



## Chipping Barnet Area Committee 17 July 2017

<b>Title</b>	<b>High Street, Barnet – Pavement Build-outs</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Commissioning Director for Environment
<b>Wards</b>	High Barnet
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	No
<b>Key</b>	No
<b>Enclosures</b>	Appendix A - Drawing Number BC/000888-01 Appendix B - Summary of Consultation Responses
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### Summary

The report details the outcome of the informal public consultation carried out on a proposal to introduce new measures including pavement build-outs in High Street, Barnet to improve the pedestrian environment and enhance the aesthetics of the High Street.

### Recommendations

1. That the Chipping Barnet Area Committee notes the outcome of the informal consultation on the proposal as per Drawing Number BC/000888-01, as set out in this report.
2. That the Chipping Barnet Area Committee notes the decision to review the scheme following further discussion with the Chipping Barnet Town Team and other interested parties.
3. That the Chipping Barnet Area Committee notes that following the scheme review, a revised scheme will be developed with agreement from Chipping Barnet Town Team and The Barnet Society and reported back to a future meeting of the Chipping Barnet Area Committee.

## 1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 A request was made to the Chipping Barnet Area Committee for a feasibility study to be undertaken on building out full or part of the pavements on the western side of the High Street Barnet, to provide a better pedestrian environment and improve the townscape along the High Street. Two options were developed as part of this study and were reported to the Chipping Barnet Area Committee in July 2016, where the decision was made to proceed with detailed design of Option 2.
- 1.2 Following a site meeting on 12 December with the Chipping Barnet Town Team, a variation of Option 2 was developed due to concerns about the extent of the proposed pavement widening. The revisions to the scheme provide the objectives of the Barnet Town Centre Strategy as follows;
- To widen the pedestrian footway on the western side of the High Street from the Post Office to no.119 without any parking spaces or loading bays;
  - Include new loading bays at the High Street ends of Union Street and Salisbury Road to replace/increase the number of loading bays available for High Street businesses;
  - To include as many new street trees as possible along the length of the extended footways together with new, regularly-spaced bins, benches and cycle hoops.
- 1.3 The revised proposal for Option 2 (Appendix A Drawing No BC/000888-01) comprised the following measures:
- i. Removing much of the parking along the western side of the High Street and widening the pedestrian footway to provide a safer and more enjoyable shopping experience
  - ii. Upgrade of existing pedestrian crossings, with the added advantage of a shorter crossing width
  - iii. Introduction of trees to improve both the look of the area and have a beneficial effect on the air quality
  - iv. Introduction of cycle stands to allow for safe cycle parking, and to promote sustainable transport. Benches were also proposed to encourage people to enjoy the ambience of the area.
- 1.4 An informal consultation was carried out on the revised scheme for a period of four weeks from 23 March 2017 and a letter and plan outlining the proposals were distributed to approximately 300 properties and businesses in the local area. The proposals were also published on the consultation page of the Council's website and copies were displayed on the noticeboards at Barnet Library.
- 1.5 There were 122 individual responses to the consultation as well as responses from Barnet Residents Association, Union Street Residents Association, the

Barnet Society and the Chipping Barnet Town Team. In addition, a petition opposing elements of the scheme was received signed by 1,586 traders and residents within the Chipping Barnet area.

