
Meeting	Chipping Barnet Area Environment Committee
Date	16 th October 2012
Subject	Russell Lane – Pedestrian and Traffic Improvement Scheme
Report of	Interim Director for Environment Planning and Regeneration
Summary	The report outlines the proposals and feedback received from the information letter sent out for the pedestrian accessibility and safety scheme proposed in Russell Lane, N20

Officer Contributors	Gurdeep Ahdhi, Engineer and Antoine Aubert, Senior Engineer
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards Affected	Brunswick Park Ward, Oakleigh Ward
Key Decision	Not Applicable
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in	Not Applicable
Function of	Executive
Enclosures	Resident Letter and Drawing 60662_C_001 REV D
Contact for Further Information:	Gurdeep Ahdhi 0208 359 7260

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Sub-Committee note the scheme's details, background and rationale presented in this report.
- 1.2 That the Sub-Committee note the feedback received from the information documents sent out to local residents on 25 June 2012 regarding this scheme.
- 1.3 That the Sub-Committee decides whether or not the scheme should proceed either in its current or amended form to formal consultation.
- 1.4 That should the scheme be agreed, any objections received as a result of the formal consultation be considered by the Interim Director of Environment, Planning and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment before deciding on whether to introduce the scheme or not.

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 N/A

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Introducing traffic management measures in the borough will contribute to the Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Plan priority "A Successful London Suburb" by enhancing Barnet's reputation as a good place to work and live.
- 3.1 The London Mayor's Transport Strategy also addresses these areas through: "Proposal 30: The Mayor, through TfL, and working with the London boroughs and other stakeholders, will introduce measures to smooth traffic flow to manage congestion (delay, reliability and network resilience) for all people and freight movements on the road network, and maximise the efficiency of the network. These measures will include ...c) "... keep traffic moving ..." , e) Planning and implementing ... improvements to the existing road network, ... to improve traffic flow on the most congested sections of the network, and to improve conditions for all road users

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 The issues involved are not likely to give rise to policy considerations as the proposed measures would provide pedestrian access points without having a major impact on traffic flow.
- 4.2 There would be some minor disruption whilst the work is being completed but this would be minimised through traffic management in discussion with contractor undertaking the work.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 5.1 The introduction of pedestrian access points along Russell Lane between Beresford Avenue and Weirdale Avenue would facilitate movement of

pedestrians across Russell Lane particularly benefiting users with mobility impairments and pedestrians with prams and pushchairs.

6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

6.1 **Finance** The scheme is funded across financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13 from the Local Implementation Plan's Traffic Management and Road Safety allocation. The total estimated cost for the scheme is £41,000 of which £15,000 has been spent in year 2011/12 for design and feasibility work, and £26,000 is projected to be spent in year 2012/13 for consultation and implementation if the scheme goes forward in its current form.

6.2 Any financial implications will be contained within the Environment, Planning and Regeneration budgets.

6.3 **Procurement** The highway works would be procured through the borough's highway term contracts.

6.4 There are no **Staffing, IT or Property** implications arising out of this report.

7. LEGAL ISSUES

7.1 The Traffic Management Act 2004 places an obligation on authorities to ensure the safe and expeditious movement of traffic on their road network.

7.2 The Council as Highway Authority has the necessary legal powers to introduce or amend Traffic Management Orders through the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS (Relevant section from the Constitution, Key/Non-Key Decision)

8.1 Constitution Part 3 – Responsibility for functions - Area Environment sub-Committees discharge functions delegated to them by both the Council and the Executive, including highways use and regulation not the responsibility of the Council, within the boundaries of their areas in accordance with Council policy and within budget. The highways functions which are the responsibility of the Council are limited to: creating, stopping up and diverting footpaths and bridleways; asserting and protecting public rights to use highways; removing things deposited on highways which cause nuisance.

9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

9.1 The proposed scheme on Russell Lane was investigated due to pedestrian accessibility concerns raised by local residents with their Councillors.

Current Issues:

9.2 The central reserve in Russell Lane between Beresford Avenue and Dene Road does not provide adequate crossing opportunities for pedestrians wishing to access the local parade of shops on the northern side of the road. The absence of dropped kerbs along the central reserve means that

pedestrians with reduced mobility are encouraged to use the breaks in the central reserve intended for vehicular traffic. Crossing at these breaks points is made hazardous by the fact that vehicles do not expect to encounter pedestrian while turning but also due to the fact that parked cars along the kerbside limit inter-visibility between pedestrian and vehicles.

- 9.3 Visibility to the right when coming out of Hereford Avenue is limited. The combination of a downhill gradient, high volume of traffic and obstructive parking makes coming out of this road an unpleasant experience.
- 9.4 Finally obstructive parking around the junction of Gallants Farm Road with Russell Lane restricts the turning movement of vehicles causing them to mount and damage the central verge.

