

**REPORT FOR: Traffic And Road Safety
Advisory Panel**

Date of Meeting: 28th November 2017

Subject: **INFORMATION REPORT**
Wealdstone Transport Study

Responsible Officer: Paul Walker – Corporate Director, Community

Exempt: No

Wards affected: Wealdstone, Marlborough

Enclosures: Appendix 1 – Wealdstone Transport Study

Section 1 – Summary

This information report is presented to members to provide an update on the Wealdstone Transport study completed recently and explain the objectives, outcomes and recommendations.

FOR INFORMATION

Section 2 – Report

Background

- 2.1 The Wealdstone area has been identified by the Council and the Mayor of London as a priority area for regeneration and is designated in the Harrow Core Strategy and the London Plan as an Opportunity Area. The vision for the area as described in the Harrow and Wealdstone Area Action Plan and updated in the draft Regeneration Strategy 2014 – 2026 is to deliver 5,500 new homes, two new schools and around 3,000 additional new jobs. Section 2 of the study sets out the relevant local, regional and national policies.
- 2.2 The redevelopment of a number of key development sites in the area will change travel patterns and increase travel demand which will have implications for transport infrastructure in Wealdstone. The three main sites in the Council's regeneration programme are Poets corner (existing civic centre site), Byron Park (leisure centre site) and the new Civic Centre site (Peel House car park). In order to help unlock the wider development potential of Wealdstone a transport study was commissioned with the council's engaged transport consultant to assess the impact of all known and committed development on the transport network and to identify opportunities to enhance the public realm and transport network to support growth.
- 2.3 Details about the opportunity area, area action plan and site specific information about development sites in the regeneration programme are in section 3 of the study (Appendix 1).
- 2.4 The objectives of the study were to:
- Understand the current conditions in the study area for all modes of transport;
 - Determine the change in traffic demand and impact on the highway network due to committed and known development proposals;

- Facilitate regeneration in the area by identifying opportunities and developing measures to mitigate the impact of proposed development on the road network in the study area

Transport issues

2.5 A full review of the condition and functionality of the existing transport network was undertaken and the key transport issues identified in the town centre area are summarised below:

- The 2011 census data shows that car use is the most popular form of transport in the three postcode sectors in wealdstone, with 38% travelled by driving a car or van, and only 11% travelled to work did so by foot or by bicycle. Levels of car use in the area are higher than both the London (30%) and North London averages (29%). Walking levels are slightly above the London average – 10% in Wealdstone compared to 9% in London, however cycling levels are a mere 1% mode share to work compared to the 4% London average.
- Wealdstone Ward has the highest level of multiple deprivation in the borough. Low income is a known risk factor for physical inactivity and health inequality and is a factor in current transport trends.
- Wealdstone town centre is well connected by public transport, with several bus routes serving it as well as both rail and underground / overground services from Harrow and Wealdstone station. Unlike many other town centres, Harrow and Wealdstone station is close to the town centre.
- All bus routes, including route 140 which is a key route connecting Harrow Weald and Heathrow Airport, have identified journey time reliability issues and points of delay at a number of locations within Wealdstone town centre. The future expansion of services to facilitate the increased number of trip from regeneration will exacerbate this situation.
- The two bus stops in the centre of the High Street are located opposite each other which cause problems for through traffic as nine bus services use the stops.
- There is a high demand for on-street parking in Wealdstone town centre, and this pressure may increase with the new Civic Centre development at the Peel House car park site and the wider regeneration programme to build 5,500 homes and create 3,000 new jobs.

- The current cycle provision is disjointed and confusing, which may discourage people from cycling around the town centre and the cycle mode share is very low.
- The presence of street clutter reduces the effective footway width at several areas within the town centre, creating pinch points and congestion, the overall appearance of the public realm is poor throughout the town centre, a mix of paving materials has been used which is dated in appearance and in need of renewal. There is a moderate to high pedestrian footfall between the station and the centre of the town.
- The A409 corridor creates severance between east and west sides of the town with only a few controlled crossing points, excessive guard railing is present at several locations, creating convoluted routes for pedestrians.
- The number of recorded pedestrian and cyclist casualties was higher than the borough average for the period assessed. A high number of collisions occurred at the A409 High Street / Locket Road junction and there were clusters of collisions at several junctions within the study area.
- Wealdstone is an identified air quality focus area where NO2 levels in the vicinity of Harrow and Wealdstone station and the A409 often exceed the maximum levels allowed.

2.6 The review of the existing situation, transport issues and potential opportunities is in section 4 of the study (Appendix 1).

