

Cabinet Member for Regeneration Environment & Housing

Date: 12th September 2016

Agenda item:

Wards: Abbey Ward

Subject: Balfour Road Experimental Road Closure

Lead officer: Chris Lee, Director of Environment & Regeneration

Lead member: Councillor Martin Whelton, Cabinet Member for Regeneration Environment & Housing

Forward Plan reference number: N/A

Contact Officer: Mitra Dubet, Tel: 020 8545 3201

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Recommendations:

That the Cabinet Member considers the issues detailed in this report and

- A) Notes the result of the informal consultation that was carried out between 15th of January and 13th February 2015 on the proposed experimental closure of Balfour Road near its junction with Merton Road and the associated changes to existing one way system and parking arrangements. Copy of the consultation leaflet is attached in Appendix 1.
- B) Considers the data regarding traffic volumes and speed collected as summarised in Appendix 2
- C) Considers the Safety Audit and Auto track attached as appendix 3.
- F) Considers the options as set out in section 4 of this report and agree not to progress the proposed experimental closure.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the result of the informal consultation carried out on the proposed Experimental Road Closure. This report recommends that the proposed road closure is abandoned. It also sets out the various options (section 4 of this report) that the Cabinet Member may wish to consider.
- 1.2 The report also sets out surveyed traffic volumes, speed, feedback received during the informal consultation, Safety Audit and tracking of larger vehicles.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Balfour Road is a one-way road that provides access from Kingston Road to Merton Road. It feeds off Cecil Road which is one-way between Kingston Road and its junction with Balfour Road and a 2 way road along its loop-length. These roads are within a CPZ and subject to a 20mph and a 7.5T Lorry and Public Service Vehicle ban.
- 2.2 Historically due to the various banned movements at South Wimbledon junction, motorists who wished to either travel toward Wimbledon Town Centre or Morden were directed into Cecil and Balfour Roads. However, a number of years ago all but one directional sign on Kingston Road were removed but those motorists with established pattern continue to use Balfour Road. In recent years, however, London Buses attempted to use this road but due to the insufficient road width and legitimately parked cars, on 2 reported occasions buses had become stuck and on one occasion caused damage and police had to intervene. It appears that this instigated a demand from the residents for the road to be closed. This matter has been subject to a number of discussions between residents and the previous Cabinet Member, Cllr Andrew Judge. Officers were instructed to consider a scheme to trial a road closure on Balfour Road near its junction with Merton Road.

3. CONSULTATION

- 3.1 As part of the informal consultation 180 consultation documents were delivered to the residents of Balfour and Cecil Roads, and to those residents and businesses within close vicinity. The consultation on the Experimental Road Closure was carried out between 15 January 2015 and 13th February 2015. A total of 79 responses were received with a majority of 51.6% against the proposed road closure. The Council also received 15 additional feedback forms as well as a petition from residents and businesses in the local area.
- 3.2 During the consultation as the Cabinet Member, Cllr Andrew Judge gave the residents an undertaking that when considering the results of the informal consultation more weight would be given to those residents and businesses fronting Cecil and Balfour Roads i.e. the through route section. The majority of these residents support the road closure as well as the introduction of the lorry ban. However, residents of the neighbouring roads believe the scheme would displace the existing traffic volumes on to their roads and the local businesses have concerns regarding their operational needs and visitors.
- 3.2 Pre-scheme surveys were undertaken to ascertain the existing traffic volume and speed for the area. The data have been summarised in Appendix 2.
- 3.3 During the consultation the following comments with some common themes were also received
- Preference would be that the roads are traffic calmed
 - Concerned about the loss of parking
 - More traffic pushed onto the Cecil Road loop
 - Priority should be the removal of the HGV's and buses
 - Concerned about traffic being displaced onto Montague and Pelham Roads and the surrounding areas
 - Priority should be the redesign of the South Wimbledon junction
- 3.4 During the informal consultation that took the format of a questionnaire, many of those who either supported or objected to the proposed closure contacted Cllr Andrew Judge directly with their views. As with any consultation, there are conflicting need and demands and it would not be possible to accommodate them all.
- 3.5 The proposed experimental road closure was scheduled to be installed on Balfour Road during 5-7th October 2015; however, implementation was put on hold pending the outcome of a Road Safety Audit (RSA). However, the lorry/PSV ban was introduced and the signage changed accordingly.
- 3.6 Following comments from an independent Safety Audit, the proposed layout has been auto- tracked. It has been concluded that given the site constraints, with a road closure in place, vehicles such as delivery vehicles and refuse vehicles will not be able to turn at the road closure nor reverse unobstructed when using Cecil Road. It is also considered undesirable and unsafe to permit such a manoeuvre within any given design.
- 3.7 It has been argued that there are a number of roads in the borough particularly those that are in nearby locality that are subject to a road closure and yet access for refuse and delivery vehicles do not appear to be a problem. It is true that there are many roads throughout the borough that have been closed in excess of 20 years. The main difference between this and other roads that are already closed is that those roads have been closed for many years and over the years, a number of factors such as flow of traffic, safety, driver behaviour, displacement, accessibility, manoeuvrability, design practices etc have increasingly become key consideration factors that designers must be accommodate when making design assessments. Also in many roads that are already closed, there is a reasonable turning area for vehicles and in areas where there are not, the Council does receive complaints about damage to properties when vehicles attempt

