

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE 22 MARCH 2005

Report from the Director of Environment

For action	Wards affected: Wembley Central
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Report Title: Wembley High Road - Safety Scheme

Forward Plan ref: ES 04/05 318

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report informs Members about proposals to improve road safety and the movement of public transport along Wembley High Road in particular between the main pelican crossings outside Wembley Central station and outside the Woolworths store.
- 1.2 It is now the view of officers that the level of congestion and on-going accidents involving pedestrians cannot be allowed to continue, and a solution to these problems is a priority, and will necessitate the partial closure or full closure of St. John's Road junction with High Road .

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That subject to the results of the consultation with the local ward members (to be reported at Committee), the Committee approves the design concept and the draft consultation of the safety scheme (as shown in Appendix A).
- 2.2 That the Committee approves the public consultation strategy to be adopted for the scheme as detailed in the report.
- 2.3 That the officers shall report the results of the consultation at the next appropriate Committee meeting before implementing the scheme.

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3.0 Detail

Introduction

- 3.1 Funding has been allocated by Transport for London for local safety scheme based on the Borough Spending plan (BSP) submission for 2004/2005. A budget of £275,000 has been approved for this financial year within the Capital Programme.
- 3.2 The scheme is in accordance with the Mayor for London's Road Safety Policy and the Government's new 10 year accident reduction target for the year 2010 which aims to achieve:
- A 40% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents,
 - A 50% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured; and
 - A 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate

Accidents

- 3.3 The analysis of accidents along the High Road over the last three years show that most have occurred in the section between the pelican crossing outside Woolworth's / Marks & Spencer, and Wembley Central Station's eastern exit. There had been a total of 26 accidents that occurred; four were of a serious nature and 22 were slight. Details of the accidents are as follows:

	No. of Accidents	No. of casualties
Accidents involving pedestrians	19	21
Other reasons (pedal cycle, skidding, head to tail collision, etc)	3	4
Accidents involving Buses	4	4
Accidents in vicinity of St John's Road with High Road	17	18

Congestion

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- 3.4 The sheer volume of traffic using Wembley High Road inevitably leads to congestion but this is exacerbated by motorists stopping and waiting on yellow lines, and making illegal right turns into and out of St John's Road.

There is also a high level of pedestrian movements at this location, with a number of pedestrians choosing to cross the High Road near 'Primark', rather than using the nearby pelican crossing facilities. This activity leads to congestion but more importantly is the cause of the majority of accidents involving pedestrians.

- 3.5 Wembley Town Centre experiences very high levels of traffic flows during the working day, and the congestion caused through a combination of obstructive and indiscriminate parking, as well as the high volume of vehicular and pedestrian movements, affects the safety of all road users in the area, and reduces the attractiveness of the town centre.
- 3.6 London Borough of Brent's Transportation Service Unit is committed to improving traffic flows in the town centre whilst at the same time ensuring that the safety of all road users is maintained. The Unit's Engineers have carried out investigations to identify factors which impact on traffic congestion and road safety, and have drafted proposals which are designed to address these issues.

Scheme development and proposals

- 3.7 Committee should note that proposals to address the St. John's Road junction with High Road were approved in 1991 by the Highways Committee but the decision was subsequently rescinded due to extensive objections from local resident associations. However, officers have been working closely with Transport for London, emergency services, London buses and agree that an improvement should now be considered.
- 3.8 Once the scheme has been prepared, public consultation would be undertaken which would involve distributing public consultation documents to affected residents, businesses and bus passengers with an invitation to comment on the proposals. The documents would be posted to all addresses in the consultation area and bus passengers providing details of the scheme, a plan of the proposals and a free-paid return comment form for the residents, businesses and bus passengers to give their comments and express their views. The recently adopted public consultation procedure would be followed which requires active consultation with local members and area consultative forums.
- 3.9 The following proposals have resulted from investigations into accidents and congestion in High Road, Wembley:

- 3.9.1 Provision of a raised pedestrian platform at the pelican crossing outside Woolworths / Marks & Spencer. This was identified as an urgent

requirement and has been programmed for implementation within this financial year.

3.9.2 Possible relocation of the pelican crossing from opposite Wembley Central Station (eastern exit) towards St John's Road, incorporating a raised pedestrian platform to give more direct pedestrian access to bus stops.

3.9.3 Partial or full closure of St. Johns Road to allow the extension of the existing bus stop outside 'Blands' and 'Primark' stores.

3.10 Detailed assessment of St. John's Road junction with High Road has produced a number of options on which public feedback will be invited. The final proposals to reduce accidents and improve Wembley High Road for all road users will vary depending on the response to this consultation. Two options, in addition to "Do nothing", have been identified for the St. John's Road / High Road junction:

Option 1: Do nothing

Option 2: Partial closure – One Way exit into the High Road only, no entry from High Road to St. Johns Road)

This proposal allows traffic to exit St Johns Road and turn left into Wembley High Road, thus diverting traffic which currently turns into St. John's Road from the High road into Park Lane and Elm Road.

Option 3: Full Closure – Ban All Traffic Movement

This proposal bans all traffic into and out of St. Johns Road, all of which would be diverted to Park Lane and Elms Road.

3.11 Options 2 and 3 would have an impact on the surrounding road network, but each option involves different road changes and implications for Wembley High Road, St. Johns Road, Elm Road and Park Lane. The impacts of options 2 and 3 on the road network are as follows:

Option 2: Partial Closure of St Johns Road – One Way Exit Only into High Road)

This scheme will provide the following benefits:

- Improve conditions for pedestrians and bus passengers by providing additional footway space,
- Extend and / or relocate the bus stops outside Blands and Primark to improve road traffic flow and pedestrian movement,

- Prevent illegal right turns in and out of St. Johns Road,
- Reduce accidents by reducing the vehicle/pedestrian conflict at the junction,
- Relocate and increase number of disabled parking bays along St. John's Road.

There will however be the following additional requirements:

- Because of the additional traffic diverting to the Elm Road / Park Lane junction, there will be a need to reconfigure this junction, and possibly traffic signals linked to the Park Lane / High Road junction.
- On street parking on Elm Road will need to be reduced to provide for the safe and efficient passing of vehicles.

Option 3: Full closure of St Johns Road – Ban all traffic Movement

This scheme will provide the following benefits:

- Improve conditions for pedestrians and bus passengers by providing greater additional footway space,
- Accommodate a free standing bus shelter,
- Extend and/or relocate bus stops, make them closer to Barclays Bank, further increasing the benefits to traffic flow on the High Road,
- Remove obstructions to the free flow of traffic on the High Road by removing all turning movements in and out of St. Johns Road,
- Reduce accidents by removing the vehicle/pedestrian conflict at the junction,
- Improve the urban environment by introducing landscape area containing street furniture similar to that used along the High Road at the Café Quarter,
- Prevent the use of St. Johns Road as a rat run to avoid Park Lane junction with High Road,
- Relocate and increase number of disabled parking bays along St. John's Road.

As with option 2 above, the Elm Road / Park Lane junction will need to be redesigned and the existing parking arrangements amended. A 'turning area' will have to be provided at the 'closed' end of St John's Road and consideration given to improvements to pedestrian routes between Elm Road and St. John's Road car parks and the High Road.

Traffic analysis

3.12 Preliminary traffic analysis at the junction of Park Lane with Wembley High Road, shows the followings:

3.12.1 The current junction is fully saturated in the AM peak. Any increase in flows will have a detrimental affect, although all approaches are below 100%. The restriction of St. John's Road to exit only, transfers additional traffic to the left turn to Park Lane. This takes the degree of saturation to above 100% and will have a detrimental adverse impact on the operation of the junction. The full closure of St. John's Road improves the situation with 4 approaches just below 100% saturation. All PM options are below 90% saturation.

3.12.2 The addition of the pedestrian stage over Park Lane reduces the capacity of the junction by some 11-12% when tested with the current observed flows. None of the options function within capacity with the addition of generated flows, whether St. John's Road is partially or fully closed.

3.12.3 The closure of St. John's Road affects the operation of the junction. If exit only is allowed, then there is an increase in the left turn into Park Lane. However, the full closure reduces the High Road (east) ahead, transferring it to the left turn from Park Lane which is under saturated. The full closure therefore performs better than the partial closure.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 The cost of developing and implementing the proposed local safety scheme will be met from the Capital Programme allocations from Transport for London for Local Safety Schemes. An overall budget of £275,000 has been allocated for improvements to public transport and road safety on this route.

4.2 Funding of £115,000 has been allocated within the Capital Programme for this financial year for urgent improvements such as construction of pedestrian platform at the pelican crossing outside Woolworths / Marks & Spencer and improvement of the footway along St. John's Road and the High Road. The remaining funding (approximately £160,000) will be used for consultation and implementation of proposal for St. John's Road junction with Wembley High road.

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 The amendments to loading bays, parking prohibitions (waiting and loading restrictions) and existing two way traffic associated with implementing the proposed scheme will require the making of a traffic regulation order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The procedures to be adopted for making the actual orders are set out in the associated Statutory Traffic Regulations.
- 5.2 The speed platform and speed cushion (types of road humps) measures proposed are made under sections 90A to F under the Highways Act 1980 and will require the Council to undertake prescribed consultation and consider objections and place statutory notices.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 All public consultation material distributed included a section written in the most common languages used in the Borough with an explanation of how more information about proposals could be obtained.

7.0 Staffing / Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 7.1 The Council's Transportation Service Unit will deal with all issues related to the scheme detailed in this report.

8.0 Environmental Implications

- 8.1 The introduction of traffic management measures will improve road safety for all road users in the locations treated and reduce the frequency of road traffic accidents.

Background Papers

Traffic Management Project File TP 311
Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
Highways Act 1980

Contact Officers

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Adam Assaadi, Senior Engineer, Transportation Service Unit, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 6BZ, Telephone: 0208 937 5110

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