



Highways Committee
25th January 2006

**Report from the Director of
Transportation**

For Action

Wards Affected:
Kilburn, Queens Park, Brondesbury
Park, Willesden Green, Dudden Hill,
Mapesbury, Dollis Hill, Welsh Harp,
Fryent, Queensbury.

Cycling Strategy for the A5 Corridor

Forward Plan Ref: E&C--05/06-051

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report updates members of the current situation with regard to cycle facilities on the A5 corridor. It seeks approval to reassess the cycling strategy for the LCN+ A5 corridor in view of the joint Borough approach with LCN+ officers.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That Committee recognises the outcome of consultation that has been undertaken between Brent, LCN+ and the adjoining boroughs involved in the project.

2.2 That Committee recommends that the cycling strategy for the LCN+ A5 corridor through Brent be amended to include alternative routes off the A5 as part of the LCN+.

2.3 That Committee recognises a need to alter the Bye-Laws to allow for cycling on routes within certain parks in order to include alternative routes.

2.4 That Committee instructs officers to proceed with identification of and subsequent scheme development on the alternative (off A5) routes for the A5 corridor.

2.5 That Committee authorises the Director of Transportation to proceed with any necessary consultation, public / statutory, and to consider any objections or representations and either to refer objections or comments back to this Committee where it is thought appropriate or to implement the order if there are no objections or representations, or if it is considered the objections or representations are groundless or insignificant.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Brent's Cycling Policy is fully detailed in the borough's Local Implementation Plan (LIP) and a Cycling Action Plan for 2005-2010 appears in the 2005-2006 Borough Spending Plan (BSP).

3.2 As part of the BSP submission, a package bid (on behalf of all London Local Authorities) was prepared, which sought funding for the LCN+ projects. Brent was awarded £300k in 2004/2005 in order to act as lead authority for the project management of the A5 corridor. An additional £150k has been awarded for 2005/2006.

3.3 The A5 corridor is significant for cyclists as it is an important north / south link between North West London and the City / West End. Following TfL guidelines a consultant, Jacobs Baktie, was commissioned to produce a Cycle Route Implementation Stakeholder Plan (CRISP) for the A5. This involved meeting with all the stakeholders, including cycling campaign groups and appropriate London Boroughs about their aspirations for cycling facilities on the A5. The consultants then carried out an audit of the route identifying problems and barriers to cycling and made suggestions as to the type of schemes that could be implemented. The proposals were contained in a final report which was presented to officers in December 2004.

3.4 As well as considering cycle facilities on the A5, western and eastern alternative routes off the A5 were also identified. These alternatives were favoured by local cycle campaign groups.

3.5 Officers proceeded with work necessary to implement cycle facilities for route 5 on the A5.

3.6 Subsequent to two inter-borough consultative meetings (10.10.05 and 01.12.05) undertaken at the LCN+ offices in Camden at which Brent, Barnet, Camden and LCN+ representatives were present and designs for cycle facilities on the A5 were submitted, a need to amend the strategy for cycling on the A5 corridor was identified, as set out below.

Amendment

3.7 The character of the A5 is such that it is not possible to achieve the LCN+ requirements for a fast, safe, comfortable, convenient, attractive and easy to access cycle facility purely on the A5 itself. Conditions on the A5 change along its length. The whole road experiences a high traffic flow, some stretches are characterised by space restricted urban conditions, others by high speed dual carriageway. This character as well as difficulties posed by

the junction with the North Circular at Staples corner suggests that, by incorporating alternative routes into the A5 corridor cycling strategy, LCN+ requirements may be more successfully addressed. See Plan A for a suggested in principle route for the western alternative.