Urban design issues

2.7 An urban design review was also undertaken and a number of issues and key links in the town have been identified as summarised below:

- The existing wider connectivity to and from Wealdstone, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, is poor.
- It was noted that Harrow Council had attended a UDL design panel in May 2016 to discuss the Major Scheme bid proposals for Wealdstone and were encouraged to better define the spaces within the town centre and how they should be used.
- Improving links to Wealdstone will become increasingly important due to the large number of proposed developments.

- A separate scheme, Wealdstone Square (formerly named Trinity Square) includes a new public space and improved public realm between the eastern end of Headstone Drive and the High Street.
- Urban design proposals have been developed for the area outside Harrow & Wealdstone station, to better connect the station with the High Street.
- Urban design proposals have also been developed to better link development sites to the High Street, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists. This includes the Kodak Site, Byron Park (Leisure Centre) and existing Civic Centre developments.

2.8 The urban design review is in section 5 of the study (Appendix 1).

Design options

2.9 The general approach to improving the town centre public realm and transport network is to follow a similar model to the Station Road scheme implemented in Harrow Town Centre. This innovative scheme is featured as a best practice example in the TFL publication “Better Streets Delivered”. The scheme prioritises bus, cycle and pedestrian movement and uses narrower carriageways, wider footways, low height kerbs and less street furniture to create a pedestrian friendly environment.

2.10 A number of technical stakeholder’s workshops including Council Transport, Regeneration and Economic Development teams and representatives of Transport for London was held to identify issues and opportunities and developed ten scheme options to tackle the issues identified. These are listed in the table below.

	Name	Details
1	Do minimum	Retain existing traffic management arrangements. Re-design junctions and links to improve pedestrian and cycle links and improve the public realm in the town centre.
2	High Street two-way and Palmerston Road closed	Two-way operation restored on the length of the High Street. Closure of the Palmerston Road arm of the A409 roundabout. Level surfaces outside the station and from Canning Road to the A409 junction. Improved junctions, links and public realm as in Option 1.
3	Headstone Drive Two-Way	Allow two-way traffic on Headstone Drive and Canning Road. Downgrade junction outside the station. Potential option to close Ellen Webb Drive to traffic.
4	New link to Palmerston Road	Create new carriageway link from Ellen Webb Drive to Palmerston Road through public house development site. Downgrade junction outside the station. Potential to close Ellen Webb Drive south of development site and release land for development.

5a	The Bridge and High Street (Palmerston Road to A409) bus only	Bus and cycle only northbound and southbound on High Street between Palmerston Road and A409. Servicing on High Street to take place off peak. New cycle and pedestrian link through the public house development site.
5b	The Bridge and High Street (Palmerston Road to A409) bus only and Headstone Drive one-way	As Option 5a. Headstone Drive east of Cecil Road to operate as one-way eastbound with access onto High Street via Trinity Square. Access to A409 from the west would be via Ellen Webb Drive – High Street – Palmerston Road.
5c	The Bridge and High Street (Palmerston Road to A409) bus only and Masons Avenue Eastbound Only	As Option 5a. Mason Avenue eastbound only west of Herga Road (western access).
6	High Street bus only (Masons Avenue to A409)	Bus and cycle only northbound and southbound on High Street between Ellen Webb Drive and A409. Servicing on High Street to take place off peak. Access to A409 from the west would be via Ellen Webb Drive – The Bridge. All movement signalised junction at the A409/ The Bridge junction. New cycle and pedestrian link through the public house development site. Potential to downgrade Palmerston Road and routes east- west bus routes along Palmerston Road with new bus stops.
7	High Street pedestrianisation (Palmerston Road to A409)	Close High Street to all traffic between Palmerston Road and A409. Re-route bus services along Palmerston Road and A409. Servicing on High Street to take place off peak.
8	High Street two-way and The Bridge bus / cycle only	Allow general traffic to use High Street in both directions. Close The Bridge to general traffic to create a dedicated interchange space outside the station.
9	Headstone Drive and Canning Road bus / cycle only	Canning Road and western end of Headstone Drive restricted to buses and cycles only. Revised route for east-west buses.
10	LBH Major Scheme bid	Buses diverted to enter town via Canning Road, section of High Street made one way between Canning road and A409. Canning Road and Palmerston Road made one way towards High Street. Junction improvements on A409.

2.11 An appraisal scoring system based on assessing highway operational performance, pedestrian environment, cycling environment, public transport, public realm, regeneration and parking was used to review the proposals by the Council's transport consultant. The list of options was reduced from 10 to 4 for more detailed modelling work to be undertaken. The options shortlisted are shaded in the table.

