junction and the small improvements proposed for cyclists. The proposals align with the Mayor of London’s Vision and contribute to the

delivery of the Camden Transport Strategy (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 is not recommended as there was significant opposition to aspects of the scheme particularly the conversion of the existing zebra crossing to a signalised crossing.

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 consultation exercise and **recommend the Cabinet Member for Improving Camden’s Environment approve Option 3**, the revised proposals as summarised below:

- to not convert the existing zebra pedestrian crossing on Hampstead High Street by Oriel Place to a signal controlled pedestrian crossing;
- to alter the waiting and loading restrictions proposed for 7-10am and 4-8pm Monday to Saturday along the southern side of Hampstead High Street (adjacent to Greenhill) to operate during 7-9am and 3-8pm on Mondays to Fridays only. (Saturday parking times would remain unchanged);
- to operate the hours of the mandatory cycle lane in Heath Street outside Nos. 29/31 to 9am to 8pm Mondays to Saturdays so as to retain the existing loading facility at that location.

3.4.2. Although the signalisation of the zebra crossing does achieve greater journey time savings for some bus movements, officers acknowledge that there is great opposition to this proposal. As well, Camden’s Transport Strategy prioritises walking and cycling above public transport, but any changes at this time are only possible through funding provided to improve bus journey times, a balanced view is taken.

3.4.3. The proposed changes have been discussed and agreed with representatives from Transport for London (TfL) who acknowledge that there are still significant benefits to be gained from the changes to the junction even without the zebra crossing conversion. In the evening peak hour, the bus journey time savings for buses travelling through the junction can be seen in the table provided below.

Movement for buses	Predicted Bus savings with junction changes and zebra conversion - pm peak	Predicted Bus savings with junction changes only-pm peak
Hampstead High St right into Heath Street	2.11 minutes	1.96 minutes
Hampstead High St left into Heath St	1.67 minutes	1.2 minutes
Heath Street left into Hampstead High Street	0.58 minutes	0.57minutes
Heath Street right into Hampstead High Street	0.83 minutes	0.8 minutes

3.4.4. TfL buses have confirmed that they would still fund the proposals recommended if approved as they will help provide significant improvement to bus journeys and help provide some benefit to pedestrians and cyclists.

3.4.5. Following comments received from Camden Cycling Campaign, an 'early release' for cyclists was modelled so as to give cyclists waiting on all approaches to the Hampstead High Street / Heath Street junction an extra 4 seconds to move off from the stop line before motor vehicle movements are permitted.

3.4.6. The results of this modelling indicated that the journey time benefits to buses are all removed and buses would experience further delays. TfL's bus programme would therefore not fund the scheme as the main aim from their perspective is to improve journey times for their services. This would mean the Council would not be able to provide the additional diagonal pedestrian crossing at the junction and formalising a safe crossing in a desired location. For these reasons the 'early release' proposal is not to be progressed at this time.

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

4.1. Key Impacts – positive

- Benefits for all road users and upgrade of junction including additional footway space helping 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 journey times and reliability for buses
- Improved road safety by reducing the risk of collision on Camden's roads

4.2. Key Impacts – negative

- Lack of high quality cycling infrastructure for cycling, due to the impact this would have on bus journey times.
- Disruption to road traffic and increased noise levels during the construction stage. Works will be programmed to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum.

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.

4.3.3. The consultation unearthed many local transport issues not specific to this project, with residents and business groups who have had previous meetings and discussions with Council officers regarding the future of Hampstead town centre. Although this project is specifically funded to improve bus journey times the impression may be that the Council is not doing enough to tackle other wide ranging issues such as air pollution, high street business viability, public realm improvements (Healthy Streets) and the measures proposed may lead to increasing vehicle numbers travelling through the area.

However, these issues are beyond the scope of this project and there is no funding identified to address the wider issues and provide an area wide solution at this time. Officers will however collate comments on the wider issues and forward them to relevant officers within the Council for consideration towards a 'future vision' of Hampstead Town Centre.

4.3.4. The introduction of the new diagonal crossing outside Hampstead Station is sited at the same location as the existing street trading kiosk. The scheme can be implemented without moving the kiosk but officers predict that at busy times, pedestrian comfort levels may be compromised.

Officers will continue to monitor the situation post implementation and if such issues arise consideration will be given to re-locating the kiosk away from the crossing point which would require working together with the borough's Market Development Manager and the kiosk trader.

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 **902** 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 10 December 2018 and ended on 23 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 **364** online, email and postal responses were received from individuals, groups and ward members.
- 6.5. The responses to the public consultation can be summarised as follows: (See Appendix B for the full responses received including officer comments on the issues raised).
- 6.6. **Question 1 - Do you agree with the proposal to change the number of westbound lanes on Hampstead High Street from one to two to increase capacity at the junction?**

	Support	Object	Indifferent
Individuals	175 (51%)	125 (37%)	42 (12%)
Local Groups / Ward Members	6 (38%)	9 (56 %)	1 (6%)
Total	181 (51%)	134 (37%)	43 (12%)

Half of those who responded supported this proposal however a high proportion also objected. The **Hampstead Business Improvement District (BID)** were amongst the majority of those who objected on the basis that the additional lane would increase capacity and encourage more demand for traffic in the area. Many comments received from individuals on this matter called for ways in which traffic through Hampstead Village could be reduced to improve congestion and air quality. In addition, the **Camden Cycling Campaign** objected to the additional approach lane to the junction, stating that the extra carriageway space could be used to implement segregated

cycle facilities instead.

All three ward members Cllrs Oliver Cooper, Cllr Maria Higson and Cllr Stephen Stark wrote a joint letter in which they stated their agreement to this proposal but with the qualification that the London Ambulance Service should be consulted.

