

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Cabinet **DATE:** 23rd June 2014

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PORTFOLIO: Councillor Sohail Munawar, Commissioner for Social and Economic Inclusion

PART I **KEY DECISION**

RESULTS OF THE HARROW MARKET EXPERIMENTAL SCHEME CONSULTATION AND CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE OPTIONS

1 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to outline the results of the recent public consultation on the experimental changes to the road layout in Langley that were completed in January 2014 and for Cabinet to approve the final layout of this junction.

2 Recommendations/Proposed Action

The Cabinet is requested to resolve that:

- (a) The general principles of the proposed layout of the Harrow Market shown in Figure 5.1 are approved.
- (b) Council officers proceed with detailed design and are allowed a degree of flexibility in the design of the final scheme based upon the results of the following:
 - Road Safety Audits of the proposed scheme.
 - A survey of current services in the ground e.g. gas, water, electricity, on the understanding that widening of the carriageway to the south of the junction may be prohibitively expensive.
 - A statutory consultation including emergency services, the freight haulage association etc. will be carried out if traffic regulation orders or traffic calming is proposed.
- (c) Council officers report to the Councillors of the affected wards any significant changes to the design proposed in Figure 5.1.
- (d) That, subject to a satisfactory detailed design, construction of the final layout goes ahead within the current financial year 2014/15.

3 The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan

3a Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities

- Health

Aims relating to this report:

- Increase residents' level of physical activity and encourage healthier eating.
- Improve emotional and physical health of children from 0 to 19 years.

Providing better pedestrian crossing points around the Harrow Market junction will improve pedestrian links to all the surrounding amenities such as the shops, the park, the school and the college. By improving these pedestrian facilities, this will encourage more people, including children, to walk and cycle in this area, thereby increasing their emotional and physical levels of activity and health.

- Economy and skills

Aims relating to this report:

- Increase prosperity of the community and town.
- Improve transport and communications infrastructure.

By reducing congestion and improving transport infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists in the Harrow Market area, this will increase the attractiveness of the area for potential businesses and customers, aiding the increase of prosperity for the community and town. The redesigned layout of the Harrow Market car park will simplify access and improve flow within the car park. Adding more spaces and reducing the queue to get in and out will further benefit the local businesses and shoppers in the area.

- Housing

Aims relating to this report:

None.

- Regeneration and Environment

Aims relating to this report:

- Maintain and improve access to recreational and leisure facilities, including parks and open spaces, using these in such a way as to ensure local people gain most benefit.
- Improve public transport, cycling and walking facilities to increase use of sustainable forms of transport.
- Reduce energy consumption, water usage and the amount of carbon emissions generated.

Improvements to the pedestrian and cycle movements around the Harrow Market junction will make it easier and safer to access the park and will increase use of sustainable forms of transport in Langley. Reduction of congestion through the junction where possible will reduce the carbon emissions at peak times.

A number of accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists were recorded in 3 years prior to the start of the experimental scheme, including on designated crossing points and near to local educational establishments. By working to address these issues, the safety and wellbeing of residents can be supported while the environmental quality of the area can be improved, both aesthetically and in terms of pollution.

- Safer Communities

Aims relating to this report:

- A place where people feel safe to live, visit, work and play.
- Safeguard and support vulnerable adults and children in our communities.
- Promote cohesive open communities that value diversity, encourage a sense of belonging and engender a sense of local pride.

Road safety is the key theme of this report. By making people feel safer when accessing and using the Harrow Market junction, this will help to support the vulnerable user groups such as children and elderly adults while promoting a cohesive open community in Langley that is not restricted by a difficult and dangerous road layout.

Cross-Cutting themes:

In terms of **civic responsibility**, residents have an important role to play in the delivery of the Harrow Market safety improvement scheme. For example, it is the responsibility of the parents of children attending Langley Hall Primary Academy to park responsibly and to cross the road at an appropriate point such as, as the signal controlled crossing points or with the School Crossing Patroller. This teaches the children about the important values of road safety, and the benefits of walking to school.

Drivers using the junction, both local residents and commuters, can take responsibility by adhering to the posted speed limit of 20mph and taking extra care of cyclists and at pedestrian crossing points. Safe driving practices also reduce CO² emissions with a steady slow driving speed as opposed to aggressive accelerating and braking.