- 1.6 Councillor Wendy Prentice responded saying that she could not see why the scheme was being proposed and was concerned that the proposed pavement build-outs may cause congestion in the area. She suggested that the scheme be reconsidered as she does not believe it is a good use of resources.
- 1.7 Theresa Villiers MP responded noting the importance of engaging with the high street traders on this scheme due to the potential concerns about the loss in parking spaces in the High Street and the proposed re-location of loading bays. She added that she believed there may be a case for retaining the loading bays and that it may be worth considering whether they could be dual use so that they could be part of the widened pavements for most of the day but with provision for loading/unloading at certain times.
- 1.8 Union Street Residents Association was particularly concerned about the suggested siting of loading bays in Union Street and Salisbury Road. They note that both Union Street and Salisbury Road are narrow at the High Street end, and are concerned that when large vehicles park at this location, other traffic will have difficulty passing and may mount the pavements, causing damage to the footway and creating a risk to pedestrians.
- 1.9 The response from Chipping Barnet Town Team was concerned that the consultation document did not positively promote the project and that there were negative views locally as a result. The Town Team believes that the scheme will help to tie the two ends of the High Street together and, along with the development of The Spires shopping centre, will help to revive the High Street. However, it did recognise that finding a compromise on the siting of loading bays may help to ease some of the local concerns about the scheme.
- 1.10 Barnet Residents Association supports the proposal to maximise the build outs by removing the parking bays, but also supports a suggestion that it may be beneficial to reduce the extent of the build out to 2.4 metres rather than 2.6 metres, which would allow extra width to the carriageway. The response questioned the proposal for hatching north of the junction with Salisbury Road rather than pavement build out. Doubts were also expressed about putting the loading bays in the side streets, particularly Union Street due to the narrow width of the road at the proposed location, and suggested that leaving the existing loading bay on the High Street would not unduly compromise the scheme.
- 1.11 Of the individual responses received 64 respondents (52.5%) supported the scheme and 58 respondents (47.5%) objected to the scheme as a whole or had comments and concerns relating to particular elements of the scheme.
- 1.12 Comments received from those in favour of the scheme cited that they believe that the proposed measures could enhance the appearance of the High

Street, improve the pedestrian environment and the ambience of the area. Some commented that they believe it could help to regenerate the High Street and attract new businesses.

- 1.13 The majority of the objections received and concerns raised were in relation to the proposed removal of parking bays and the re-siting of loading bays away from the High Street. In respect of the proposal to remove parking spaces on the western side of the High Street, several comments referred to the need for convenient parking opportunity in the immediate vicinity of the High Street to allow quick access to shops and other local facilities such as banks and the Post Office. There was also a concern that removal of these spaces could adversely impact businesses on the High Street, in particular in respect to losing passing trade. Residents who live on or near to the High Street commented that removal of parking spaces would affect their ability to park near to their homes and that it would further reduce the already limited parking in the area.
- 1.14 Many of those who commented on the proposed siting of loading bays on Salisbury Road and Union Street said that they believe these roads are not suitable for such facilities due to the narrow road width and the residential nature of these roads. In addition many respondents felt that locating them away from the High Street would be impractical for businesses due to the distance that goods would need to be transported. There was concern that the footways are not sufficiently wide to accommodate goods trolleys and that such activity could impede pedestrian movements and compromise safety on these side roads. There was also opposition due to concerns about a potential increase in congestion, noise and air pollution and the impact on bus services in Salisbury Road.
- 1.15 A petition was received from the Union Street Residents Association signed by 1,586 High Street traders and residents of the area opposing the proposal to remove parking bays and the loading bay from the Western side of the High Street and opposing to the siting of loading bays in Union Street and Salisbury Road.
- 1.16 Several concerns were raised in relation to the pavement widening itself and the proposed carriageway running widths which it is perceived may potentially have a negative impact on traffic flow and increase congestion in the High Street. The impact on bus movements was mentioned, particularly to buses turning right out of Salisbury Road into the High Street. Some respondents did not see the need to extend the pavements and did not believe that it would improve trade in the area.
- 1.17 Comments were also received in respect to other elements of the scheme. Questions were raised about the effectiveness of the proposed shared use facilities, and whether the measures would be robust enough to withstand the weight of larger vehicles. There was a comment that the proposed number of new trees was excessive and another that they should be positioned so as not to obstruct the view of historic businesses. There was also a view that installing new benches and trees may result in the pavement becoming

cluttered, which could restrict the space for people with buggies or wheelchairs and potentially negate the benefits of widening the pavement. One respondent was opposed to the trees being planted in planters rather than directly into the ground.

