



Millfield Lane Safe and Healthy Streets Consultation Information Sheet

Proposals to make trial changes permanent and introduce new measures

Making your neighbourhood safer and healthier

The Covid-19 pandemic changed how communities live, travel and work. We want to transform our streets, so they have **more, safe space** for everyone to walk and cycle, for children to get to and from school **safely**, for you to be **breathing cleaner** air, to **reduce carbon emissions** from road transport, and for businesses to **flourish**. We want to ensure that our streets support recovery from the pandemic and provide a lasting legacy of **greener, safer, healthier travel**, helping us to deliver our wider Transport Strategy objectives

To help we have been making changes across Camden as part of our Safe and Healthy Streets Programme. This includes making trial changes on Millfield Lane which we introduced in June 2020 to reduce traffic volumes to make it safer for people to walk and cycle while observing social distancing, and to improve air quality.



London Borough of Camden is now consulting on making the trial changes permanent and creating a safer and healthier street, by introducing some additional minor changes based on feedback received during the trial period. The proposed changes aim to improve road safety, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

About the Millfield Lane Safe and Healthy Streets Scheme

We know from listening to local people that there were concerns about pedestrian safety on Millfield Lane. Millfield Lane is a residential street with direct routes to Hampstead Heath. However, there is very little pavement space at the southern end of the street: pedestrians have been observed walking in the road even though there is very limited visibility due to the bend – pedestrians cannot see oncoming traffic and drivers cannot see them.



Further north, the pavements are narrow, and pedestrians often step into the road to pass one another. However, the street is also narrow here, with parking on the eastern side: drivers therefore drive very close to the pavement when using the road, especially to allow another vehicle to pass. Parking on the pavement which also takes away pavement space from pedestrians has also been observed. This made Millfield Lane difficult for people walking, particularly during the pandemic when pedestrians often needed to step into the road to maintain social distancing while passing others.



Millfield Lane: narrow pavements make it difficult for pedestrians to use the street safely

In response to these concerns, in June 2020 we implemented the Millfield Lane pavement widening scheme as a trial, as part of our COVID-19 Safer Travel response programme, to provide safe space for pedestrians and to enable social distancing. These measures included:

- Removing one permit holder parking space on the northbound approach to the bend, at the southern end of Millfield Lane, to improve visibility;
- Removing 15 metres (3 spaces) of shared permit holder/pay by phone parking bays just after the bend, to create a new space for pedestrians to walk, on the side of Hampstead Heath, protected by water-filled barriers;
- We also made the road one-way only, northbound, for motor traffic between the bend at the southern end and the junction with Merton Lane, to reduce hazardous vehicle movements, but kept it two-way for cyclists.

These measures, which were introduced under an Experimental Traffic Order (ETO) as a trial, aimed to improve visibility around the bend on Millfield Lane, reduce traffic and congestion through the area and provide a safer way for pedestrians to access the Heath. The decision report related to this ETO can be viewed [on our website](#) and is also provided in the “**Related**” section of the online consultation front page. We have monitored the scheme during the trial and local residents and stakeholders have provided feedback.



The water-filled barriers were subsequently removed, in October 2020, following officers' review of the scheme including on-site observations as well as feedback from local residents which showed that the barriers were no longer necessary: the number of pedestrians using the spaces had reduced after the summer months and lockdown measures had eased. The decision report to remove the barriers can be viewed [here](#).

The decision report noted that a further consultation would be undertaken on any proposed permanent changes after approximately 12 months of the trial. We are now asking local residents and stakeholders as part of this final consultation to give their views on whether or not the scheme should be made permanent after the trial period. We are also proposing additional changes and options to help create a safer and healthier street – see “what are we now consulting on” later in this leaflet.



Millfield Lane: narrow street and parking makes it difficult for vehicles to pass each other, creating road safety issues for pedestrians and cyclists



Monitoring information collected during the trial

It was not possible to collect data before the scheme was introduced due to the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions on movement. The pandemic has also had an impact on traffic levels in Camden and across London over the last year: data from Transport for London shows that there was a 1.2% increase in traffic levels across inner London in June 2021 compared to September 2020 (these being the dates that traffic count information on this scheme were collected, as below).

This makes it difficult to assess the impacts of the scheme during the trial period but particularly how it compares to pre-pandemic conditions. Nevertheless, data has been collected at all junctions in the area in two monitoring phases to assess trends: weekly motor traffic turning movement counts (car, van, lorry, bus, and motorcycle) were taken over the following seven-day periods during the scheme trial:

- Saturday 19th September 2020 to Friday 25th September 2020
- Tuesday 1st June 2021 to Monday 7th June 2021

The counts covered the total number of motor vehicles on a Monday to Sunday moving from and to each of the count points at the following junctions:

- Merton Lane / Millfield Lane / Fitzroy Park
- Millfield Lane / Highgate West Hill
- Merton Lane / Highgate West Hill

The data shows that:

- Traffic using the Merton Lane / Millfield Lane / Fitzroy Park junction increased in all directions in both peaks, except south onto Millfield Lane (due to the southbound traffic restriction) during the am peak. The morning peak saw the greatest increases.
- The daily average number of vehicles turning into Merton Lane at the junction with Millfield Lane increased by 93% in the morning peak and 29% in the evening peak, an increase of 76 and 32 vehicles respectively.
- Total traffic movements at Merton Lane / Highgate West Hill decreased by 1% in the morning peak and increased by 8% in the evening peak. However, vehicles exiting Merton Lane at the junction, eastbound, increased by 82% in the morning peak.
- This is reflected in the increase of 56% of traffic turning westbound into Millfield Lane at Highgate West Hill, although total traffic movements at that junction were relatively stable between the monitoring periods.