This scheme can also assist in **improving the image of the town** by making access to the town smoother and by reducing congestion where possible during peak hours. Improvements to overall road safety make the town a more attractive place to live and work.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

Chapter 2 of the JSNA is about Social and Place Wellbeing with a focus on deprivation and it's effect on a community. Nationally, the evidence is clear that children in deprived areas have an elevated risk of injury and death from road traffic collisions compared with children living in more affluent areas. This may be due to low education and literacy levels, being less aware of risk and parents/ carers not being able to access information and services to reduce risk.

Under the same section, environmental issues are highlighted. The scheme outlined in this report seeks to improve the general environment around the Harrow Market and, in turn, improve air quality by reducing congestion and it's associated CO² emissions.

Section 4.3 in the JSNA is concerned with Children and Young People. This report relates to the issue of improving road safety, particularly with reducing the numbers of children and young people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions in Slough.

4 Other Implications

(a) Financial

The costs of delivering this scheme will be met from the Greener Travel and Casualty Reduction Capital funds.

The redesign of the Harrow Market car park layout will be met from the Parking budget.

Additional funding may be sourced from section 106 agreements if necessary.

Whilst the main cost of collisions is the impact of injury to individuals and communities they also have a detrimental impact on the economy, with a quantifiable economic cost. The Department for Transport (DfT) puts an average value on the cost to society resulting from a road traffic collision at £90,117 on urban roads. This is based on lost output caused by time off work, medical and personnel costs, police costs, insurance and property damage and also includes an allowance for 'damage only' collisions which aren't reported to the police.

With the 17 collisions that occurred on the roads in the immediate vicinity of the Harrow Market prior to the scheme's inception, that puts the total estimated cost to society of those collisions at £1,531,989. Averaged over the three years, this puts the annual cost of collisions at the Harrow Market in the region of £500k.

Improvements to the road safety of the Harrow Market junction will be measured in quarterly and annual collision figures. Additionally, a First Year Rate of Return (FYRR) analysis for the scheme may be used, based on annual accident savings (in a treated area) x 100 and then divided by the scheme costs for that area. This gives a quantifiable method of determining the financial saving to society of the implementation of the Harrow Market scheme. The cost of delivering the Harrow Market scheme is unlikely to be anywhere near £500k, thus potentially offering a good initial FYRR.

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal	Legal implications have been considered below in section (c).	Consideration of all legal angles in the delivery of a road traffic scheme.
Property	None	
Human Rights	None	
Health and Safety	Wide publication of works and adherence to all relevant H&S when on site.	Additional information and awareness of the scheme and it's purpose.
Employment Issues	None	
Equalities Issues	An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken and can be viewed in section (d) below.	Improvements for vulnerable road user groups would reduce current inequality in this area.
Community Support	A wide scale public consultation has been	Further involvement from interest groups would be

	undertaken along with regular consultation with specific interest groups and Ward Members.	sought during detailed design phase, thus improving community relations.
Communications	None.	
Community Safety	None.	
Financial	Any possible overspend on existing budgets for this scheme will be met from section 106 agreements.	Overall, savings to society can be made from a reduction in road traffic collisions in this area.
Timetable for delivery	Regular monitoring of project deadlines and delivery together with a robust delivery plan from the main contractor.	Delivery of a scheme on time and within budget to improve the public perception of the benefits of the scheme.
Project Capacity	Budget constraints will limit the capacity for this scheme to increase to any significant degree.	Delivery of a scheme on time and within budget to improve the public perception of the benefits of the scheme.
Other	None.	

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act implications.

Other legal implications are as follows:

Section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 states that a local authority “must prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety”, “must carry out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles” and “must, in the light of those studies, take such measures as appear to the authority to be appropriate to prevent such accidents”.

The Harrow Market area and the roads leading to the junction was identified in the Road Safety team’s annual cluster analysis as having a high number of collisions involving vulnerable road users e.g. pedestrians and cyclists. In light of this study and subsequent identification of an issue, the authority carried out a number of experimental measures to assess which was the most suitable to promote road safety in this area.

Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 states that “the traffic authority for a road outside Greater London may make an order under this section in respect of the road where it appears to the authority making the order that it is expedient to make it:

- for avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising
- for facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians)

- for preventing the use of the road by vehicular traffic of a kind which, or its use by vehicular traffic in a manner which, is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road or adjoining property
- for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs

The creation of the 20mph Zone (a Speed Limit Order [SLO]) and Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO), and in the case of Harrow Market, Experimental TROs, was designed to assist in avoiding danger to persons in the area by reducing the overall vehicle speed and improving opportunities for pedestrians to cross the road in slower moving vehicular traffic. These orders also facilitated passage on the road and adjacent footways for pedestrians and cyclists and prevented vehicular traffic from using in a manner which was unsuitable i.e. exceeding the speed limit.

The aim of the permanent scheme layout is to preserve the amenities of the area by improving traffic flow, the car park layout and the pedestrian and cyclist facilities.

Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 states as follows:

Exercise of functions by local authorities.

(1) It shall be the duty of every local authority upon whom functions are conferred by or under this Act, so to exercise the functions conferred on them by this Act as (so far as practicable having regard to the matters specified in subsection (2) below) to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway.

(2) The matters referred to in subsection (1) above as being specified in this subsection are - .

- (a) The desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises; .
- (b) The effect on the amenities of any locality affected and (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles, so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the roads run; .
- (bb) The strategy prepared under section 80 of the Environment Act 1995 (national air quality strategy); and
- (c) The importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles;

The key phrase in this Act is that it is the duty of the authority to *secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway*. This scheme at the Harrow Market seeks to secure the above by reducing congestion and improving facilities for all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists. Improvements to the Harrow Market car park layout aim to fulfil the requirement to provide suitable and adequate parking facilities at this junction.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

Please see Appendix A.

5 Supporting Information

5.1 The proposal for the Harrow Market Roundabout

The road safety team carried out an experimental scheme at the Harrow Market roundabout in 2013. The three phases of the experiment were as follows:

- Phase 1 - 8th April to 27th June 2013 (approx. 3 months) 20mph Zone with entry to the roundabout restricted to one lane on all approaches.
- Phase 2 - 28th June to 28th September 2013 (3 months) 20mph Zone with entry to the roundabout returned to two lanes on Langley Road and High Street Langley approaches only. Enhancements to the crossing facilities on Station Road.
- Phase 3 - 29th September to 31st December 2013 (approx. 3 months) 20mph Zone with all entries to the roundabout returned to two lanes. Temporary traffic calming (speed cushions) installed on all three approaches following consultation and agreement with Ward Members and the Commissioner.

During the experiment, speed and journey time data was collected along with accident data. The result of this data collection showed that Phase 3 was the most effective at reducing speed through the Harrow Market junction and that journey times for each phase were roughly similar.

Accident data during the scheme showed a general reduction in accidents in the Harrow Market area and a particularly significant reduction in pedestrian accidents from 8 in the previous period to 1.

The council then carried out a public consultation on the experimental scheme. A very positive response rate of 18% was received – typically the council receives about 5% in consultations.

The main conclusions from this consultation have been listed below, together with the ways in which the council is responding to this feedback in the form of the proposal for the Harrow Market junction.

5.2 Consultation feedback and proposal details

The majority of respondents did not support any reduction in lane width on the approach to the Harrow Market junction (Qs 1 and 2).

The proposal does not include any road narrowings but instead will widen two of the approaches to the roundabout to reduce congestion at peak times.

Public opinion was divided on the traffic calming (Q3).

The proposal is to include a very minimal amount of traffic calming which will be necessary for pedestrian safety at crossing points. It will be placed at the best possible locations so that traffic will not be able to weave around it.

A clear majority supported the 20mph Zone (Q4).

The 20mph Zone will be retained and improved, with better signing and road markings.

Opinion was again divided on whether or not the scheme had made the area any safer for pedestrians and cyclists (Q5)

The proposal is to improve existing pedestrian crossing points and to introduce new ones, with better visibility.

Other key elements of the proposal:

Bus laybys

It is proposed to remove the bus laybys on all three arms of the roundabout BUT the design allows plenty of space for vehicles to get past. If a bus is stopped for a long period of time, this will not have a negative impact on the traffic flow. Removing the bus laybys is a key element in widening the lanes for traffic, improving general congestion and improving the pedestrian crossing points.