to turn around or/and reverse. We also receive complaints about poor driver behaviour and excessive reversing that generates noise and increases perception of safety at the very least.

- 3.8 Additionally, given the increase in volume of insurance claims Local Authorities have also become risk averse and designs are often driven aiming on the side of caution. It is also a matter of good practice that officers must consider.

Arguments for and against

- 3.9 According to the Personal Injury Accident data, over the last 3 years there have not been any personal injury accidents along Cecil and Balfour Roads. There have been 3 PI accidents at Cecil Road / Kingston Road junction all involving vehicles turning right across on-coming vehicle. Issue to consider would be Cecil Road becoming 2- way, with all the traffic having to exit from Cecil Road into Kingston Road. Although there is a KEEP CLEAR road marking at the junction, due to congested nature of Kingston Road, those exiting Cecil Road are likely to encounter some delays which may lead to drivers taking unnecessary risk. Although this specific risk does apply to all junctions, it is one that must be considered as residents have not had to use this junction to exit.
- 3.10 According to a week long (24/7) traffic volume survey 7574 Vehicles entered Cecil Road with and daily average of 1082 vehicles which include cyclists and motorcyclists. Additionally surveys were carried out across three separate days between 06.00 and 18.00hrs, which captured the number of vehicles turning right and left into Merton Road. The results are set out in the table below.

Turning left from Balfour Road into Merton Road

	Pedal cycle	Motor cycle	cars	LGV	MGV HGV	Bus/coach	total
17/11/2014	2	5	411	110	23	2	553
20/11/2014	7	9	403	87	17	2	525
29/11/2014	3	11	433	51	4	0	503

Turning right from Balfour Road into Merton Road

	Pedal cycle	Motor cycle	cars	LGV	MGV HGV	Bus/coach	total
17/11/2014	2	3	179	48	8	7	247
20/11/2014	5	8	221	60	15	4	313
29/11/2014	4	5	177	25	2	0	213

The volume of traffic is comprised of residents who reside in Cecil and Balfour Roads, those visiting, deliveries to the immediate local businesses who cannot stop on either Kingston Road or Merton Road, the local businesses who have access via Balfour Road.

- 3.11 According to property data base, there are 151 properties that have access via Cecil and Balfour Road. According to Parking Permit data base, 137 Resident permits have been issued to residents of Cecil and Balfour Roads plus 8 business permits. Visitor Permits have not been accounted for. The numbers of properties who have not purchased a permit are also unknown. It is often the case that there are those who do not purchase a permit as they either use an annual visitor permit mostly for their second or third car or simply work their way around the CPZ operational hours. This is, however, likely to be minimum. Given the number of permit holders using these roads along with the unknown numbers of businesses who have access via Balfour Road, it could be considered that the actual numbers of those who rat run is comparatively low (when compared to other roads and similar situations and demands). Nonetheless it could be argued that Balfour Road is unsuitable for any amount of rat running.

- 3.12 The difficulty in offering any justification for a road closure on this occasion is that the rat running is causing a nuisance for a few residents. Although this is fully understandable, the Council must be mindful of the possible risks, level of risks and displacement. Another consideration would be setting a precedent in closing roads, something that the Council has refrained from doing for a number of years but it is a request that is routinely received from many roads who suffer from similar problems.

Notwithstanding the above comments, when assessing a problem, each road should be assessed on its own merit and on this occasion it could be considered that given the nature of Balfour Road, the volume of traffic is deemed high but with low displacement when considering the surrounding road network. This, however, is unlikely to be of little comfort to the surrounding roads who already feel they too suffer from rat running.