- 1.18 In relation to the scheme as a whole there were views that further measures would be needed to improve the High Street's appeal, such as incentives to attract new retailers with lower business rates. Some residents suggested that more parking is needed and that tariffs should be reviewed. There were concerns that the proposals may cause shoppers to forego their local shopping facilities in Barnet in favour of larger out of town facilities where there is ample free parking, such as Borehamwood and London Colney. There were views that the scheme would not have any effect on reducing pollution as it would make no difference to the number of vehicles passing through the High Street and would actually increase the number of larger vehicles such as delivery lorries using Salisbury Road and Union Street.
- 1.19 Additional comments referred to the consultation process itself, with some respondents claiming that they did not receive the consultation documents and only heard about the scheme by word of mouth. Another concern was that there was insufficient detail in the documentation, particularly in relation to the numbers of parking spaces potentially being removed as part of the scheme, and that this may affect the responses received. There was also a view that the measures being proposed were put forward by the Town Team without local agreement, and that residents and businesses should have been consulted on their views earlier in the process.
- 1.20 A more comprehensive summary of the comments received to the informal consultation is attached as Appendix B.

## **2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is proposed to review the scheme in light of the number of objections received and concerns raised in respect to particular elements of the scheme.

## **3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED**

- 3.1 Additional options were originally presented to the July 2016 Chipping Barnet Area Committee but not recommended for progression.

## **4 POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1 The scheme will be reviewed following further discussion with Chipping Barnet Town Team, Barnet Residents Association and other interested parties and reported back to a future meeting of the Chipping Barnet Area Committee.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 The proposals here will particularly help to address the Corporate Plan delivery objectives of “a clean and attractive environment, with well-maintained roads and pavements, flowing traffic” and “a responsible approach to regeneration, with thousands of new homes built” by helping residents and particularly school children to feel confident moving around their local area on foot, and contribute to reduced congestion.

- 5.1.2 The proposals also help create an environment that encourages an active lifestyle by promoting walking and other sustainable modes of travel so helping to deliver active travel opportunities as identified in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for children and the population generally.

### **5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

- 5.2.1 The cost of progressing the selected option to detailed design would be £12,000. There is £100,000 available through 2017/18 Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funding for improvements to the High Street, Barnet which was agreed at Environment Committee on 15 March 2017 which would be sufficient to cover these costs. Additional funding will be required to complete implementation for which a separate approval will be required.

### **5.3 Social Value**

- 5.3.1 As procurement is via existing term or framework arrangements there are no relevant social value considerations in relation to this work.

### **5.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

- 5.4.1 The Highways Act 1980 provides general and specific powers for the highway authority to make changes or improvements to the highway.

- 5.4.2 The Council has the necessary legal powers to introduce traffic orders to put the proposal into effect under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1994.

- 5.4.3 The Traffic Management Act 2004 places obligations on authorities to ensure the expeditious movement of traffic on their road network. Authorities are required to make arrangements as they consider appropriate for planning and carrying out the action to be taken in performing the duty.

5.4.4 The Constitution section 15 Responsibility for Functions (Annex B – Scheme of Delegated Authority to Officers provides that Chief Officers can take decisions to discharge the functions allocated to them or dealt with by them or their staff, except for matters specifically reserved to, Committees or Council.

## **5.5 Risk Management**

5.5.1 None in relation to this report.

## **5.6 Equalities and Diversity**

5.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- Foster good relations between people from different groups.

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day to day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.

Introduction of the measures outlined in the report would benefit pedestrians and non-motorised traffic generally, but in particular children travelling to and from school and those escorting them.

## **5.7 Consultation and Engagement**

5.7.1 An informal consultation has been undertaken as set out in section 1.4 and this report details the objections and comments received.

## **5.8 Insight**

5.8.1 The proposals have been informed by site, traffic and pedestrian surveys in the area.

## **6 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1.1 Report to the Chipping Barnet Area Committee on 6 July 2016.  
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=711&MId=8648&Ver=4>

6.1.2 Report to the March 2017 Environment Committee to approved the LIP funding for 2017/18.  
<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/g8593/Printed%20minutes%2015th-Mar-2017%2018.30%20Environment%20Committee.pdf?T=1>