



Highways Committee 20 March 2012

Report from the Head of Transportation

For information

Wards Affected:
Harlesden, Kensal Green

Harlesden Town Centre Consultation Results

Forward Plan Ref: E&C-

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report informs members of the results of the recent public consultation on the Harlesden Town Centre “Major Scheme”.
- 1.2 Transport for London’s (major scheme) funding regime provides an opportunity for Council’s to develop and implement schemes to improve the operation and appearance of town centres so as to support the vibrancy and vitality of those town centres.
- 1.3 Officers are currently working on a scheme for Harlesden Town Centre with the aim of securing up to £4 million to deliver the proposals. The aim of the scheme is support the development of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable town centre which contributes to the wider objectives of reducing the need to travel (by motorised means) and where travel is necessary, to maximise the attractiveness of public transport by improving its reliability and speed.
- 1.4 The report recommends that, having considered the results of the consultation, the Committee agrees to progressing option B including the amendments outlined within the report.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 That Committee notes the results of the recent consultation into options for the Harlesden Town Centre Project and instructs officers to proceed with option B, including recommendations identified within section 6.10 of the report, subject to confirmation of funding from Transport for London and completion of the necessary statutory consultation.
- 2.2 That Committee authorises the Head of Transportation to consider any objections and representations to the statutory consultation and to report back to Committee if there are significant or substantial objections or concerns raised, otherwise to implement option B.
- 2.3 That a progress report will be prepared and reported back to Committee during the autumn prior to commencement of the works on site.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Harlesden Town Centre is at the centre of a diverse community, yet like many places its status has been progressively reduced so that it has increasingly become a place of motor traffic domination, broken pedestrian preferred routes, inadequate investment and maintenance, road danger and declining areas of public space.
- 3.2 The Council's vision for Harlesden is to bring about a major shift in the commercial ranking and quality of Harlesden town centre, enabling it to better serve and contribute to the regeneration of its residential and industrial hinterland, and to become an attractive place that people will want to visit, linger, socialise and spend money.
- 3.3 Over the last couple of years, Brent Council have been working closely with the Harlesden Town Team 2010, a local community group set up in 2010 to help promote positive change in Harlesden. Our partnership led to the publication of the 'Harlesden Town Charter – A Vision for Harlesden', which sets out the community's vision for improving Harlesden over the next 10 to 15 years.
- 3.4 As a major first step towards realising the aspirations of the Charter, a large multi-million pound scheme for Harlesden Town Centre has being developed in conjunction with the Town Team.

4.0 The Proposals

- 4.1 The proposals for the Town Centre project consist of two options (Option A and Option B) which are detailed in the consultation documents and attached as Appendix A.
- 4.2 Option A retains the existing gyratory system for traffic movements around the town centre and consists of:
- Wider footways to provide more space for pedestrians and small areas of public space with seating and greenery.
 - Less street clutter by removing unnecessary signage, guardrails etc. and renewing or improving the remaining items, making the street more attractive, less obstructed and safer for pedestrians.
 - New cycle parking and more accessible bus stops to promote sustainable transport.
 - New litter and recycling bins positioned in locations that will maximise their use.
 - High quality paving.
 - Safer and more accessible crossing points for pedestrians.
 - Raising the carriageway to footway level across side roads to assist pedestrians crossing the roads.
 - More trees will be planted throughout the area to make the streetscape more attractive. Trees help to improve air quality and reduce pollution and improve the quality of life by promoting a sense of wellbeing.
 - Reduced resident permit parking on the High Street and Craven Park Road and an increase in Pay & Display and loading bays to free up space for passing trade and short term parking during the day.
 - Amendments to the boundaries of the Controlled Parking Zones.
 - The provision of additional permit parking within the adjoining Controlled Parking Zones to accommodate the displacement of residential parking from the High Street and Craven Park Road during the day.
 - CCTV for enforcement of parking restrictions plus improved beat enforcement.
- 4.3 As well as all the improvements proposed in Option A, Option B consists of a shared space/pedestrian priority area in High Street Harlesden between Jubilee Clock and Tavistock Road. While buses and cyclists will be allowed to pass through the shared space, all other motor vehicles will be prohibited with the exception of deliveries which will be permitted before 10am and after 4pm.
- 4.4 Changes are required to the traffic circulatory system to accommodate the prohibition of motor vehicle on the High Street these include:
- Changing Tavistock Road to one way south westbound and Crownhill Road to one way north eastbound.
 - Changing Manor Park Road to two way between Tavistock Road and High Street Harlesden.