- 3.13 It is reasonable to consider that any substantial change to one road will impact neighboring roads. The Cabinet Member would need to consider the impact of displaced traffic and given that the displaced traffic is likely to be through a wider network, it would be unreasonable, unsustainable and unaffordable to continue to remedy any impact within the entire road network that may be affected.
- 3.14 Another fact that should be noted is that the Council has been successful in obtaining some funding from TfL within its LiP allocation 2016/17 to assess South Wimbledon Junction with a view of removing the various banned movements which is contributing toward the rat running through Balfour Road and accommodating the needs of pedestrians and cyclists as well as addressing the capacity issue at the junction. The traffic modelling of this junction is likely to take approximately 12 months to complete and any change would be subject to Cabinet Member approval as well as TfL's approval process. Implementation of any change would be within 2017/18/19 financial year subject to available funding.

4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The key objective of the previously proposed experimental road closure was to prevent Cecil and Balfour Roads from being used as a rat run thereby addressing concerns raised by some residents. The following sets out a number of options that the Cabinet Member may wish to consider:

4.2 OPTION 1

- 4.2.1 To introduce a road closure on an experimental basis under an Experimental Order. The closure would be located outside Nos 2/4 Balfour Road. Associated works would include loss of three parking spaces; introduction of double yellow lines; removal of the existing one way systems in Balfour and Cecil Roads. This option will prevent drivers who use this road in order to avoid traffic queues at the traffic signalised junction of Morden Road/Merton Road/Merton High Street/Kingston Road. In addition it will stop drivers from Kingston Road who use this road during the morning and evening peak periods to avoid the part-time (Mon-Fri 7-10am and 4-7pm) banned right turn into Morden Road.

- 4.2.2 The impact of this option include:

- Due to the narrow nature of Merton Road, those businesses on Merton Road, adjacent to Balfour Road, often load and unload using Balfour Road within the double yellow lines at the junction. The road closure would mean that they would need to reverse from Merton Road into Balfour Road which is not ideal with the main safety issue being the actual stopping and reversing on Merton Road. The Council, however, is aware that on occasions this manoeuvre does take place but the Cabinet Member would need to consider the fact the road closure would effectively remove any safe alternative.
- There are a number of other properties that although based on Merton Road have access via Balfour Road. During the consultation some businesses were

concerned that due to the location of their access points in relation to the point of closure, they (including their customers) would need to gain access via Merton Road which would involve using South Wimbledon junction and / or other roads.

- Delivery and refuse vehicles would not be able to turn at the point of closure and although they could reverse into Cecil Road, it would not be something that could be considered as part of a design as this is considered an unsuitable solution. The alternative would be for larger vehicles to travel through the Cecil Road loop. However, according to auto-track, larger vehicles turning right onto Balfour Road from Cecil Road would be hindered by some parked cars both in Cecil and Balfour Roads. To accommodate this turning manoeuvre, it may be necessary to cut back some parking (between 0.5m and 1m) in Cecil Road adjacent to No 14 Balfour Road and possibly 2m from outside No 16 Balfour Road. A further issue would be directing larger vehicles into the loop which will lead to complaints from those who reside within the Cecil Road loop. Although Merton's Waste Management team could be advised to use the loop, it would not be possible to direct all other larger vehicles without some kind of sign.
- There have been a number of concerns from neighbouring roads who believe that the displacement would have an adverse impact on their roads. However, given the relatively low volume of traffic that may be dispersed throughout the network (rather than one or two specific roads) it would be difficult to realistically estimate the actual impact. To assess the impact (should this option be progressed) the Council has collected traffic data from the surrounding roads which can be used to determine any change in traffic volume.

4.2.3 Acknowledging that the displacement onto surrounding roads would be relatively low, the key factor, therefore, is the safe manoeuvrability of refuse and delivery vehicles when using Cecil / Balfour Roads and the safety of Cecil / Kingston Road junction.

4.3 OPTION 2

4.3.1 To reduce extent of rat running, consideration could be given to either ban the Left or the Right turn from Balfour Road into Merton Road. Based on the survey data the 67% of vehicles turned left and travelled towards Wimbledon Town Centre, whilst 33% turned right towards South Wimbledon junction.

4.3.2 Implications

The consequences of any proposed ban would lead to drivers seeking alternative routes and given the wide range of road network it would not be possible to accurately determine the level of displacement through any given road. However, given the relatively low numbers of traffic movement (as set out in table below), it could be considered that impact on the surrounding roads would be relatively low.