Routes through Parks

- 3.8 Alternative routes on the A5 corridor will benefit from cycling on routes through Parks. Such routes would be implemented only consequent to consultation particularly with park action groups. Brent Parks service have a positive stance with regard to cycle facilities within open spaces. However current Bye-Law allows for very little legal cycling within Brent Parks. Certain exemptions are already in place such as for the under twelve's and during the early morning in Gladstone Park. Cycle provision within parks would be designed through consultation with Brent Parks Service. In all cases, the design through parks will try to ensure safety of both the pedestrian users and cyclists.

Authorisation for Officers to Proceed

- 3.9 The next stage in the process is to commit for a consultant to undertake a feasibility study on alternative routes. In order to maximise the facilities that the A5 corridor can provide for cyclists, officers are requesting that committee will agree to allow for changes to the Bye-Law on cycling in Parks and allows them to proceed with all aspects of scheme development, public consultation, statutory consultation and implementation on alternative routes. This will mean that officers do not have to report every individual scheme to Committee, however regular progress reports will be made. This request for authorisation is intended solely to speed up the delivery of schemes and ensure maximum use is made of externally provided funds. Where scheme consultation is inconclusive or where major objections are raised to a proposal then a report will be brought to this Committee for a decision.

Consultation Process

- 3.10 Consultation would be carried out in a similar manner to as for local safety schemes. Consultation documents will be posted to all addresses in the consultation area providing details of the scheme, a plan of the proposals and a free pre-paid return comment form for residents to fill in. Active consultation would also be undertaken with local Ward Members and area consultative forums such as park action groups. In addition consultation documents will be sent to cycling campaign groups.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 Funding has been allocated by Transport for London (TfL) for progressing the LCN+ schemes on the A5 corridor based on the Borough Spending Plan submission for 2004/2005, 2005/2006, and also for 2006/7.
- 4.2 In 2004/2005 £300k was allocated for the development of schemes on the LCN+ A5 corridor however the production of the Cycle Route Implementation and Stakeholder Plan (CRISP) was delayed and therefore the amount of

physical measures that could be designed and implemented in this financial year has been reduced. The final spend for 2004/05 was £98,509.

- 4.3 In 2005/2006 £150k was allocated for delivery of this programme but this is likely to be reduced to 50k as a result of the changes in the overall strategy for the A5 corridor.
- 4.4 In 2006/2007 Brent has been allocated £150k to develop schemes on the A5 corridor. BSP bids for future years totalling £600k have been agreed in order to complete the scheme.
- 4.5 As a result of all the consultations with the neighbouring Boroughs and LCN+, it is hoped that there will be a general agreement to the proposals for implementation in 2006/7

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 Some of the schemes that are developed for the LCN+ A5 corridor alternative routes may require traffic or parking restrictions. These proposals would require the making of Traffic Regulation Orders under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The procedures for making orders or varying existing orders are set out in the associated Statutory Traffic Regulations.
- 5.2 There is a need to alter the Bye-Law to allow for cycling on certain routes through specific parks in order for alternative routes to be possible.
- 5.3 Committee is authorising the Director of Transportation to consider and reject objections or representations if he thinks appropriate prior to the implementation of schemes following the statutory consultation process. This will mean that further reports need not be bought before this committee prior to the implementation of schemes.

6.0 Diversity Implications

- 6.1 All public consultation material distributed will include the offer of translation into the most common languages used in the Borough. Text will be in an appropriate size and plain English will be used.

7.0 Staffing Implications

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

8.0 Environmental Implications

Brent is aiming to create an integrated sustainable transport system and cycling forms a significant part of this. Brent is promoting cycling because of its many benefits to the environment and to foster an environment that will encourage increased levels of cycling in the Borough. Two thirds of journeys that people make within Brent are 5 kilometres or less, this means that there is great scope for switching some of these journeys from car to bike.

Background Papers

Brent Council's Proposals on Policy on Cycling along the A5 Corridor.
Brent Council's Proposals on Policy on Cycling in Parks.

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Plan A

LCN+
Route 5

Option 2

Borough
Boundary

Option 1

Western Alternative