- U-turning at the junction of Millfield Lane and Merton Lane was observed with a daily average of 18 vehicles making this movement during each peak period in June 2021.

The full methodology is set out in the Monitoring Factsheet which can be found in the “**Related**” section of the online consultation front page.

Feedback during the Experimental Traffic Order (ETO) Period

28 emails were received from local residents and stakeholders during the trial ETO period.

- 21 emails did not support the scheme (75%), although this comprised multiple responses from individuals, and represents 15 respondents;
- 5 email responses were neutral although this too represented 3 respondents;
- 2 emails expressed support for the scheme.



All the negative feedback raised concerns about the impacts of the scheme on Merton Lane. Emails highlighted that, as a result of the scheme, westbound drivers on Merton Lane unable to turn south at the junction with Millfield Lane, or unable to find parking spaces on Merton Lane, were now turning around at the junction with Millfield Lane to go back again, eastward, along Merton Lane. As discussed above, a daily average of 18 vehicles were observed making this movement during each peak period in the traffic survey undertaken in June 2021.

This has resulted in more traffic on Merton Lane, with drivers going back and forth looking for somewhere to park but with vehicles often being unable to pass one another. This has increased road safety concerns for some pedestrians, caused by vehicles turning at the junction but also using residents’ driveways and sections of the road where there is no pavement to turn around.



It was also noted that some drivers ignored the southbound restriction on Millfield Lane, which is evidenced by the monitoring data, although the numbers are not high - an average of 4 vehicles in the morning peak and 7 in the evening peak, in June 2021. All respondents requested better signage at the junction of Merton Lane and Highgate West Hill to indicate to drivers that they could not access Millfield Lane (no through road) at the end of the road.



What are we now consulting on?

Considering a number of factors, including the monitoring data, the feedback received from residents and stakeholders during the trial period, and our policies and objectives set out in our Camden Transport Strategy and Climate Action Plan, we are now consulting on making the experimental scheme permanent with some minor changes to improve safety for all road users based on comments received. Further changes can be considered longer term, subject to funding and further public consultation.

The proposals include:

- **Retaining** (by making the current trial permanent) the one-way northbound for motor traffic on Millfield Lane and two-way for cyclists, including the removal of one parking bay on the northbound approach to the bend on Millfield Lane to improve sightlines for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians and 15 metres of shared permit holder/paid for parking bays (three spaces) outside Millfield Cottage, to create a safe space for pedestrians to walk and for cyclists and vehicles to pass each other safely. The new space in the road for pedestrians outside Millfield Cottage would be replaced with permanent pavement widening.
- **Improving** the signage at Highgate West Hill to highlight to drivers that Merton Lane is a 'no through route' except for cyclists.

We are also proposing additional measures and options to improve road safety for all road users, as follows:

- Converting 10 additional permit holder/paid for parking bays on Millfield Lane to double yellow lines and double kerb blips (no parking or loading at any time), to improve visibility, reduce conflict between drivers and cyclists and to minimise vehicle movements which are hazardous to pedestrians and cyclists. And, in line with our 'Safer Junctions Programme', to keep 10 metres clear of parking around all junctions to improve sightlines and visibility of pedestrians crossing there, we propose to convert 1 parking space at the northern end of Millfield Lane, at the junction with Merton Lane, to double yellow lines (no parking at any time). This would enable us to widen the pavement there, making it safer for people to walk and to cross to Hampstead Heath.



The junction at Millfield Lane and Merton Lane: narrow pavements and parking making it difficult to cross to the Heath

We are also proposing options to address residents' concerns and feedback received during the trial:

Option 1: Making Merton Lane one-way (eastbound only) and amendments to parking provision

- Under this option we would make Merton Lane one-way, eastbound only, for motor traffic with two-way for cyclists. This proposal includes converting 2 parking spaces near the junction with Highgate West Hill to double yellow lines to enable cyclists to turn into Merton Lane safely and improve visibility for all road users. This option would help to address the U-turning problem observed at the junction of Millfield Lane and Merton Lane, reduce traffic on Merton Lane and improve road safety.

Option 2: Keeping Merton Lane two-way and amendments to parking provision

- Keep Merton Lane two-way (as current) for traffic and convert 7 permit holder/paid for parking bays on Merton Lane to double yellow lines and double kerb blips (no parking or loading at any time) to provide passing points for vehicles. This includes converting 5 parking spaces near the junction with Highgate West Hill to double yellow lines, and 2 parking spaces opposite Haversham Place to also enable drivers to turn out of that street safely.

This consultation asks for feedback from residents and stakeholders on which of those options, if either, they would like to be taken forward to implementation.

You can view the drawings of the proposed changes in the “**Related**” section of the online consultation front page.



What happens next?



After the consultation a decision report will be produced and published online via our website. Local residents and stakeholders will be notified of the outcome. The report will consider the consultation responses, feedback received during the trial, relevant policies, and other data/information.

The report will then outline if, at the end of the trial period, the experimental scheme should be made permanent, modified, or allowed to lapse. If a decision is made to approve any permanent proposals, the construction of any required elements would then take place. The consultation finishes on **7 November 2021**.

Subject to the decision to make the scheme permanent, officers will continue to monitor the scheme and will consider additional measures if necessary. These will be progressed and publicly consulted on as part of a separate scheme.