Turning left	total		Turning right	total
17/11/2014	553		17/11/2014	247
20/11/2014	525		20/11/2014	313
29/11/2014	503		29/11/2014	213

4.4 OPTION 3

4.4.1 Remodelling of the South Wimbledon signalised junction.

The Cabinet Member may wish to consider not to take any action at this time until the remodelling of the South Wimbledon junction is completed during late 2017. Through the Local Implementation Plan 2016/17, the Council has funding to fully review the operation of this junction which has been operating at full capacity if not over capacity for many years. There has been an increase in traffic and demand from a variety of road

users all competing for the limited capacity at this junction. To address this increase in capacity, over the years there have been a number of banned movements introduced at this junction which has led to rat running via a number of roads including Cecil and Balfour Roads. It is planned to utilise the available funding during 2016/17 financial year to undertake a feasibility study and establish a workable solution for the junction via the appropriate traffic modelling. The intention is to remove all the banned movements which in turn will alleviate the need for traffic to rat run via Cecil Rd. This process can be a very lengthy process i.e. will take at least 12 months to complete. It is important to note that TfL would need to approve any change at this junction. Once an acceptable proposal is established, the Council would progress to implantation subject to available funding during 2017/18.

4.5 OPTION 4

4.5.1 Do nothing. When making a decision the Council must consider the following factors:

- Due to limited available resource and funding and the demand for traffic and parking related action that far outweigh the available funding, the Council prioritises by giving first consideration to those areas with recorded personal injury accidents and areas outside schools. Engineering solutions are then considered to address accidents' contributory factors.
- The number of residents adversely affected through displacement outweigh the number of residents who are directly affected by some through traffic.
- The majority of consultees do not support the proposed road closure.
- Although it is appreciated that some residents may feel there is a traffic problem, given that this problem is shared across the borough, the Council is not in a financial position to address rat running. As a rule the Council does not address rat running as a priority and given its limited available resource must concentrate on its other priorities such as evidence based safety issues. In this case, one example was the inappropriate access by London buses which have now been legally banned.

5. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 Officers recommend that the Cabinet Member considers the above options and agrees with option 4 and not take any further action at this time.

6. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

6.1 These are set out in in section 4 of this report.

7. **FINANCIAL RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The cost of implementing Option 1 (the experimental road closure) is estimated at £2195. This includes installation of 2 bollards, a lock, decommissioning of the various existing regulatory sign faces (covered up and not removed); erection of new signs and modification to road markings and Traffic management. This does not include staff costs nor the cost of the statutory consultation.

7.2 Option 2 (banned movement) is estimated to cost approximately £800. This includes the cost of a post and sign and electric connection. This does not include staff costs nor the cost of the statutory consultation.

The above options 1 and 2 would be funded from Merton Capital which is fully committed for 2016/17.

7.3 Cost of Option 3 is not yet determined but this would be funded from LiP allocation for 2016/17

7. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Traffic Management Orders for an Experimental Road closure would be made under Section 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended). Banned movements would be made under Section 6 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended). Introduction of waiting restrictions would be made under Section 6 and Section 45 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended). The Council is required by the Local Authorities Traffic Order (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 to give notice of its intention to make a Traffic Order (by publishing a draft traffic order). These regulations also require the Council to consider any representations received as a result of publishing the draft order.
- 7.2 The Council has discretion as to whether or not to hold a public inquiry before deciding whether or not to make a Traffic Management Order or to modify the published draft Order. A public inquiry should be held where it would provide further information, which would assist the Cabinet Member in reaching a decision.

8. HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHENSION IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The implementation of any scheme endeavours to meet the above.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATION

- 9.1 N/A

10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Before reaching a decision to make the necessary Traffic Management Order to implement any scheme, the Council must follow the statutory consultation procedures pursuant to the Road Traffic Regulation Act ("RTRA") 1984 and the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. All objections received must be properly considered in the light of administrative law principles, Human Rights law and the relevant statutory powers.
- 10.2 The Council's powers to make Traffic Management Orders arise mainly under sections 6, 9, 45, 46, 122 and 124 and schedules 1 and 9 of the RTRA 1984.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report.
- Appendix 1 – Informal Consultation Leaflet
 - Appendix 2 – Traffic Data
 - Appendix 3 – Safety Audit & Auto track

Informal Newsletter

INFORMAL CONSULTATION

Experimental Road Closure - Balfour Road

ISSUE DATE : 15 JANUARY 2015

Councillor Andrew Judge

Cabinet Member for
Environmental Sustainability
and Regeneration

T: 020 8545 3425

E: andrew.judge@merton.gov.uk



Dear Resident/Business

The Council is seeking your views on its intention to amend the traffic arrangement in Cecil Road and Balfour Road, under an Experimental Traffic Management Order (ETMO) by closing Balfour Road to through traffic, as shown on the plan overleaf. The location of the proposed closure would be within the vicinity of 4 Balfour Road.