- Changing High Street Harlesden to two way between Manor Park Road and Wendover Road.
- Providing CCTV for enforcement of the prohibition of vehicles on High Street, Harlesden.

4.5 In addition zebra crossings are proposed on Tavistock Road at its junction with Manor Park Road and both ends of Crownhill Road.

4.6 It should be noted that design of the shared space/pedestrian priority area has not been decided on. Shared areas do not always consist of flush areas and kerbs can be installed. Should Option B be progressed the design of this area is still to be finalised in consultation with the Town Team and disability groups.

5.0 Consultation Procedure

5.1 The consultation document, questionnaire and ethnic monitoring questionnaire attached in **Appendix A** was sent out to 11313 residents and businesses in the area Zones on 16th January 2012 with a closing date of 10th February 2012. This included all properties within the existing Controlled Parking Zones H, HS, HW and HY including properties within the extended HY zone to be implemented in April 2012.

5.2 Following an error being identified in the documentation a letter was sent out to all residents to advise them of the correction and advise them of an extension to the consultation period to 17th February 2012.

5.3 The consultation pack was also sent to the local Ward Councillors, all organisation/interest groups and statutory authorities including the emergency services.

5.4 The consultation pack was also available on the councils' website along with additional information which included:

- Details of existing and projected traffic flows
- Details of changes to the bus routes
- A list of Frequently asked Questions

5.5 Larger scale plans were displayed at Harlesden Library for the duration of the consultation for people to view. Copies of the Harlesden Town Charter and Frequently asked Questions were available for people to take away.

5.6 Public Exhibitions were held at the Salvation Army Hall on Manor Park Road on:

- Monday 23rd January 2012 between 4pm and 8pm
- Wednesday 25th January 2012 between 4pm and 8pm
- Saturday 28th January 2012 between 10am and 2pm
- Monday 30th January 2012 between 1.30pm and 5pm
- Tuesday 31st January 2012 between 6pm and 9pm

5.7 Council Officers and members of Harlesden Town Team 2010 were in attendance to discuss the options and answer any questions.

5.8 Members of the Town Team undertook small events on street to assist with advertisement of the exhibitions and encourage residents and businesses to come along and respond to the consultation. They visited all the businesses individually on the High Street and Craven Park Road to ensure they had received a copy of the consultation pack and encourage them to return it.

6.0 Consultation Analysis and Responses

6.1 A total of 904 questionnaires were returned giving a return rate of 8% for the whole area. Of these returns 18% came from the H zone, 22% from the HS zone, 41% from the HW zone and 19% from the HY zone. A plan showing the consultation boundary and a breakdown of responses by CPZ is detailed in **Appendix B**.

6.2 An 8% response rate is not unusual in a scheme with such a large consultation area. Responses were well distributed across the 4 zones with a slightly higher rate coming from the HW zone.

6.3 Of the roads within the immediate boundaries of the scheme which includes the roads with changes to the parking restrictions there was a 7.6% response rate.

6.4 With regards to individual roads the High Street received the most responses with 45 which is equal to 6.4% of all the addresses on the High Street. Of these the majority were within the limits of the scheme.

6.5 The results of the consultation are summarised as follows:

6.6 Question 1: Which option do you prefer? The table below summarises the responses by CPZ zone and the overall total.

ZONE	No of Consultees	Option A (% of zone)	Option B (% of zone)	No Preference (% of zone)	Neither (% in zone)	TOTAL (%of Zone)
H	2201	44 (27%)	78 (48%)	11 (7%)	31 (19%)	164 (7.5%)
HS	2415	47 (24%)	102 (52%)	24 (12%)	24 (12%)	197 (8.2%)
HW	3938	88 (24%)	220 (59%)	29 (8%)	33 (9%)	370 (9.4%)
HY	2759	34 (20%)	95 (55%)	21 (12%)	23 (13%)	173 (6.3%)
TOTAL	11313	213 (24%)	495 (55%)	85 (9%)	111 (12%)	904 (8%)

A breakdown of the results of the consultation by road is attached as **Appendix C**.

6.7 Question 2: If you responded 'Neither' which elements do you object to?

111 people responded that they did not like either option. Of these 45 (41%) objected to the provision of wider footways, 24 (22%) objected to the provision

of raised junctions, 38 (34%) objected to the provision of additional trees in the area, 31 (28%) objected to the reduction in street clutter, 45 (41%) objected to the Controlled Parking Zone boundary changes, 49 (44%) objected to the proposed changes to the parking and 45 (41%) objected to the use of CCTV enforcement.

6.8 All responses have that were received have been recorded and are set out by road in **Appendix D** along with officers' responses and recommendations.

