



**Report of: Executive Member for Environment and Transport**

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Ward(s):</b>
Executive	17/10/19	Highbury West and Highbury East

<b>Delete as appropriate:</b>		Non-exempt
-------------------------------	--	------------

## **SUBJECT: Approval of the Finsbury Park to Highbury Fields Cycleway**

### **1. Synopsis**

1.1 In October 2018, Executive approved the Local Implementation Plan delivery programme (2019-2022) for TfL funding, which also included the Cycle Grid and Quietway programme.

Within the latter was the then-named Quietway 10 (Farringdon to Palmers Green) and of which the Finsbury Park to Highbury Fields Cycleway forms part.

1.2 The proposals for the Finsbury Park to Highbury Fields Cycleway went to public consultation for four weeks, commencing on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019. This report presents the results of the consultation and recommends final approval for the scheme.

### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 To note the results of the consultation as outlined below and in Appendix D.

2.2 To approve the Finsbury Park to Highbury Fields Cycleway (as at Appendix B) incorporating the following amendments:

1. Stepped cycle tracks along Drayton Park
2. Arvon Road School Street permit area to be extended to incorporate the resident permit holders impacted by the proposed right turn ban from Horsell Road to Drayton Park.

- 2.3 To authorise the Corporate Director of Environment and Regeneration in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and Transport to make any further minor amendments to the scheme as are considered necessary in the light of further traffic surveys and any issues emerging during detailed design.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Council wants to create a healthy, fair, accessible and enjoyable transport environment in the borough. The Council wants to achieve this by making active travel (such as walking, cycling and using public transport) an easier, safer and enjoyable option for Islington residents' to get around, reducing car use and improving the local environment for everybody. This supports the Council's transport vision, central aim, objectives, policies for the next two decades as outlined in the draft Islington Transport Strategy, which is currently subject to consultation before being finalised and formally adopted.
- 3.2 To achieve these aims, initial proposals for a Cycleway (formerly referred to as QW10) between Farringdon and Finsbury Park were agreed as part of the Quietway Delivery Programme in 2016. Since then preliminary designs have been developed based on the agreed Quietway Definition Plan.
- 3.3 This proposed new Cycleway was identified as a key area for existing and potential cycling in Islington. The route could facilitate wider improvements as part of the Healthy Streets approach and provide future connections to areas undergoing significant development and regeneration. This proposed new Cycleway provides an opportunity to improve the road network by encouraging walking and cycling, increasing connectivity to key attractions, new developments, transport hubs and the wider London wide cycling network.
- 3.4 A final preliminary design for the proposed Finsbury Park to Highbury Fields section of the Cycleway was developed by the Council in collaboration with TfL. The southern section of the Cycleway connecting the route to Farringdon will be consulted on separately. The alignment of the agreed cycle route between Finsbury Park to Highbury Fields is indicated in Appendix A. Detailed proposal plans can be seen in Appendix B. The proposals include the following measures:
- Fully separated cycle facilities on Drayton Park between Benwell Road and Martineau Road in both directions.
  - Fully separated cycle facilities for northbound cyclists between Martineau Road and Aubert Park.
  - Upgrade of the existing Benwell Road/Drayton Park junction to a continental style roundabout that will include protected cycle facilities through the junction, new zebra crossings on all arms of the junction and raised tables to reduce vehicle speeds.
  - Upgrade of Avenell Road/Blackstock Road/Somerfield Road junction to a new signalised junction which will include new pedestrian crossings on all arms, early-release signals for cyclists and cycle boxes on each approach to the junction.
  - General road marking and signage wayfinding works along route.