ETMO is used to assess whether a particular restriction would produce the desired result, or to check what consequences would arise from the imposition of a restriction, before it is made permanent. Anyone can object and make representations within the first six months (the formal consultation period) of the experimental order coming into force. No consultation is required prior to the order coming into force. The regulations also allow modifications to be made to the scheme during the experimental period, after the scheme has been implemented. ETMO can remain in force for a maximum period of 18 months by which time the Council must confirm, amend or remove the scheme.

A traffic volume survey carried out in Balfour Road for a period of 24 hours for 7 days between 17 and 23 November 2014, recorded a total of 7574 vehicles using this road, of which 1% were HGVs delivering to the shops on Merton Road.

A further traffic survey was carried out in Balfour Road at its junction with Merton Road, on 17th, 20th and 29th November 2014 from 6am to 6pm to determine the volume of drivers who use this road as a through route. The survey recorded a total of 2354 vehicles during this period, of which 93% were through traffic. Of this, 67% turned left and travelled towards The Broadway, whilst 33% turned right towards South Wimbledon Station. The result show that drivers in Merton High Street used Balfour Road to avoid the banned right turn into Merton Road.

To facilitate this experimental road closure, the existing 'one way' traffic movement in Cecil Road and Balfour Road will be converted to two way working. The parking bays on both sides of the road between nos. 1 - 13 Balfour Road will be shortened by a total of 3 car spaces to allow drivers to turn within this area.

The experimental traffic arrangement will prevent drivers who use this road as a through route to avoid traffic queues at the traffic signalised junction of Morden Road/Merton Road/Merton High Street/Kingston Road. In addition, it will stop drivers from Kingston Road who use this road during the morning and evening peak periods to avoid the banned right

turn into Morden Road.

The experimental traffic measures will not impact on deliveries to the shop, but will impact on residents access to the area and also the operation of the traffic signalised junction outside South Wimbledon Station.

A 7.5 tonne weight restriction will be imposed on both Balfour Road and Cecil Road to prevent heavy good vehicles (HGVs) from using these roads. This will minimise the distraction and inconvenience caused to residents from HGVs drivers who use this road.

LET US KNOW YOUR VIEWS

We are at this stage seeking your views to implement the proposals on an experimental period of 6 months and would like to know if you support the principle of the proposals. Please complete and return the enclosed prepaid questionnaire (no stamp required), with any further comments / suggestion by **13 February 2015**. Please note that late replies may not be included and only one questionnaire per household will be accepted. If you fill in the paper questionnaire, then do not complete the online version.

The Council will use your response to determine the level of support for the proposals and provide statistical information to your ward members and the Cabinet Member for Environmental, Sustainability and Regeneration, who will then make a decision on the whether or not to proceed with the proposals. Your views will be considered proportionately depending on issues such as how likely you would be affected by any of the proposals. Other relevant factors, such as the Council's own statutory duties will also be taken into account.

We regret that due to the number of responses received during a public consultation it will not be possible to individually respond to each respondent. However, all returned questionnaires will be analysed and the results reported to the Cabinet Member for Environmental, Sustainability and Regeneration. We therefore welcome your comments on this proposal, which will be noted and included within the proposed measures where appropriate.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

The results of this informal consultation along with officers' recommendations will be reported to the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability and Regeneration for a decision to proceed or not to proceed with the experimental traffic management proposals. Once a decision is made you will be

Public Consultation
Experimental Road Closure - Balfour Road

We would like to know your views.

Please tick the appropriate boxes and return this card by **13 February 2015**

Please complete this reply card and return it by FREE POST to the address at the back of this page.

Please write in BLOCK capitals

Name: Signature:
Road: Property No./Name:
Email: Post Code:

Please tick if you would like the above information to be confidential.

