

Subject:	Kenton Park Road Experimental Road Closure Update
Responsible Officer:	Andrew Trehern, Director of Area Services, Urban Living
Contact Officer:	Steve Swain, Transportation Manager
Portfolio Holder:	Environment and Transport
Key Decision:	No
Urgent/Non Urgent:	Non Urgent
Status:	Public

Section 1: Summary

Public consultation has been carried out and it is proposed to extend the experiment period of the road closure and review the scheme in November 2005. An update is also provided on the investigation to locally widen Kenton Road in order to create a dedicated right turn lane into Kenton Lane.

Decision Required

That the Panel recommend that the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport:-

- i) authorises that the experimental closure in Kenton Park Road including the associated experimental double yellow line waiting restrictions be extended for a further six months to 18 months;
- ii) that further discussions be undertaken with Brent Council, including at member level, regarding sharing the cost of the proposed scheme to widen Kenton Road and reinstate the right turn into Kenton Lane.
- iii) That local residents in the wider area shown at Appendix C be informed of the extension of the experiment period and ongoing work to investigate reinstating the right turn into Kenton Lane and that any further community representations be considered along with all other representations and information at the scheme review in November 2005.

Reason for report

To seek approval to extend the experiment period to allow more time for further

community representations be considered.

Benefits

- responding to customers
- improving local community participation in the decision making process
- improving communication

Cost of Proposals

The estimated cost of the road widening scheme is in the region of £450,000 for which there is no budget provision. The scheme does not fit into any Transport for London (TfL) category under their funding regime. In view of this and bearing in mind the possible road safety disbenefits (increasing conflict), TfL are unlikely to support a bid for funding.

The London Assembly Member for Brent and Harrow has indicated that he will promote a suitable scheme with TfL. However, there is no firm commitment or official offer from Brent Council to share the costs of the road widening scheme.

The cost of extending the experiment period is in the region of £4,000 which can be funded from this year's traffic management budget.

(See also financial implications.)

Risks

- The implementation cost of road widening may exceed the estimate due to cost overruns associated with relocating the below ground services.
- Road widening costs verses benefits may not be seen as value for money.
- Removal of the closure would be unpopular with the residents of the estate who benefit from reduced traffic.

Implications if recommendations rejected

The road closure will be removed at the end of the experimental period on 2 December 2005.

Section 2: Report

Brief History

- 2.1 Following the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel recommendation of 22 September 2004, the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport decision (PHD 043/04) agreed the following:

That (1) officers be authorised to continue investigating the feasibility of widening Kenton Road and reinstating the (currently banned) right turn into Kenton Lane, whilst retaining two straight ahead lanes (option 3 of the officer report);

(2) a barrier be installed within the next 3 months under an experimental order under section 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, for a temporary period of one year at the junction of Kenton Lane and Kenton Park Road with appropriate monitoring and consultation to be carried out by the Council during this period;

(3) both cyclists and the emergency services be made exempt from the restrictions imposed by the above barrier;

(4) the results of the monitoring and consultation be submitted to the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel at the end of the experimental period to facilitate a decision on the future of the barrier; and

(5) the head petitioners be informed accordingly.

- 2.1.2 Following concerns expressed by the emergency services, the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport also agreed the implementation of double yellow line waiting restrictions as shown at Appendix A.
- 2.1.3 A barrier was installed in Kenton Park Road at its junction with Kenton Lane on 2 December 2004 with associated double yellow line waiting restrictions on experimental basis in accordance with the above.
- 2.1.4 The experimental traffic order has been made to run for 12 months and it will expire on 2 December 2005. Unless a decision is made about its future, it will be necessary to either remove the closure on 2 December or advertise a six month extension to the experimental order to bring it up to the 18 months maximum permissible before then.
- 2.1.5 Two petitions have been received. One in favour of the scheme from some residents of Kenton Park Road, Kenton Park Avenue, Kenton Park Crescent and Kenton Park Close. The petition contains 171 signatures representing 135 households out of 196. The other petition against the road closure is from some residents of Kenton Lane and Alicia Avenue . It contains 60 signatures representing 52 households.

2.2 Options considered

- 2.2.1 An investigation has been carried out by consultants to assess the feasibility of widening Kenton Road to provide a dedicated right turning lane in addition to two straight ahead lanes (see Appendix B). This would effectively return the movements to the previous arrangement. The scheme would retain the improved traffic flow on Kenton Road that has been achieved by Brent's scheme.
- 2.2.2 In summary, the investigation showed it is feasible to widen Kenton Road within existing highway boundaries. Transport for London approval would be required for the signal layout and operation. This cannot be obtained until further detail design is undertaken.
- 2.2.3 The feasibility study shows that providing a right turn indicative green arrow requires an additional stage in the method of control. If the time allocated to this movement is taken out of the eastbound green time, the queues are expected to increase by a quarter. Taking time away from all arms in equal measure to allocate to right turn green arrow would result in unacceptable queues on all arms. Both scenarios would be unworkable and would result in further diversion of traffic into nearby residential roads and they are not recommended.
- 2.2.4 Thus, if a dedicated right turn lane is provided, its method of operation would have to be the same as the arrangement which was in place before the banned turn was introduced. This means that the right turn would only be possible when there are gaps in the opposing straight ahead traffic during Kenton Road green stage. Before the right turn ban was introduced, Brent Council carried out a traffic survey which shows that about 50 to 60 vehicles per hour managed to make the right turn manoeuvre. Therefore, the benefits of road widening would be limited as a dedicated right turn lane is also expected to yield similar results.
- 2.2.5 The scope for road widening is also limited. The outcome would be sub-standard traffic lanes which would result in slower speeds culminating in fewer cars going through the junction. Thus, there would be a deterioration in traffic flow compared with the existing.
- 2.2.6 Lifting the right turn ban could also have an adverse affect on road safety. In the three year study period before the introduction of the banned turn, there were no reported personal injury accidents involving the right turn into Kenton Lane (three years is the nationally recognised period for assessing accident risk for design purposes). This is unusual for right turn movements at a busy traffic light controlled crossroads. The removal of

the banned turn could therefore increase conflict which may lead to accidents.