- 3.5 A meeting was held with Cycle Islington and Living Streets in April 2019 to discuss the developed proposals. Further meetings were also held with Councillors in the Highbury East and Highbury West wards to discuss the proposals. A meeting was also held with local MP, Jeremy Corbyn.
- 3.6 It should be noted that TfL are also currently consulting on proposals for the junction of Holloway Road with Drayton Park (consultation closes on the 8th September 2019) as part of their Safer Junction programme. The proposal involves the introduction of new signalised pedestrian crossings on all arms of the junction.
- 3.7 The 4-week public consultation on the Cycleway started on the 10th June 2019 and involved door-to-door delivery of just under 13,000 consultation documents throughout the affected areas. Three drop-in sessions were arranged at various venues along the proposed route during this period to support the consultation. A copy of the consultation brochure can be seen in Appendix C. As part of the consultation, stakeholders (e.g. emergency services, transport groups, etc.) and seldom heard groups (faith groups, community organisations, etc.) were contacted individually to discuss the proposals. The consultation was further publicised through press releases, social media and the Council website.
- 3.8 For the purposes of consultation, two design options for protecting cyclists along Drayton Park were presented in order to gauge public opinion. The two options for consideration were the following:
- Kerb protected cycle tracks: The cycle track would be at the same level as the carriageway with a kerb installed to separate vehicles and cyclists. This option provides a higher degree of separation for cyclists from traffic.
  - Stepped cycle tracks: The cycleway would be installed halfway between the carriageway and footway level. This option offers less protection than kerb protected tracks but wider tracks and poses less of an obstacle for loading activities and particularly pedestrians crossing movements.
- 3.9 During the consultation period the Council received a total of 803 responses to the consultation. The large majority of the respondents were in support of the proposed Cycleway improvements (83% in favour to 17% against). Even amongst non-cyclists, 58% were in favour. The table below provides a more detailed summary of the overall consultation results.

Table 1 : Finsbury Park to Highbury Fields Consultation Results		
Respondents :		
In favour	667	83%
Against	136	17%
Total Number of Responses	803	
Regular Cyclist	399	50%
Occasional Cyclist	216	27%
Non Cyclist	109	13%
Did Not Indicate	79	10%

- 3.10 A summary of the comments received during the consultation is given in Appendix D.

Responses to the most frequently received comments are provided below:

### 3.10.1 **Protected cycle tracks throughout scheme:**

During the development of the preliminary design the Council considered protecting cyclists along the whole length of the Cycleway route. However, a number of constraints limit the feasibility of accommodating protected cycle tracks along the entire route, which include the following

- The narrow road widths along parts of the route as well as the presence of street trees and parking.
- The accessibility impacts of protected tracks for residents, business and particularly pedestrians.

Where possible, the Council aims to design cycle routes which separate cyclists from general traffic where there are in excess of 500 motor vehicles per hour at peak times, and preferably where there are more than 200 vehicles per hour. This also follows the recommended TfL's Cycle Route Quality Criteria, which sets cycling design standards for cycling routes. As a result, protected tracks have been provided along those sections of the route where it is feasible and where the mixing of cyclists with general traffic cannot be safely achieved due to high traffic flows.

In areas where it is not feasible to introduce protected cycle tracks, the design allowed for other interventions to reduce motor traffic. These include the introduction of the Gillespie Road point no-entry trial in February 2019 and the 3.5T Lorry Ban trial on Drayton Park in March 2019. The level of traffic along Drayton Park north of Aubert Park has significantly fallen since the introduction of both trials. The most recent traffic surveys conducted in June on Drayton Park north of Aubert Park recorded a two-way motor traffic flow of 326 vehicles per hour in the PM peak (18.00-19.00) and 199 vph in the AM peak (08.00-09.00), which meets the minimum standards desired for mixing cyclists with general traffic.

Cycle Islington have also raised concerns regarding the absence of a southbound protected track along Drayton Park between Martineau Road and Aubert Park on the grounds that traffic flow is too high for cyclists to comfortably mix with traffic along this section. The most recent traffic surveys conducted in June on Drayton Park south of Aubert Park recorded a two-way motor traffic flow above the desired 500 vph threshold for the mixing of cyclists with general traffic. However, there is insufficient carriageway width to accommodate a protected cycle track in both directions along this section and hence only a northbound cycle track has been proposed. Providing a southbound cycle track would also involve the removal of some street trees and all parking bays within this section.

However, at this stage it is considered too early to verify the long-term impacts of the recent introduction of the Gillespie Road Point No-Entry and 3.5T Lorry Ban trials, as more time is required for traffic patterns to settle down. Further traffic surveys will be conducted over the coming months to monitor progress and if required mitigation measures will be considered.