2.12 The design options are in section 7 and the shortlisting of options in section 8 of the study (Appendix 1).

Transport modelling

2.13 Traffic modelling has been undertaken using both strategic and local modelling techniques to determine the current operation of the highway network (2016 base year) and predict the future situation (2021, 5 years

later) taking account of all changes in traffic from planned development sites in Wealdstone and background forecast traffic growth. Each of the shortlisted design options has been evaluated with the model to assess the proposed interventions.

- 2.14 TfL's strategic West London Highway Assignment Model (WeLHAM) has been used to determine the future year traffic flows and turning volumes at key junctions within the study area. The model matrix was adjusted in accordance with best practice to achieve a better level of correlation between modelled flows and the base year (2016) observed traffic flows. The TfL Model Auditing Process (MAP) was used to support the assessment of the current highway network to inform proposed design options.
- 2.15 Outputs from the 2021 future year WeLHAM model indicated that with no changes to the infrastructure there will be a marginal reduction in traffic flow on roads within the study area in the future. Despite the overall increase in the quantum of development within Wealdstone there is likely to be a substantial overall reduction in car parking provision within these developments which will result in traffic growth being limited.
- 2.16 The overall increase in the number of trips generated by the proposed developments in Wealdstone are forecast to be made predominantly by sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling and public transport) especially for commuting trips.
- 2.17 Each of the shortlisted options was modelled and the key findings were as follows:
- Option 1 – Results in minimal change to traffic flows across the Wealdstone town centre road network and has no significant benefits over the existing situation.
 - Option 2 - Allowing traffic to access the High Street southbound increases flows along the High Street, reduces flows on the A409 George Gange Way and increases flows on Masons Avenue. It is likely to result in a detrimental impact on the High Street which would generate more noise, congestion, reduce air quality and limit opportunities for improved public realm and bus service performance due to vehicle dominance.
 - Option 3 - Results in a significant reassignment of traffic away from Wealdstone town centre along the High Street and the A409 onto inappropriate minor residential roads including Byron Road, Cecil Road and Marlborough Hill. This is due to junctions on the A409 being unable to accommodate the additional traffic demand arising from the scheme.

This would be highly undesirable and cause a significant reduction in the quality of life for residents living in those streets.

- Option 10 - A moderate increase in traffic flows on the High Street northbound and Palmerston Road is predicted. The proposed High Street / Palmerston Road and A409 George Gange Way / Canning Road junction improvements reduce delay on the High Street northbound, attracting some traffic from the A409 George Gange Way route.

2.18 Option10 (Major Scheme bid) demonstrated the best fit with the mayoral transport strategy objectives. The scheme accommodates the transport modal shift changes resulting from regeneration to public transport, walking and cycling.

New mayoral transport strategy / additional design options

2.19 During 2017 a new draft Mayor's Transport Strategy was published. The key objective of the strategy was to increase the proportion of travel by sustainable transport modes to 80% by walking, cycling and public transport and reducing 3 million car journeys each day by 2041. This is a significant step change from the previous strategy. The aims of the strategy are:

- Healthy Streets and healthy people
- A good public transport experience
- New homes and jobs

2.20 To reflect the Mayor's revised transport objectives two additional sub-options of Option 10 were developed with elements of the scheme refined to optimise the benefits for the town centre and public transport. These were as follows:

- Option 11A: An offside southbound bus lane on A409 George Gange Way between the High Street and Canning Road and a modified layout at A409 George Gange Way / Canning Road junction, with a secondary southbound stop line before the proposed signalised crossing on A409 George Gange Way.
- Option 11B: Two-way bus operation on the High Street north of Canning Road, i.e. no rerouting of bus services, and the existing layout at the junction of A409 George Gange Way with Canning Road.

2.21 The appraisal of the shortlisted options and additional options shows that the best performing options on balance across the appraisal criteria are options 11A and 11B particularly in terms of improved journey time performance for buses.

- 2.22 The healthy Streets for London initiative aims to ensure people and their health are put at the centre of decision making in London. It ultimately aims to reduce reliance on personal vehicles, in favour of walking, cycling and using public transport to create a healthy city. The design options were reviewed against the healthy street indicators and options 10, 11A and 11B showed more significant benefits.
- 2.23 An important benefit of the healthy streets approach in the Wealdstone area will be to encourage more physical activity, healthy lifestyles and a consequent improvement in public health within the community.
- 2.24 The evaluation of the design options is in section 9 and the healthy streets assessment is in section 10 of the study (Appendix 1).