1. Are you a resident or business? Resident
 Business
 Other - Specify _____

2. Do you support the experimental road closure in Balfour Road as shown on the attached plan? Yes
 No
 Undecided

3. Do you have any additional comments regarding the proposals? (Please write in BLOCK capitals)

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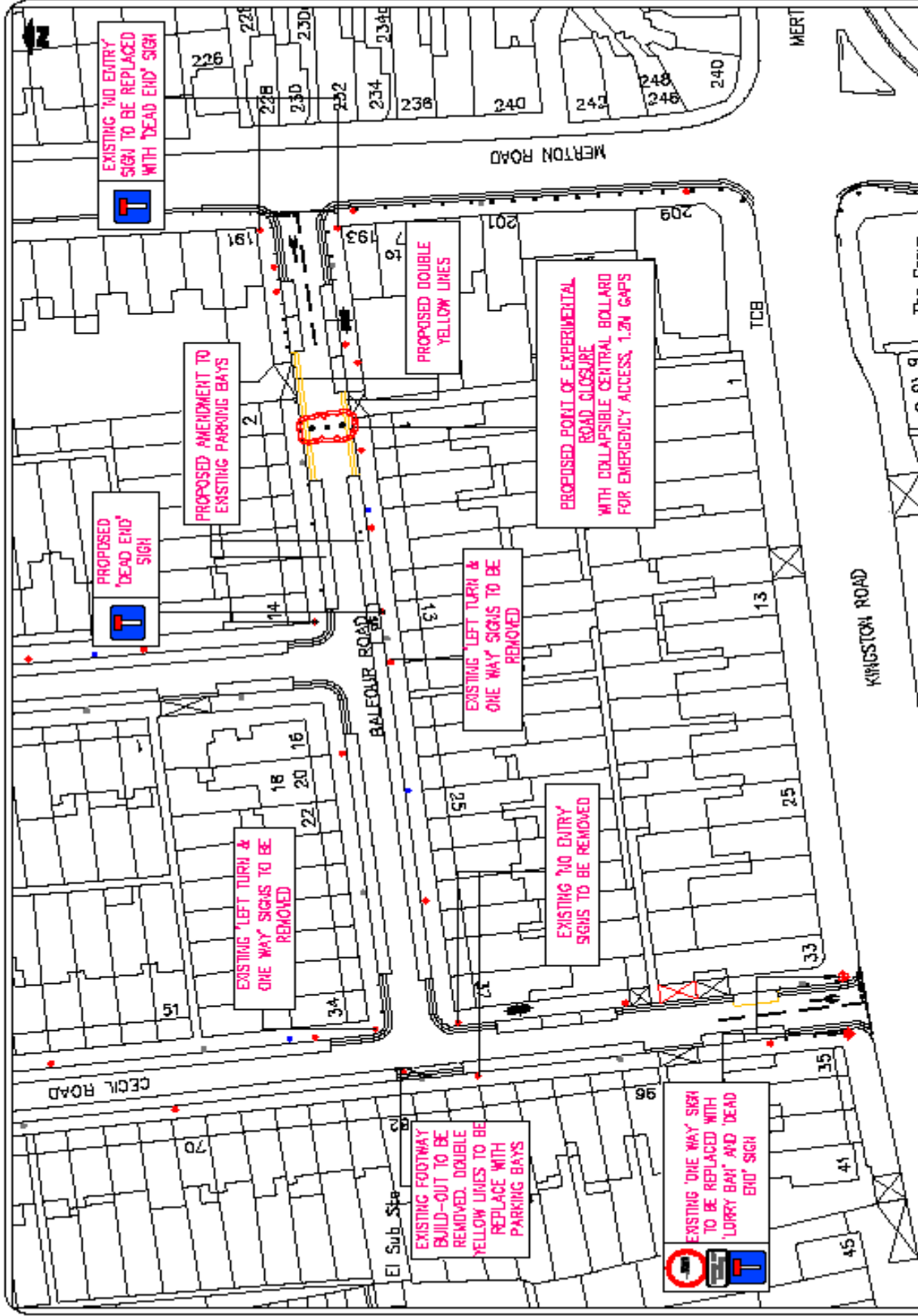
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Please Note: In view of the large number of responses received during a public consultation it will not be possible to reply individually to each respondent.



BALFOUR ROAD – EXPERIMENTAL ROAD CLOSURE

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London Borough of Merton 10007/0286 2014

Appendix 2

Results of Informal Consultation

Table 1

	Yes % (Number)	No % (Number)	Undecided % (Number)	Totals
Original Consultation Area	44.3% (35)	50.6% (40)	5.1% (4)	79
Wider Area Consultation	35.7% (35)	59.2% (58)	5.1% (5)	94

In addition to the overall results above, table 2 below shows the results split the sections for the Cecil Road loop (the section of road that currently has no through traffic), Balfour and Cecil Roads that currently accommodates through traffic and Kingston and Merton Road frontages which are predominantly businesses but have access via Cecil / Balfour Roads.

Table 2

	Yes % (Number)	No % (Number)	Undecided % (Number)	Totals
Cecil Road (loop) - <i>No through route</i>	21% (7)	71% (24)	8% (3)	34
Balfour & Cecil Road - <i>through route</i>	93% (27)	3.5% (1)	3.5% (1)	29
Kingston & Merton Road – frontages (predominantly businesses)	6% (1)	94% (15)	0% (0)	16

7 Day / 24hrs Traffic Survey - Taken week starting 17th November 2014

Balfour Road (one-way)	
Traffic Volume per Week	Average 85 th percentile speed
7574 Vehicles (Daily average 1082)	22mph

Turning Counts for Balfour Road into Merton Road (Surveys taken on 3 separate days between the hours of 0600- 1800hrs)

Turning left	total		Turning right	total
17/11/2014	553		17/11/2014	247
20/11/2014	525		20/11/2014	313
29/11/2014	503		29/11/2014	213

7 Day / 24hrs Traffic Survey taken week starting 27th September 2015

Cecil Road	
Traffic Volume per Week	Average 85 th percentile speed
Eastbound 489 Vehicles	16mph
Westbound 223 Vehicles	17mph

Montague Road	
Traffic Volume per Week	Average 85 th percentile speed
Northbound 7851 Vehicles	24mph
Southbound 11160 Vehicles	28mph

Pelham Road	
Traffic Volume per Week	Average 85 th percentile speed
Eastbound 3328 Vehicles	20mph
Westbound 5930 Vehicles	22mph

Southey Road	
Traffic Volume per Week	Average 85 th percentile speed
Northbound 5595 Vehicles	30mph
Southbound 4536 Vehicles	29mph



LB Merton

**EXPERIMENTAL ROAD CLOSURE,
BALFOUR ROAD, LB MERTON**

**STAGE 1/2 - ROAD SAFETY AUDIT
NOVEMBER 2015**

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Appendices

Appendix A - Drawings and documents supplied for audit.

Appendix B – Location plan of identified problems

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings from a combined Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit undertaken on the proposed experimental road closure of Balfour Road and associated works on Cecil Road in the London Borough of Merton.
- 1.2 It is the Audit Teams understanding that the scheme is being promoted to remove the 'rat running' associated with the avoidance of the Kingston Road/ Merton Road signalised junction for the movement between Kingston Road (east) and Merton Road (north).
- 1.3 The audit was carried out by the following:
- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Tristan Brooks
BSc (Hons), MBA, CMILT, MCIHT, MSoRSA | - Road Safety Audit Team Leader |
| Shal Arayal
BEng (Hons), MCIHT, EU RSA Cert.Comp | - Road Safety Audit Team Member |
- 1.4 The site visit was undertaken on Wednesday 21st October 2015 and comprised a walk and a drive through of the area covered by the proposals. During the site visit it was overcast with light rain and the road surface was damp. Traffic in the vicinity of the scheme was light and free flowing.
- 1.5 Balfour Road and Cecil Road are both subject to a 20mph speed limit; have on street parking bays and benefit from street lighting.
- 1.6 The drawings and documents supplied for audit are listed in **Appendix A**. An annotated drawing showing the locations of the problems identified is provided in **Appendix B**.
- 1.7 The terms of reference of the audit are as that broadly described in HD19/15 and the Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT) Guidelines on Road Safety Audits. The team has examined and reported only on the road safety implications of the scheme as presented and has not examined or verified the compliance of the designs to any other criteria.
- 1.8 From the plans provided for audit it is proposed that:
- ∞ Balfour Road is closed off through the introduction of collapsible central bollards restricting through movements by vehicles;

- Balfour Road and the southern section of Cecil Road from its junction with Kingston Road will revert to two way working;
- The build-out at the junction of Balfour Road (west) and Cecil Road will be removed and replaced with parking bays: and
- The scheme will be accompanied by changes to the road signs and markings to reflect the new arrangements.

1.9 A review of the Personal Injury Collisions (PIC) data between May 2012 to April 2015 indicates that during this period there have been no PICs on Balfour Road or Cecil Road. It is noted however that there have been 3 PICs attributed to vehicles turning right into Cecil Road from Kingston Road (east) into the path of either motorcycles or pedal cycles, of which two resulted in injuries that were slight in severity and one which was serious in severity (car/motorcycle). There have been no PICs recorded at the junction of Balfour Road/ Merton Road.

1.10 A review of the collision descriptions, causation and contributory factors have been reviewed as part of the RSA and if considered relevant addressed within the recommendations within this report.

1.11 No departures or relaxations from standard have been provided by the design team for review as part of this RSA.

2 ROAD SAFETY AUDIT FINDINGS FROM RSA 1/2

PROBLEM 1

LOCATION: Balfour Road.

SUMMARY: Potential lack of sufficient turning provision.

2.1 The introduction of the bollards may result in there being insufficient turning provision adjacent to the bollards for a significant number of users including residents especially those parked within the parking bays adjacent to the bollards, potential HGVs/MGVs associated with the commercial premises or refuse vehicles either side of the bollards. This issue may result in injudicious turning and/or reversing manoeuvres over an excessive distance that may lead to a number of road safety issues at this location including:

- Vehicles having to reverse onto Merton Road into the path of on coming traffic which could include HGVs/MGVs associated with the commercial premises accessed from Balfour Road;
- Vehicles having to reverse onto Cecil Road (east) which may result in increased levels of conflict at this junction; and
- Potential multi-point turning manoeuvres where a sufficient turning head is not provided.

2.2 It is considered that all of the above issues would potentially result in increased highway safety risks that could result in collisions involving vehicles or vehicles and pedestrians.

2.3 It is also noted that the area adjacent to the bollards where vehicles would be required to turn is adjacent to a nursery which may exacerbate the problems identified above and potentially increase the risk of vehicular collisions with vulnerable road users.

RECOMMENDATION

2.4 Ensure suitable turning facilities are provided for vehicles to safely turn either side of the bollards.

2.5 It is noted that double yellow lines are provided in advance of the bollards which allows for increased width for turning vehicles, however vehicle swept path analysis should be

undertaken using the largest vehicle size anticipated to use Balfour Road to ensure the layout is satisfactory with regard to the problem raised.

PROBLEM 2

LOCATION: Balfour Road junctions with Cecil Road.

SUMMARY: Lack of give way road markings.

- 2.6 At both the Balfour Road (east) and Balfour Road (west) junctions with Cecil Road there are no details provided with regard to the give-way road markings at these locations. A lack of appropriate road markings at these locations could lead to side-swipe type collisions at these locations. It is noted that give way road markings are currently provide at both junctions, albeit that they are extremely worn at the Balfour Road (east)/ Cecil Road junction.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.7 Ensure give-way road markings are provided at both the Balfour Road (east) and Balfour Road (west) junctions with Cecil Road.

3 OBSERVATIONS/NOTES

- 3.1 The recommendations included within this report should not be regarded as being prescriptive design solutions to the problems raised. They are intended only to indicate a proportionate and viable means of eliminating or mitigating the identified problem, in accordance with HD19/15. There may be alternative methods of addressing a problem which would be equally acceptable in achieving the desired elimination or mitigation and these should be considered when responding to this report.
- 3.2 The proposed scheme will allow for all vehicle movements to be permitted at the Balfour Road/ Kingston Road Junction. Although, it is considered that this in itself is unlikely to pose a road safety issue (as this is not an atypical arrangement and the vehicle flows into and out of Balfour Road are likely to be relatively low), it may introduce unnecessary vehicular conflict/ interaction at this location. It is suggested therefore that this matter is reviewed as part of a Stage 4 RSA or as part of the review process of the operation of the experimental road closure with regard to the affect on PICs, with particular attention given to the introduction of the right turn manoeuvre out of Balfour Road.
- 3.3 Although considered outside of the scope of the RSA, it was noted during the site visit that there was an absence of tactile paving provision at the junction of Merton Road/ Balfour Road and at junction of Balfour Road/ Kingston Road and that there were a range of surface materials and colourings at the uncontrolled crossing points, potentially making it difficult for visually impaired pedestrians to cross at these locations. A view confirmed through discussions with a visually impaired pedestrian whilst undertaking the site visit.
- 3.4 It should also be noted that that a number of the dropped kerbs at the extents of the scheme were loose resulting in uneven surfacing/excessive up-stands which could potentially result in trip hazards at the locations noted above. It is therefore suggested by the Audit Team that remediation work is undertaken at the uncontrolled crossing points at the extents of the proposed scheme to address these issues.

4 AUDIT STATEMENT

- 4.1 I certify that this audit has been carried out broadly in accordance with HD 19/15 and the Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT) Guidelines on Road Safety Audits.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "T Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Date: 30 November 2015

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