Harrow Market Car Park

It is proposed to completely redesign the internal layout of the car park, making movements in and out of it much easier and radically improving the flow within the car park itself. The unsightly brick planters will be removed, the number of disabled spaces will be doubled and the overall number of car parking spaces will be increased from 64 to 78 spaces. The access to the old Harrow Market pub car park will be closed which will make access simpler and stop traffic backing up onto the roundabout.

On-carriageway cycle lanes

It is proposed to remove the current on-carriageway cycle lanes as they are confusing, inconsistent and too narrow in many places. Instead, the traffic lanes will be wide enough to accommodate vehicles and cyclists and off-carriageway cycle routes will be installed where width allows, along with good access points for cyclists to leave and rejoin the road safely.

5.3 Summary of proposals

This proposal is the best available option taking into account the necessary balance between improvements to road safety while not having a detrimental impact upon congestion.

The results of the speed and journey time surveys showed that the traffic calming was the most effective at reducing speed. That is why limited traffic calming has been included in the final design. It is the minimum amount necessary to help to improve pedestrian safety at the various crossing points.

The journey time surveys showed that the amount of time taken to travel through the junction was not adversely affected by the traffic calming.

The most positive outcome of this experiment has been the reduction in accidents in the Harrow Market area. Overall, accidents have been reduced and most significantly the numbers of pedestrians involved in accidents has been significantly reduced from 8 to 1.

So, the proposed layout offers the following benefits:

- A 20mph Zone to maintain low vehicle speeds
- Limited traffic calming around pedestrian crossing points to continue to improve the pedestrian casualty record
- An increase in signal-controlled and uncontrolled pedestrian crossing points
- Removal of confusing cycle lanes on the carriageway
- Installation of shared use footway / cycleways where width allows
- Longer two lane approaches to the roundabout to improve capacity and reduce congestion
- Improved crossing near the roundabout on Station Road to be patrolled by Lollipop Man during term time
- Better layout of Harrow Market car park improving flow within and reducing queuing on the road

6 Comments of Other Committees

The earlier phases of the Harrow Market Experimental Scheme were considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4th June 2013. The outcome of that meeting was;

Resolved – To RECOMMEND the Cabinet to direct officers that because of the impact on levels of congestion in Langley;

- *The narrowing of the approaches to the roundabout be removed as soon as possible;*
- *The 20mph zone be retained; and*
- *Alternative measures be considered to assist road safety in the area, particularly in Station Road.*

The matter was subsequently reported to Cabinet on 17th June 2013 who;

Resolved –

- (a) *That the recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee be noted in relation to the Call-in of the officer delegated Decision; 20mph zone covering Langley Road, Station Road and High Street, Langley.*
- (b) *That the experimental trial scheme remain in place for the original six month period from 8th April 2013, noting the modifications proposed by officers for the second three months of the trial as follows:*
 - (i) *To make some further adjustments to the roundabout layout to improve its performance;*
 - (ii) *To make some further improvements to the crossing points on Station Road to assist road safety and consider additional measures suggested by the Cabinet;*
 - (iii) *To retain the 20mph zone as planned.*

7 Conclusion

It is recommended that the general principles of the proposed layout of the Harrow Market shown in Figure 5.1 are approved by Cabinet.

Officers would like to proceed with detailed design and construction of the final layout within financial year 2014/15 with a degree of flexibility in the design of the final scheme based upon the results of the following:

- Road Safety Audits of the proposed scheme.
- A survey of current services in the ground e.g. gas, water, electricity, on the understanding that widening of the carriageway to the south of the junction may be prohibitively expensive.
- A statutory consultation including emergency services, the freight haulage association etc. will be carried out if traffic regulation orders or traffic calming is proposed.

Officers are committed to continuing regular communication with Councillors in the affected Wards and will discuss with them any significant changes to the design proposed in Figure 5.1 if it is amended following the results of the above surveys.

8 Appendices Attached

'A' - Equalities Impact Assessment

9 Background Papers

'1' - Significant Decision 8th February 2013

'2' - Significant Decision 2nd April 2013

'3' - Significant Decision 4th September 2013