Recommendations of study

- 2.25 Design option 11A and Option 11B should be taken forward for further analysis to identify a single preferred option that makes a business case for improved bus services infrastructure.
- 2.26 There is a strong case for improving sustainable transport networks in Wealdstone to support a new Liveable Neighbourhood bid for Wealdstone High Street and the town centre area.
- 2.27 The increased demand to park in Wealdstone area will require a responsive programme of parking management schemes to mitigate the impact of development.
- 2.28 The public realm opportunities identified along The Bridge, Headstone Drive and Peel Road will require a significant funding investment. The Council will need to undertake a detailed assessment and cost evaluation of each scheme to assess the funding requirements, funding opportunities and consider a possible delivery programme.

Next steps

- 2.29 The Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holder and local ward councillors have been briefed on the findings of the study which has been received positively. The Council's regeneration team will now be reviewing the findings of the study, considering the impact and taking account of this as necessary in the regeneration programme for Wealdstone.
- 2.30 Since the completion of the transport study a number of the recommendations have been taken forward.
- 2.31 The transport study findings have been discussed with the TfL bus priority team and the proposals in design options 11A and 11B have been reviewed and a site inspection undertaken. TfL have indicated that the proposals merit

further investigation and have funded a more detailed study to model the bus services improvements possible and develop a business case for consideration. The study is currently in progress and is expected to be concluded by the end of 2017/18.

- 2.32 In October 2016 a Wealdstone Town Centre scheme was submitted as a Major Scheme bid to TfL. The scheme was not admitted to the Major Scheme programme because of the changes in Mayoral priorities. The Major Schemes Programme has now been replaced by the Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme which focuses on delivering the healthy streets agenda. The original bid has been reviewed and the scheme has been substantially revised to reflect on the key policy drivers set out in the Liveable Neighbourhoods Programme Guidance and the Draft Mayors Transport Strategy. A revised scheme the “Wealdstone Sustainable Neighbourhood Project” was submitted to TfL for consideration in October 2017.
- 2.33 There is a separate report on the agenda for this meeting which gives details about the Liveable Neighbourhood bid.
- 2.34 The Wealdstone Square project which is funded by the GLA regeneration fund is nearing the end of the scheme development phase and has been designed to accord with the outcomes of this transport study and to complement the Liveable neighbourhood bid. The scheme is likely to be implemented in 2018/19.
- 2.35 The Panel are requested to note the need to take account of parking pressures in the Wealdstone area resulting from development and to prioritise schemes in the area when reviewing schemes to be included in the annual parking management programme. It is necessary to be responsive to the changes in parking demand in this area of development intensification.
- 2.36 Further feasibility study work will need to be undertaken on the key links in the town identified in the urban design review. Funding will need to be identified to take this forward.

Section 3 – Further Information

- 3.1 There is no further information.

Section 4 – Financial Implications

- 4.1 Taking forward the recommendations of the study will rely on successfully bidding to TfL and external agencies for funding to develop and implement the physical changes to the transport infrastructure required.

- 4.2 An allocation of £50k in 2017/18 has already been approved by TfL to support further study work to assess options 11A and 11B in the transport study to evaluate the bus services benefits.
- 4.3 A Liveable neighbourhood bid for Wealdstone has been submitted to TfL in October this year for funding of £2 million over a three year period from 2018/19 – 2020/21. A decision on the bid is anticipated by December / January.
- 4.4 The urban design links identified will require further feasibility study work to be undertaken. Funding still needs to be identified to take forward this study work.
- 4.5 The total funding approved by the GLA for the Wealdstone Square project is £850,000 which was awarded over two years 2016/17 and 2017/18. Approximately £680k of this is allocated to the public realm improvements. Costs of £87k were spent in 2016/17 and £763k has been carried forward into 2017/18. It is likely that some of this funding may be carried forward to 2018/19 due to delays with the implementation programme, subject to the agreement of the GLA.

Section 5 - Equalities implications

- 5.1 A programme of investment was included in the Transport Local Implementation Plan which was approved by full Council. The LIP was subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment where schemes were identified as having no negative impact on any equality groups. Positive impacts of the programme were demonstrated on some equalities groups, particularly, women, children and people with mobility difficulties.

Section 6 – Council Priorities

- 6.1 The funds allocated by TfL and Harrow for transport improvements will contribute to achieving the administration's priorities:
- Making a difference for the vulnerable
 - Making a difference for communities
 - Making a difference for local businesses
 - Making a difference for families

Section 7 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Jessie Man



on behalf of the
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 15/11/17

Ward Councillors notified:

YES

Section 8 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

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Background Papers:

Local Implementation Plan 2