Proposals:

- 9.5 To address the above it is proposed to introduce three pedestrian access points across the existing central verge. Waiting restrictions would be introduced on the approach to these access points as well as at the junctions of Gallants Farm Road and Hereford Avenue with Russell Lane to ensure sufficient visibility for traffic and pedestrians.
- 9.6 The reason for providing three pedestrian access points is to cater for pedestrians approaching from the south-western, north-eastern and south eastern side of Russell Lane. These access points would be placed with dropped kerbs, hard standing surface across the central verge and good inter-visibility between pedestrian and vehicles. They would not however be controlled such as Zebra or Pelican crossings and would therefore allow pedestrians to cross with minimal impact on traffic flow.
- 9.7 The measures which are shown on enclosed drawing number 60622_C_001 REV D would provide:
- three safe places to cross the central reserve with suitable visibility to improve accessibility to the parade of shops;
 - improved access to the bus stops located near the Cavalier Pub for both buses and pedestrians;
 - improved turning movement out of Gallants Farm Road; and
 - improved visibility for vehicles turning out of Hereford Avenue.
- 9.8 There would be a loss in available kerbside space as a result of the waiting restrictions, which is indicated on the attached drawing (approximately 11 spaces would be lost); however, there would be no loss of parking outside the parade of shops. Site observations indicated that the spare parking capacity in the area could accommodate the proposed reduction with minimal impact to local residents and businesses.
- 9.9 Two existing small trees (as shown on drawing no. 60662_C_001 REV D) would need to be removed to provide a sufficient visibility at pedestrian access point 1. As agreed with Green Space officers who maintain trees and parks in the borough, these would be replaced with two new trees planted in the vicinity the following winter.
- 9.10 Local ward members and emergency services were consulted in February 2012, and no objections were received.

- 9.11 850 properties including local businesses and private dwelling surrounding the central verge were contacted regarding the proposals by way of a letter sent in June 2012. A notice was also placed on the Council's website in early July to allow those residents outside of the original distribution zone to post comments regarding the proposals.
- 9.12 118 comments were received as a result of this information gathering exercise. For clarity the comments have been split into two tables. Table 1 shows the level of support for the proposed accesses while table 2 shows the level of support for the waiting restrictions in Hereford Avenue and Gallants Farm Road.

Table 1: Consultation results - proposed pedestrian access points

No comments (%)	Support (%)	Object (%)
2	17	74

Table 2: Consultation results - proposed waiting restrictions

No comments (%)	Support (%)	Object (%)
9	35	56

- 9.13 The results in Table 1 show that the majority of the respondents objected to the provision of the pedestrian access points. The main reason given for objecting was concerns over the loss of parking which was felt would have a detrimental impact on the shops and on residents' ability to Park along Russell Lane. The second most common reason stated by residents was the loss of amenity which would result from the introduction of the access points on the grassed verge. The third reason stated by those objecting was that the access points were simply not needed. On the other end residents in favour of the measures were mainly elderly who welcomed the increased accessibility that the measures would offer them.
- 9.14 Officers are aware that the East Barnet Resident Association did campaign against the measures and appear to have produced their own information material which was handed to local residents and businesses. While local involvement is always welcomed the material they did produce is not thought to have presented the scheme as a true representation and may have generated some confusion amongst residents regarding the exact nature of the proposals. The numbers of objections received after the association's information material was distributed was noted and increased markedly compared with the previous response rate.
- 9.14 Table 2 summarises the responses regarding the proposed parking restrictions at Gallants Farm Road and Hereford Avenue. Although the majority of the responses object to the proposed parking restrictions there are considerable numbers of residents who support the proposals.
- 9.15 In addition to the above consultation responses a petition dated 19th July 2012 was also received in objection to the proposed scheme with approximately 850 signatures. The statement on the scheme says *"We the undersigned do not believe there is any need for additional pedestrian crossing points in Russell Lane. We oppose the plans to introduce double yellow lines, because they would destroy local businesses"*.

Officers' recommendations:

- 9.16 Officers have assessed the parking requirement against the current provision in the area and are satisfied that although there would be a reduction in available kerbside parking space sufficient provision would remain both in Russell Lane and the surrounding streets to accommodate the local needs. Moreover no spaces would be lost directly outside the parade of shops and the properties outside which parking restriction are proposed do have off street parking facilities.
- 9.17 In answer to the concerns over a loss of amenity following the introduction of the access points, officers would like to clarify that the hard standings over the verge would be blocked paved and not surfaced with tarmac as was feared by some respondents. The two small trees which would be removed to ensure good visibility at one of the accesses would be replaced with similar trees in the immediate vicinity to cancel out any loss of amenity.
- 9.18 With regards to the need for the access points, the initial comments from elected members and the feedback received by some respondents confirms that some pedestrians do find it difficult to negotiate the high kerb when crossing Russell Lane and would welcome the proposed scheme. As the access points would not be controlled ones such as zebra or pelican crossings the provision of three safe places to cross the road at 100 metres intervals would not represent an over provision.

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Consultation documents sent to residents are included.

Cleared by Finance (Officer's initials)	JH
Cleared by Legal (Officer's initials)	SS