### **3.10.2 Potential increase in congestion/pollution & risk of displacing traffic to other residential roads:**

Other measures proposed as part of the Cycleway are expected to have no adverse impact on congestion or displace traffic. The provision of the Cycleway will encourage active travel choices which, in addition to the greening measures being developed, will make a long term difference to improving local air quality.

Some concerns were raised regarding the proposed conversion of the Benwell Road / Drayton Park junction to a roundabout exacerbating existing delays caused by the nearby signalised junction on Holloway Road (subject to a separate consultation being conducted by TfL). A short offside lane will be removed on the eastern arm of the Benwell Road / Drayton Park junction. However, this would have negligible impact on junction capacity as the offside lane can only accommodate two vehicles at the most and also can only be effectively used by right turners into Benwell Road, due to the single lane exit on the western arm of the junction. The proposals for both the Benwell Road roundabout and the Blackstock Road/Ambler Road signalised junction have been reviewed using traffic modelling software in order to understand the network impacts in Islington. The review confirmed that journey times for general traffic will not be significantly affected by these improvements, with the relevant junctions predicted to operate within capacity. However, any approved cycle route would be monitored post implementation. If displaced traffic are adversely impacting a certain area, then mitigation measures will be considered to improve the operation of the scheme.

### **3.10.3 Would like to see more cycling infrastructure in the surrounding area:**

The Council is committed to enabling more cycling infrastructure in surrounding areas and improving existing cycling routes. The Council's own draft Transport Strategy sets the strategic commitment for this and the resultant cycling action plan will help determine future cycling routes. This route would link to other Cycleways in the London cycling network, including a complementary route to the recent improvements at Highbury Corner.

The Council is committed to undertaking feasibility studies in the neighbouring and surrounding area to determine the potential for additional cycle routes and infrastructure.

Potential further improvements, subject to funding, will be investigated to complement the scheme, including mitigation measures recommended as part of the Gillespie Road point no-entry trial. The consultation for the southern section of the Cycleway through Islington is scheduled for November 2019. There are many other Cycle routes in the borough at the feasibility stage currently being developed by the Council.

### **3.10.4 Other traffic calming/filtering measures needed:**

There is no evidence of excessive speeding in the area recorded in the traffic surveys conducted to date, with average and 85th percentile speeds in line with the 20mph speed limit.

During the drop-in consultation sessions, a number of concerns regarding 'rat-running' along Horsell Road to Holloway Road in order to avoid Highbury Corner were raised.

This issue has also been raised by Cycle Islington, particularly in regards to the conflict between motor vehicles and cyclists at the junction of Horsell Road and Fieldway Crescent. Traffic surveys will be conducted shortly after the summer holidays, to further investigate the issues raised and to ascertain if amendments to the Cycleway design is required as part of detailed design, or if further interventions are required. The impact of the Gillespie Road point no-entry trial continues to be monitored. If displaced traffic/parking or increased speeds are adversely impacting a certain area, then mitigation measures will be considered to improve the operation of the trial.

### **3.10.5 Proposals will make conditions worse/less safe for vehicles and pedestrians:**

The measures proposed as part of the Cycleway will make significant contributions to improving road safety for all road users. Examples are listed below:

- Cyclists will be segregated from motor vehicles along sections of the route with high traffic flows, reducing conflicts.
- The junction improvements at Benwell Road/Drayton Park provides new raised zebra crossings, reduced crossing distances and approach speeds, which will significantly improve road safety.
- Signalising the junction of Ambler Road/Blackstock Road with signal controlled pedestrian crossings will separate conflicting movement at the junction.
- The conversion of the Aubert Park/Drayton Park mini-roundabout to a raised priority give-way junction will make to junction easier and safer to cross.
- Raised table at the Gillespie Road/Avenell Road junction will reduce approach speeds and provide a level surface for pedestrians to cross.
- Existing zebra crossings at the junctions of Drayton Park with both Martineau Road and Arvon Road will be raised to footway level reducing approach speeds and providing a level surface for pedestrians to cross.
- The Gillespie Road point no-entry trial reduces traffic flows along Gillespie Road and Drayton Park (between Gillespie Road and Aubert Park) improving safety for vulnerable road users and providing more gaps in traffic for pedestrians to cross the road safely.
- Narrower roads widths along Drayton Park adjacent to the proposed protected cycle tracks will encourage lower motor vehicle speeds.