Officers recognise that the comments received do align with Camden's broader strategy to discourage car use and promote more walking and cycling. However this needs to be balanced against the need to promote the option of public transport which is an essential travel option for many people including the elderly. Whilst the project aims are to improve bus journey times, improvements have been made to support better walking and cycling by introducing advanced stop lines for cyclists and a new diagonal crossing for pedestrians. Unfortunately more measures for cycling are not possible at this time as they will not provide any bus journey time savings, and the scheme would not be funded resulting in no additional measures being provided for pedestrians and cyclists.

An area wide traffic reduction scheme does not fall within the scope of this project, however the emerging Camden Transport Strategy includes a range of policies and measures that seek to reduce traffic on borough roads including those on residential streets so as to meet targets agreed with TfL.

As a statutory undertaker, London Ambulance are consulted on all changes to the public highway as required by UK legislation.

6.7. Question 2 - Do you agree with the proposal to change the zebra crossing on Hampstead High Street by Oriel Place to a signalised crossing to improve the efficiency of the junction and reduce congestion?

	Support	Object	Indifferent
Individuals	122 (35%)	215 (63%)	7 (2%)
Local Groups / Ward Members	4 (25%)	12 (75%)	0 (0%)
Total	126 (35%)	227 (63%)	7 (2%)

A large majority of respondents objected to this aspect of the scheme on the basis that it would prioritise traffic over pedestrians. Many comments suggested that the signalisation of this crossing would affect the ambience and aesthetics of the high street and segregate the eastern and western sides of the road, detrimental to the high street trading.

Many groups including the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum, the Hampstead Village Voice, the Heath and Hampstead Society and the Hampstead BID as well as Lord Adonis and Tulip Sadiq MP objected to this

aspect of the scheme. Ward members expressed their “unequivocal opposition to changing the zebra crossing..”.

With the level of opposition received to the removal of the zebra crossing, officers recommend to maintain the existing zebra crossing on Hampstead High Street by Oriel Place. Even without this change, there are still significant journey time savings for buses.

6.8. Question 3 - Do you agree with the proposal to introduce a new diagonal crossing across Heath Street?

	Support	Object	Indifferent
Individuals	243 (71%)	53 (16%)	45 (13%)
Local Groups / Ward Members	12 (75%)	2 (13%)	2 (13%)
Total	255 (71%)	55 (15%)	47 (13%)

There was broad support for this aspect of the scheme with less than 16% of respondents objecting. The majority of those that did object did so on the basis that they believed the area did not need any improvement. Other comments included assumptions that the addition of this crossing would affect traffic flow and as pedestrians already undertook this movement it was unnecessary to formalise it. Ward Members supported this aspect of the proposals and praised the efforts to “reduce any practical and psychological divide between one side of Heath Street and the other.”

The ‘all red’ stage of the traffic lights is the time at which all pedestrian movements are shown green, this proposal would include the diagonal crossing phase in to this stage without increasing its time. The fact that pedestrians are observed crossing diagonally (150 pedestrians in a 3 hour period in the morning) shows that there is a demand for this movement and the addition of a formal facility which indicates to pedestrians when it is safe to cross and how long they would have to complete the crossing is an important factor to ensuring road safety and reducing the risk of collisions. This will also negate the need for some pedestrians to cross two roads when they can cross at this new crossing provision, easing congestion for those who continue to use these crossings.

6.9. Question 4 - Do you agree with the proposal to modify parking restrictions along Hampstead High Street to remove the pinch point that is contributing to congestion?

	Support	Object	Indifferent
Individuals	235 (69%)	71 (21%)	35 (10%)
Local Groups / Ward Members	12 (75%)	4 (25%)	0 (0%)
Total	247 (69%)	75 (21%)	35 (10%)

The level of support for this aspect of the design was similar to that for Question 3 although the number of those objecting to the proposal was higher. The most common reason for objecting to changes to the parking adjacent to Greenhill was a concern about the impact it would have on local businesses but equally, many individuals suggested that the parking here should be removed at all times of the day. Ward Members supported the reduction in bus journey times that this measure would bring but are concerned that HGV traffic would increase given the increased carriageway widths that this feature would bring. They also brought forward an innovative solution to increasing the carriageway whilst retaining all of the parking – demolish and rebuild the existing retaining wall at Greenhill.

Officers have examined analysis provided by the **Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum** on this matter. They suggest that the pinch points generated by parked vehicles on both sides of the road only affect bus journey times during the afternoon school run and their conclusion proposes to limit the restricted hours to between 3pm and 5pm on Mondays to Fridays only. They also note that during peak times the parking bays on both sides are far from operating at full capacity which indicates that the peak time parking ban should not have a significant impact on visitor access to the businesses opposite.

However, 25 comments received from individuals show that there is a significant support to remove the parking at all times of the day.

Having considered all the responses, officers recommend to amend the proposed hours of operation to 7-9am and 3-8pm on Mondays to Fridays only. (Saturday parking times would remain unchanged) this would ensure that the restriction would operate for the entire period of the 'school run' and would not heavily impact the existing parking situation during weekday mornings and Saturdays.

The proposal to relocate the embankment at Greenhill whilst retaining all the parking bays will not be funded as part of this project and a negative impact of such works would be the removal of several mature trees.

6.10 Appendix B shows a more detailed breakdown of consultation responses received with officer comments.

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 construction cost of implementing these proposals is circa £120,000 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 Mid March 2019 and complete by end of April 2019.

10. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Consultation Documents

Appendix B – Consultation Responses and Officer Comments

REPORT ENDS