2.3 Consultation

- 2.3.1 Public consultation was carried out in December 2004 in a wide area shown at Appendix C. the consultation document is shown at Appendix D. An explanation about the experimental road closure was provided in the document and recipients were asked to comment or object if they wished. A total of 2600 leaflets were delivered and 101 replies have been received. This represents a response rate of 4%. Most of the properties consulted were fairly remote from the closure and this may have been the reason for the low response rate. The wider the consultation area, the lower the likely response rate will be.
- 2.3.2 Among the responses there are 64 (62%) objections to the scheme. Only one is from the estate directly affected. Twenty five respondents are in favour, nineteen of them from the roads within the estate. There are 47 requests for lifting the right turn ban. A table summarising the results is shown at Appendix E. The responses have been placed in the Members Library.
- 2.3.3 Additionally, 4 e-mails and 5 letters of objection have been received.
- 2.3.4 Further consultation with the residents of the estate directly affected (in the area shown at Appendix F) was carried out over 3 weeks in August 2005. The consultation document is shown at Appendix G. A total of 196 leaflets have been delivered and 112 questionnaires have been returned. This represents a 57% response rate. Out of these 85 (76%) are in favour of the road closure becoming permanent and 21 (19%) are against. The table at Appendix H shows the summary of the results. The responses have been placed in the Members Library.
- 2.3.5 Concern about the timing of the second consultation has been expressed by ward councillors, Portfolio Holder for Environment and Transport and one of the head petitioners from Kenton Park Road. They have conveyed that many residents are away during the summer and would be unable to take part in the consultation. It is therefore considered prudent to extend the experiment and allow further time for representations. In order to achieve this it is recommended that the review of the scheme be delayed until November 2005. The extension would also provide the additional opportunity for further discussions with Brent Council at member level. (Officer level discussions with Brent have not produced favourable results so far).

- 2.3.6 The opportunity will be taken to distribute a newsletter in the wider area shown at Appendix C. This would be an informative update on the consultation and investigations carried out so far together with the date of the review. The recipients would be invited to make further comment or representation for consideration along with all others received to date when the road closure is reviewed.
- 2.3.7 Delaying the review would necessitate the extension of the experiment period. It is therefore recommended that the experiment period for the road closure and associated double yellow line waiting restrictions be extended to the permissible maximum of 18 months.
- 2.3.8 Consultation documents were also sent to Kenton East and West ward councillors. One response in favour of the closure becoming permanent has been received. The member is also in favour of widening Kenton Road to accommodate a right turn lane.
- 2.3.9 Brent Council has been consulted and their response will be reported to the Panel orally if received in time.
- 2.3.10 The emergency services have also been consulted and are in favour of the road widening scheme.

2.4 Financial Implications

- 2.4.1 The estimated cost of the Kenton Road widening scheme is in the region of £450,000. Transport for London (TfL) is responsible for all traffic signal operations in London. Its consent to any such proposals is required. This has not yet been sought as TfL only considers schemes where detail design has been finalised. In view of the relatively high estimated construction costs and the limited nature of the benefits that may be gained, detail design has not yet been carried out. It will therefore be necessary to commission detail design at an estimated cost of £15,000.
- 2.4.2 There is no budget provision for the road widening proposals. The scheme does not fit into any TfL category under their funding regime. In view of this and bearing in mind the possible road safety disbenefits (increasing conflict), TfL is unlikely to support a bid for funding.
- 2.4.3 Council funding would therefore be required. Brent Council officers had previously indicated that the scheme does not represent good value for money and consequently, they would not be offering funding toward its costs. Thus representations were made to Councillor Bob Blackman, Assembly Member for Brent and Harrow. Councillor Blackman has indicated that he will “promote a suitable scheme with TfL” and “will seek to broker a satisfactory solution that will benefit both boroughs (see

Appendix I). Whilst this is positive, there is no firm commitment or official offer from Brent Council to share the costs of the road widening scheme at this stage.

2.5 **Legal Implications**

2.5.1 The period of the experimental road closure and associated double yellow line waiting restrictions can be extended under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 subject to maximum period of 18 months.

2.6 **Equalities Impact**

2.6.1 Not applicable.

Section 3: Supporting Information/ Background Documents

Appendices

Appendix A: Plan of road closure and associated double yellow line waiting restrictions

Appendix B: Proposed Kenton Road widening layout plan

Appendix C: Original consultation area

Appendix D: Original consultation document

Appendix E: Summary of responses

Appendix F: Second consultation area

Appendix G: Second consultation document

Appendix H: Summary of responses to second consultation

Appendix I : Letter from the Assembly Member for Brent and Harrow

Background documents

Previous reports, road widening feasibility report, consultations