Cycle Islington raised concerns regarding eastbound cyclists crossing Benwell Road on the grounds that cyclists would not be able to make eye contact with approaching drivers due to the alignment of the proposed parallel crossing. Several alternative alignments for the crossings were considered. However, the proposed arrangement was considered by the Council to achieve the best balance between providing highway capacity (between crossings and Benwell Road roundabout) whilst also being located as close to possible to pedestrian and cyclist desire lines. Best practice examples were considered to inform the design. However, further minor amendments will be considered during detailed design to resolve the issues raised.

### **3.10.6 More should be done to accommodate pedestrians:**

The existing proposals already involve significant improvements for pedestrians throughout the route e.g. new controlled crossing facilities, signalised junction, raised tables and footway widening. The provision of stepped cycle tracks will also address

some of the pedestrian accessibility issues posed by kerb protected tracks. The feasibility of introducing further crossing improvements along Drayton Park particularly around Drayton Park Railway Station will also be considered further as part of detailed design and subject to funding. The Council is committed to undertaking further reviews in line with the Healthy Streets principle and as part of those reviews will examine what more can be done to improve conditions for pedestrians.

### 3.10.7 **Too much parking retention:**

To ensure that Gillespie Rd, west of St. Thomas's Road, can remain two-way to traffic, 15 parking bays were suspended along the south side of Gillespie Road trial. This is to minimise conflict between vehicles travelling in both directions, removing the congestion and conflicts created by the existing parking arrangements. However, this does increase parking pressure in the surrounding area and limits the viability of parking removal elsewhere in the area. Any further parking bay removals over and above that already proposed would involve separate consultation, which could potentially result in delays to implementation particularly if objections are received.

- 3.11 A slight preference for stepped tacks was indicated in the consultation responses. This also corresponds with feedback provided during the three drop-in sessions. This, allied with the respective access benefits of stepped tracks provides sufficient justification for recommending that this option is taken forward to detailed design. However, the funding of the additional construction cost (estimated to be £46K) of this design change will require approval from TfL.

### 3.12 **Arvon Road School Street permit area**

Though not registered significantly in the consultation results, a number of residents approached Council Officers during the drop-in sessions with concerns regarding the proposed right turn ban from Horsell Road to Drayton Park, except for cyclists. The right turn ban was proposed in order to facilitate the safe crossing of cyclists turning right onto Drayton Park in two stages to access the protected cycle track along this busy road. The impact on residents was considered minimal as drivers can use Arvon Road, which is immediately adjacent to turn right into Drayton Park. However, the recently implemented School Street Zone for Drayton Park Primary School would prevent access during the scheme operating period. As there are no viable alternatives to residents driving during the School Street operating period, it is recommended that the virtual permit area is extended to incorporate the affected residents. Due to the limited number of resident permit holders impacted, the traffic generated through Arvon Road by this change is not considered to be significant.

- 3.13 The proposed extension to the Arvon Road School Street permit area incorporates Horsell Road (between Drayton Park to Ronalds Road), Witherington Road and Ronalds Road
- 3.14 Further investigations into potential crossing improvement along Drayton Park and rat running issues reported along Horsell Road will be conducted and the findings will be used to develop the detailed design. Also the feasibility of introducing 'greening' and urban realm improvements will be considered during the detailed design stage, subject to funding agreement with TfL and/or additional local Islington funding being identified. The added greenery would further enhance the improvements in the Healthy Street Indicator scores. The initial Healthy Street assessment results for the preliminary design is available in

Appendix E. The results of these investigations will be reported to the Executive Member for Environment and Transport.

- 3.15 A letter from Jeremy Corbyn MP (Islington North) in support of the proposed Cycleway consultation and welcoming the work done so far was sent to Cllr Claudia Webbe following the consultation period.
- 3.16 A separate meeting with traders regarding the impacts of the Cycleway scheme on their trading pitches was held following the consultation period. As a result, minor amendments to designated trading bays will also be incorporated into the detailed design.

## **4. Implications**

### **4.1 Financial implications:**

The cost of developing and implementing the entire Cycleway scheme between Finsbury Park to Farringdon is to be from £1.7m budget allocated to Islington Council from TfL's Quietway programme.