6.9 A summary of the most frequently received comments/concerns are detailed in **Appendix E** along with officer responses and recommendations.

6.10 The key comments and engineer recommendations include:

1. Shop owners encroaching onto the footways obstructing pedestrians.

Delineation of private forecourts will be included within the project in order to assist with enforcement

2. Banning HGVs / Strengthening the Mitre Bridge.

It would not be possible even to consider measures to reduce HGVs within Harlesden area without alternative routes being available. The key one of these being Scrubbs Lane which requires Improvements to a weak bridge (Mitre Bridge). This lies within the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF) and has been prioritised by the London Bridges Engineering Group (LoBEG) for investment. Realistically however this will not take place for the next 5 to 10 years. Brent will continue to work with LBHF and LoBEG to bring the project forward as quickly as possible.

3. More public toilets needed in the area.

It is recommended to undertake further investigation into the provision of public toilets as part of detailed design.

4. Bins for dog mess.

It is recommended to include the provision of bins for dog mess in the detailed design.

5. One respondent expressed concern regarding access to the Salvation parking area.

It is noted that the existing situation is not ideal and therefore it is recommended to provide a dropped kerb to facilitate improved access.

6. Lack of disabled parking;

Whilst those with disabled badges can park anyway, it is acknowledged that if bays are full this does not help.

It is therefore recommended to provide additional disabled bays at strategic points within the scheme.

7. Parking/loading issues on Park Parade near Manor Park Road junction causing hold ups.

It is recommended to investigate extending the 'No waiting/No loading at any time on Park Parade from the junction with Manor Park Road. This may be subject to a separate consultation.

8. Too much shared parking on Charlton Road and Bolton Road.

Parking on Charlton Road and Bolton Road is either permit holder, or shared use meaning that it's available for both pay and display users and permit holders. There is however a disproportionately high level of shared use bays on these sections of road within the proposal.

It is recommended to investigate reducing the number of shared use bays and concentrate them near the junctions in the vicinity of the shops.

9. Reduction in H zone reducing available places to park for those remaining in H zone.

It is acknowledged that there will be reduced ability to park in or close to the town centre; this is part of the aim of the scheme to dedicate parking for shoppers and loading only. However the permit holders in the sections of the old H zone removed from the new H zone will no longer be able to come and park closer to the station, which used to take place, therefore freeing up additional space. Surveys undertaken within the area indicated that there was already some spare capacity.

However, it is recommended to investigate options for providing a buffer zone in adjacent streets.

10. HA zone is too small.

The majority of bays within HA zone will be made permit holder only rather than the current shared use. The removal of the current P&D parking in these bays means that there will be less conflicting demands on these bays. Surveys undertaken as part of the development of the scheme would indicate that there should be sufficient capacity within the new zone.

However these concerns are noted, and as some of the adjoining streets within HW have spare capacity it is recommended to provide a

buffer zone for HA on Ashdown Road, Burns Road and St John Avenue. A buffer zone means that residents of HA will be able to park on these roads in HW, but the residents of these roads will not be able to park in HA. Take up of these buffer zone spaces is expected to be low and is unlikely to have any impact on the operation of these roads.

11. Loss of parking on Crownhill Road in Option B as opposed to option A.

It is recommended to investigate retaining the parking on Crownhill Road in Option B if Option B is progressed.

12. A few residents' of High Street and Craven Park Road expressed concerns regarding the loss of residents parking on these streets;

Surveys have suggested that the number of residents of Craven Park Road and High Street who own a car is low. There are issues with businesses obtaining residents permits which need to be addressed. However, it is noted that adjacent streets such as Nicoll Road may be considered some distance to walk therefore it is recommended to investigate alternative options for residents of High Street and Craven Park Road

13. Will disabled badge holders be permitted into the semi-pedestrianized High Street in Option B.

No, however opportunities in providing disabled parking in proximity to this area will be investigated.

14. A few respondents raised concerns about flush kerbs in shared areas and how safe they are for certain disability groups, particularly the blind and partially sighted.

The design of the shared area has not yet been finalised, it is not essential that a shared area has flush kerbs and therefore this may not necessarily be what is used at this location. Consultation directly with disability groups and other interested parties will be undertaken during the detailed design.

It is recommended that consultation with disability groups and other interested parties takes place as part of the detailed design process to make sure the concerns are appropriately considered as part of the process.

15. Concerns about a vehicle breaking down in Craven Park Road.

The proposed carriageway width of Craven Park Road is 4.5 metres which would be sufficient for two cars to pass if one has broken down.

It is acknowledged that this would not be possible with a larger vehicle. The aim was to provide a balance between discouraging double parking and carriageway width.

Notwithstanding, the concerns are noted and it is recommended to consider widening the carriageway to 5 metres.

- 6.11 The response rate from the local businesses was low with a total of 25 businesses from Craven Park Road and High Street responding. Of these 9 (36%) expressed a preference for Option A, 9 (36%) expressed a preference for Option B, 3 (12%) had no preference and 4 (16%) did not like either option.
- 6.12 Of the businesses that responded there is no clear preference for either option. The negative comments that were received related predominately to:
- Not being able to park outside their own shops
 - Loss of business due to reduction in locations for shoppers to park and difficulties receiving deliveries
- 6.13 Current parking practices results in difficulty parking for many shoppers, which leads to the existing problem of illegal parking on yellow lines and double parking. It is not essential for a shop owner to park outside their shop and by encouraging them to park further away will open up spaces for their shoppers.
- 6.14 Surveys undertaken in Harlesden have shown that over 80% of people coming into Harlesden to shop do not use a car and either come by public transport, walk or cycle. In addition similar schemes in other areas have shown you can actually increase turnover by 5-15%. This shows that businesses should not be detrimentally affected by the scheme.
- 6.15 The police responded and expressed a preference for Option A, no other comments were made. Further discussions will be undertaken with the Police throughout the detailed design process.
- 6.16 No questionnaires or comments were received back from London Buses, the fire brigade or the ambulance service. Although it should be noted that London Buses have been significantly involved in the development of the scheme and are happy that both proposals constitute viable options for the operation of buses within the town centre.
- 6.17 The Licensed Taxi Drivers Association Ltd responded with no strong preference for either option but objected to the fact that taxis would not be able to access the High Street in Option B which would dis-benefit those who use taxi particularly mobility impaired passengers. They also suggested that a Taxi Rank at the shopping centre which would improve the travel options available to visitors. A copy of the detailed summary of their response and officers comments can be found in **Appendix D**.

- 6.18 London Travelwatch Streets and Surface Transport Policy Office expressed a preference for Option B but would like all the one-way roads in Harlesden removed to allow for more direct bus routes. A copy of the detailed summary of their response and officers comments can be found in **Appendix D**.
- 6.19 One councillor responded to the consultation and expressed a preference for Option A. They also indicated that disabled bays were not indicated properly.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 £150,000 funding for the development of the Core Town Centre scheme within the current financial is being provided by TfL through the Council's annual Local Implementation Plan (LIP) "corridors & neighbourhoods" programme. That programme was approved by this Committee on 9th February 2011.
- 7.2 A provisional allocation of £3 million has been identified by TfL within 2012/13 and 2013/14 from the Major Schemes Programme to fund the core scheme. This will be match funded by approximately £400,000 of Developer (s106) contributions and £800,000 TfL LIP funding within the 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial years.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 None at this time

9.0 Diversity Implications

- 9.1 An initial equalities impact assessment has been undertaken and is shown at Appendix F. This document will continue to be developed through the life of the project. Recommended course of actions associated with issues identified within the scoping assessment and consultation stages are identified within section 6.10 of the report,

The Committee is under a duty to give consideration to the analysis when considering this report and making a decision.

10.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

- 10.1 None at this time

11.0 Environmental Implications

- 11.1 An air quality assessment was undertaken in February 2012 which examined the effect on local Air Pollution of the two schemes. It modelled how the changes in road design would affect the concentration and dispersion of pollutants from traffic exhaust and assessed this against the relevant Air Quality Standards.

- 11.2 The report concludes that both options represent an improvement in air quality over a no change scenario with Option B representing a bigger improvement overall.
- 11.3 Whilst in terms of air quality Option B is the preferred option consideration should be given to moving the zebra crossing on Tavistock Road further from the junction due short term exposure to increased NO² levels at this point. It also recommends that measures for the East/West section of the High Street such as traffic calming, restrictions on heavy vehicles and/or no idling zones should be considered.
- 11.4 If Option A is progressed the report recommends that further mitigation measures should be considered along all of the High Street and Manor Park Road.
- 11.5 A copy of the full report is attached in **Appendix G**.

Background Papers

- Highways Committee 27th July 2011: Briefing report – Harlesden Town Centre Project

Appendices

- Appendix A – Consultation Pack
- Appendix B – Plan showing the Consultation Boundary and response rate by CPZ area
- Appendix C – Table detailing the breakdown of responses by road and CPZ area.
- Appendix D – Summary of responses to the consultation by road including engineer responses
- Appendix E – Summary of most frequent comments
- Appendix F – Initial Equalities Impact Assessment
- Appendix G – Air Quality Report

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