Implementation and detailed design of the northern section of the Cycleway is currently estimated to cost £779k. However, this is based upon the design of a carriageway level kerb segregated cycle track along Drayton Park. The increase in construction costs associated with introducing a stepped cycle track is estimated to be approximately £46k, raising the cost to £825k.

TfL's original £1.7m funding does not include greening/urban realm improvements or application of stepped tracks. The approval of Change Request for the implementation of these and any other further measures will be required to release the necessary additional funding. This is because these measures were outside the scope the original Quietway Definition Plan upon which funding was initially agreed.

### **4.2 Legal Implications:**

Section 65 of the Highways Act 1980 enables the council to construct a cycle track in or beside a highway for which it is the highway authority.

In deciding whether to proceed with the detailed designs for the Finsbury Park to Highbury Fields Cycleway, the Executive should have due and proper regard to the justification set out in the report, the responses received as a result of the public consultation and the council's duty under section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway. This duty is not an absolute one as it is qualified by a requirement for the council so far as practicable to have regard to:

- (1) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;
- (2) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected;
- (3) national air quality survey;
- (4) the importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles, and
- (5) any other matters appearing to the Council to be relevant.

Before making the Traffic Management Orders in respect of mandatory cycle lanes the council will need to comply with the relevant requirements of Schedule 9 to the 1984 Act



and the Local Authorities Traffic Order Procedure (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 by giving the appropriate notices and receiving and taking into account any representations.

#### 4.3 **Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030:**

An environmental impact assessment will be completed following agreement of the detailed design between TfL and the Council. However, the works to install the new infrastructure will involve the use of natural resources and generate waste that will need to be appropriately disposed of. It will also require the use of plant and machinery that use fossil fuels, as well as journeys to site by the contractors.

The Council will engage with contractors in developing a construction logistics plan for the implementation of the Cycleway, that will assist in optimising efficient use of plant and minimising material delivery trips to site. Early engagement with contractors will also contribute in identifying the use of zero emission plant/vehicles and also materials for reuse, reducing the amount of material disposal at landfill sites.

In terms of impact on traffic, modelling of the proposals for both the Benwell Road roundabout and the Blackstock Road/Ambler Road junction indicate that journey times for general traffic will not be significantly affected by the proposed improvements, with the relevant junctions predicted to operate well within capacity.

In the long-term, the provision of the cycleway will encourage active travel choices, which added to the greening measures being developed, will reduce carbon emissions from road traffic and improve local air quality.

#### 4.4 **Resident Impact Assessment:**

The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The Council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The Council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

A Resident Impact Assessment (RIA) has been completed for the proposed Cycleway and a copy is at Appendix F. The project enhances the opportunity for residents with a wider range of cycling abilities to enjoy the benefits of cycling and enhances the walking environment for all users. The proposed improvements to safety and accessibility at crossing points will positively benefit all road users but especially pedestrians and more vulnerable road users.

A further TfL Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) was also conducted, which is required to meet TfL's stage gate process to approve schemes to proceed to the next stage of design, and this is available on request.

## 5. **Reason for recommendations**

- 5.1 These recommendations are made in order to meet the Councils Corporate Plan aims and in light of the highly positive support for the proposed Cycleway indicated during the consultation to proceed with the implementation of the proposals.
- 5.2 Stepped Cycle tracks are proposed to reflect the preference indicated during consultation and to overcome the accessibility issues, particularly to pedestrians crossing movements posed by kerb protected tracks.
- 5.3 The extension of the Arvon Road School Street Virtual Permit area to minimise local access issues caused to residents by the proposed right turn ban from Horsell Road into Drayton Park is also proposed.

**Appendices:**

- Appendix A - Map of Cycleway Route Alignment
- Appendix B - Proposed Design Plans
- Appendix C - Public Consultation Materials
- Appendix D - Consultation Results - Comments
- Appendix E - Healthy Street Indicators
- Appendix F - Resident Impact Assessment

**Background papers:** none

Final report clearance:

**Signed by:**



9.10.19

Claudia Webbe, Executive Member for Environment and Transport

Date

Report Author:

Tel:

Email:



Financial Implications Author:

Tel:

Email:



Legal Implications Author:

Tel:

Email:

