

LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST

Meeting Date:	PLM – 14 April 2016
Title:	Mini Holland Leyton to Blackhorse Road Route Markhouse Road Section
Directorate:	Neighbourhoods
Report of:	Head of Highways and Infrastructure
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Wards affected:	Higham Hill and High Street
Appendices:	Appendix A : Leyton-Blackhorse Route Map Overview Appendix B : Markhouse Road/South Grove Consultation Leaflet Appendix C : Markhouse Road/South Grove Consultation Drawings Appendix D: Markhouse Road/South Grove Consultation Report
Status:	Open

1. Summary

- 1.1 Waltham Forest was one of only three councils in London to be awarded Mini-Holland funding with an allocation of £27 million.
- 1.2 On 9 September 2014 Cabinet approved the delivery plan for the Mini Holland Programme.
- 1.3 The Mini-Holland Business Case was approved by Transport for London Surface Board on 18 November 2014.
- 1.4 On 10 February 2015 Cabinet delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhoods in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment to approve future individual schemes of the Mini Holland Programme.
- 1.5 This report relates to the Leyton to Blackhorse Road Route scheme – Markhouse Road and South Grove (Northern Section).
- 1.6 As part of the scheme development stage, the council has undertaken extensive engagement and consultation that has influenced the development of the final proposals.

- 1.7 This report sets out the proposals that were publically consulted on and the corresponding changes that have resulted from the consultation process, and from further assessment of the proposals against the available project budgets and Mini-Holland principals and objectives.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 For the reasons set out in this report the Director of Neighbourhoods, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment is recommended to:

2.1.1 Approve the recommendations outlined within this report;

2.1.2 Approve the design for the Leyton to Blackhorse Road Route scheme – Markhouse Road (Northern Section) as set out in this report and agree the scheme to proceed to detailed design and subsequent construction as part of the Mini-Holland Programme;

2.1.3 Note that the proposals for South Grove is to be further developed in coordination with development plans for South Grove and Brunner Road, with works being programmed in line with the local development to reduce the risk of abortive works taking place;

2.1.4 Note the results of the consultation report as outlined in Appendix D; and

2.1.5 Agree that officers undertake a further community engagement for the proposed public space/linear park area (between Boundary Road and 247 Markhouse Centre) to ensure the local community's views and aspirations are fully considered with the design of the public space.

Leyton to Blackhorse Road Route – South Grove and Markhouse Road

CYCLING IMPROVEMENTS

Markhouse Road

- Introduce a cycle track at the same level as the pavement on both sides of the road between South Grove and Boundary Road to create separate, designated space for cycling;
- Widen the pavements on both sides of Markhouse Road to accommodate the cycle track and make the area more appealing to pedestrians;
- Introduce three new raised signal controlled pedestrian and cycle crossings (Toucan crossings) to improve connectivity and safety for cyclists and pedestrians travelling north and south along the Leyton to Blackhorse Route.

- Create five new bus stop boarders between South Gove and Boundary Road on Markhouse Road to ensure bus user and cycle safety.
- Provide new wayfinding signage and road markings to local attractors such as the Blackhorse Road station, Walthamstow Market, and Walthamstow Central.
- All licensed crossovers and commercial entrances will be maintained and improved where possible and in agreement with the land owner.

Theydon Street Connection

- To provide a safe route onto Lea Bridge Road for cyclists travelling to/from the west - avoiding the Markhouse Road/Lea Bridge Road junction - a cycle route connection is proposed along Theydon Street, Hibbert Road, Bride Road and Hitcham Road.
- To make this connection as safe and accessible as possible it is proposed to make Theydon Street one way entry from Markhouse Road (Appendix C & D). This provides the space to implement a new Toucan crossing point that provides a easy and safe access for the route.

Boundary Road Connection

- For people cycling to and from Leyton, an alternative alignment has been developed at the southern end of Markhouse Road that will safely direct people away from the Markhouse Road/ Lea Bridge Road junction and along quieter side streets.
- At the Markhouse Road/Boundary Road junction, the route will be aligned along Boundary Road and Northumberland Road before connecting to Manor Road on the other side of Lea Bridge Road. The route will then continue towards Leyton via Manor Road and Grange Park Road.

South Grove

- Introduce cycle tracks on both sides of the road between Markhouse Road and Gosport Road to create a separate, designated space for cycling;
- Widen the pavement surrounding the roundabout to accommodate the cycle tracks and make the area more appealing to pedestrians; and
- Working with local developers the borough will secure contributions for improvements to the highway and public realm and also contribute to the connectivity of the borough cycle network.

CREATING A SAFER ENVIRONMENT

Provide Better Lighting for Pedestrians:

- On South Grove and Markhouse Road

New and Improved Crossings:

- Create a new raised pedestrian and cycle zebra crossing on the eastern side of the Markhouse Road/ South Grove roundabout to improve connections to St James Street, Selbourne Road and The Mall
- Create a new raised pedestrian and cycle zebra crossing on the southern arm of the Markhouse Road/ South Grove roundabout to encourage vehicles to slow down when approaching the roundabout
- Create new raised pedestrian and cycle zebra crossing points on Markhouse Road next to Ashford Close and Acacia Road. This will improve access in the area for pedestrians and cyclists whilst also making it easier and safer to cross the road.

Blended 'Copenhagen' Crossings

- Install blended 'Copenhagen' crossings at all side road junctions on Markhouse Road between Boundary Road and South Grove Road. Blended crossings encourage vehicles to slow down when entering or exiting the side road, ensuring that pedestrians and people cycling have right of way, as per the Highway Code

Road safety improvements:

- All existing entrance and exit points on South Grove and Markhouse Road will be improved where possible in agreement with the land owner(s) to reduce any potential vehicle, pedestrian, cycle conflicts
- By reducing the carriageway width the borough is able to introduce improvements for cyclists and pedestrians whilst also creating additional space for public realm improvements and planting
- Carriageway resurfacing with high friction anti-skid surface treatments at all new pedestrian and cycle crossing points
- Reducing the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph.

Bus Stop Improvements:

New bus stops and shelters will be introduced where possible - subject to funding – to improve access and convenience for bus users at the following locations,:

South Grove

- To the west of Arkley Crescent (Westbound); and
- To the east of the Markhouse Road (Eastbound).

Markhouse Road

- North and opposite of Markhouse Avenue (North/ Southbound);
- North of Downsfield Road (Northbound);
- South of Queens Road (Southbound); and
- North and south of Samantha Close (North/ Southbound).

New and Improved Public Spaces

- As part of the Markhouse Road proposal, concept designs have been developed to improve the look and feel of the road between Boundary Road and 247 Markhouse Centre. These hope to transform the long grass area into a new public space that people can walk and cycle through. This was presented as an outline concept to attract initial thoughts and views from the local community
- Overall, the scheme aims to transform the existing green space (including the current footway and cycle track) into a linear parklet with an integrated walking and cycling route.. Ideas presented for the public space included, but were not limited to:
 - Planting pollution absorbing shrubs, trees and plants within the scheme where adequate space is available and ground conditions allow for planting;
 - Creating a 'planted area' to separate people walking and cycling from the road;
 - Introducing trees and a community growing scheme, where residents can plant their own crops and plants; and
 - Improving the bus stop waiting area for bus passengers, by making the area bigger with better seats, including an electronic bus timetable, and raising the bus stop area to improve accessibility for less mobile users.
- Following the consultation, officers have been carrying out a face-to-face perception survey focused solely on the linear green space, The survey asks people on the street what they think of the space at the moment, if they would like to see improvements, and what ideas they have about how the space could be made better.
- The survey is on-going and so far 47 people have participated, nearly all of which are in favour of improvements.

- Following this, officers intend to hold several community design workshops where people can help shape the layout and uses of the space, planting, and other detailed design elements, as well as ideas for naming the new parklet. Based on discussions at the drop-in event and through the perception survey, there is considerable interest and willingness from local people to get involved in the design and development of this space.
- The long term intention is to help to garner interest and ownership of the space through engagement, and to set up meaningful involvement of the community in the long term management and maintenance of the space. Improvements to the park space will be delivered in stages, with the core backbone and infrastructure associated with the space installed first and the landscaping/community elements coming at a later stage.

Parking and Loading Improvements

- It's important that parking and loading along Markhouse Road meets the needs of local residents, as well as businesses who are vital to the local economy.
- To accommodate the proposed improvements to Markhouse Road, the borough will make revisions to the current parking and loading arrangements and are proposing to remove 10 short term parking bays north of Downsfield Road, and relocate eight parking bays onto the following side streets:
 - Three bays in Queens Road
 - Two bays in Downsfield Road
 - Three bays in Low Hall Lane
- While this means two parking bays would not be relocated, parking surveys undertaken road showed that only 40 per cent of the parking bays were used during the day, which equates to approximately four vehicles per day. With this in mind, officers feel that relocating eight parking spaces is enough to meet the demand in the area.
- To accommodate the new segregated cycle lanes between Boundary Road and South Grove, single yellow lines will be removed with double yellow "at any time" restrictions being introduced. This is necessary as the road will become too narrow to allow vehicles to park. Vehicles wishing to park near this section of Markhouse Road will still be able to use the existing parking allocation on all side streets.
- Increased parking pressures due to the removal of the existing single yellow line restrictions on Markhouse Road are not expected to adversely impact on areas with existing controlled parking restrictions in place. There may however be increases in parking in areas that do not have controlled parking due to the proposed removal of single yellow lines. These impacts may be noticeable at times when local events are taking place i.e. church and mosque events.

3. Background

- 3.1 Waltham Forest Council's Mini-Holland Programme comprises a set of integrated schemes that will deliver vast improvements in safety and convenience for cyclists and pedestrians, along with comprehensive public realm enhancements to support residential and local shopping areas.
- 3.2 The overarching objectives of the Leyton to Blackhorse Mini-Holland route are to better connect areas within the borough, such as our Town Centres and residential areas, making it easier for people to walk or cycle for local journeys. The Forest Road scheme will also provide improved connectivity with neighbouring boroughs to support and facilitate longer journeys.
- 3.3 This will be achieved through the implementation of segregated cycle tracks, improved footways, and by providing road safety improvements via the introduction of safer crossing points which link Blackhorse Road, Markhouse Road, Church Road, Manor Road and Grange Park Road to the surrounding areas and local amenities.
- 3.4 In February 2015 Cabinet delegated authority to the Director of Neighbourhoods in consultation with Portfolio Holder for Environment to approve future individual schemes of the Mini-Holland Programme including the award of any contracts that are deemed to be key decisions.
- 3.5 The Leyton to Blackhorse Road Route was initiated in March 2015 via an online "perception survey" that commenced on 17 March and concluded on 7 April 2015.
- 3.6 The perception survey was conducted within the Leyton to Blackhorse Route southern section boundary (Church Road, Leyton High Road, Lea Bridge Road) to gain an understanding of what residents and businesses thought about the area and the type of improvements they would like to see.
- 3.7 In total over 3,000 surveys were hand delivered to all households. 144 people and 70 businesses responded.
- 3.8 Following the perception survey, a detailed analysis report was prepared in May 2015, which highlighted various concerns and aspirations from the local community that were geographically mapped. This was used to inform the development of an initial concept design.
- 3.9 Respondents' feelings about the southern section of the route (Church Road, Manor Road, Grange Park Road) were primarily dominated by concerns over the attractiveness of the area. 56% of respondents noted this as an issue in relation to the area they had highlighted on the map. The second most selected option was "it is unsafe", with 51% selecting this option.
- 3.10 When asked what changes could be made to the local area to make it a better environment for walking and cycling, the four most popular responses were:
 - 50% of respondents would like to see more places to sit introduced

- 47% would like to see more cycle parking introduced
- 47% would like to see more protected cycle lanes introduced
- 42% would like to see more safer crossing points introduced

3.11 To help manage the development and consultation of proposals for the overall Leyton to Blackhorse Route scheme, the route has been split into sections as shown in Appendix A and the table 1 below. This has allowed the project to be developed in stages and local people to be consulted on the sections of most interest to them.

Table 1: Route Sections

Section	Roads/Streets	Consultation dates
Northern Section	South Grove/Markhouse Road	29 February to 20 March 2016
Southern Section	Church Road	July 2015
	Manor Road/Grange Park Rd	July 2015

4. Consultation Process

4.1 Consultation dates

The public consultation took place between 29 February to 20 March 2016.

4.2 Consultation flyer

To notify the local community a flyer was produced to promote the consultation and proposed improvements. These were hand delivered by an independent company to just over 3000 properties within the consultation area.

4.3 On-line consultation

The consultation primarily ran through an independent on-line engagement platform called Common Place but there were other ways for people to give their views as outlined further on. The plans and proposals were available to view and people could feedback on the proposals overall:

Respondents were asked to rate how they felt about each of these elements using a 'negative to positive' slider scale. Once completed they were asked why they felt like this and were provided with a series of 'tags' for them to tick.

Having ticked the tags, respondents were asked to provide comments as a free text box. Respondents were finally asked to submit these comments along with the tags and rating. The Commonplace system automatically allowed respondents to view their own comments along with other respondents.

4.4 Hard copy versions

Hard copy versions of proposals were also produced as part of a consultation document, for residents without internet access. A hard copy version of the questions and feedback form was also produced, which residents could request and return free of postage.

Total Hard Copies Sent Out – Over 50

4.5 Street signs

A number of street signs were put up along the street advertising the consultation.

Eight street signs were put up along South Grove and Markhouse Road where the improvements were being proposed.

4.6 Public drop-in sessions

One drop-in session was held to enable residents and businesses to view the plans in more detail. Council staff attended to answer specific questions and address concerns and hard copy versions of the consultation document and questionnaire were available.

In total 70 people attended the sessions.

The drop-in event details were:

- Monday, 14 March between 6pm and 9pm at Kelmscott School, Markhouse Road E17

4.7 Ward Councillor briefings

Briefing sessions were offered with Councillors from the Markhouse Ward however this offer was not taken up at the time.

4.8 Transport for London

Transport for London promoted the consultation on their consultation hub website.

4.9 Social media and on-line promotion

Social media was also used to promote and advertise the consultation as follows

- A total of 4 tweets were sent out, with 5 likes, 14 re-tweets, 3,872 impressions and 47 link clicks.
- The consultation was posted on Facebook with a reach of 401, 3 likes and 2 shares.

4.10 E-mail and Mini-Holland e-newsletter

An e-mail was sent to all people who had responded to the early engagement perception surveys and had provided contact details. A feature on the consultation was also placed in the regular monthly Mini-Holland e-newsletter.

4.11 Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholders consulted with as part of the scheme include:

- Transport for London
- London Buses
- Metropolitan Police
- London Fire Brigade
- London Ambulance Service
- Utilities Companies

4.12 Public Consultation Results

In total 162 people responded to the consultation providing 366 comments. 12 hard copy versions of the questionnaire were received and these were inputted into the on-line engagement platform Commonplace, and included in the analysis

The on-line engagement platform Commonplace received 6,231 individual page views.

Respondents were asked to rate how they felt about each proposal, using a sliding scale. The results showed that there was support for the proposals overall.

Road Improvement Proposals:

- 51% of respondents indicated they were positive
- 37% were neutral

Note: As there were a relatively high number of neutral comments overall (37%), officers analysed all neutral feedback separately to understand any issues for this pattern. Once analysed results showed that there was no real variation from the main comments highlighted within the consultation report (Appendix D).

- 12% were negative

Theydon Street One-Way Proposals:

- 63% of respondents indicated they were positive
- 26% were neutral
- 11% were negative

Public Space Proposals:

- 64% of respondents indicated they were positive
- 23% were neutral
- 13% were negative

5. Implications

5.1 Finance, value for money and risk

- 5.2 The funding of the overall Leyton to Blackhorse Mini-Holland Route is allocated within the 15/16, 16/17 and 17/18 financial years, and includes a total of £1,802,999 from the Mini Holland programme supplemented by £181,000 TfL LIP funding and Section 106/278 funding from local developments.
- 5.3 The current estimated cost of implementing the northern section as detailed in this report is £1,043,891 which will be funded entirely from a combination of Mini-Holland, LIP and developer contributions at no financial risk to the borough.
- 5.4 Staff resources for the investigation, consultation, design and implementation have been fully funded within current available budgets.

6. Timescale

- 6.1 The works will be programmed in phases to minimise disruption. The Markhouse Road proposals are programmed to be complete by October 2016 with the South Grove proposals being programmed in line with local development programmes as they come forward.

7. Legal

- 7.1 The Council may by order regulate the use of roads under section 6 and other specific powers of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- 7.2 Appropriate Traffic Management Orders will be made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and advertised in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.
- 7.3 Before making these orders consideration must be given to section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which contains the Council's duty to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway.
- 7.4 This proposal has been designed with due consideration of our Network Management Duty relating to Traffic Management Act 2004. Consideration has been given to all road users to secure the expeditious movement of traffic as far as practical.

8. Equalities and diversity

- 8.1 A full Equality Analysis has been undertaken, which has considered the impact of the proposal on those with protected equality characteristics.
- 8.2 **Gender**
- 8.3 The reduction of traffic speeds and improvements for cycling and walking in the area has the potential to improve road safety for all but especially for the most vulnerable road users and consequently reduce personal injury road accidents.
- 8.4 **Age**
- 8.5 Improved safety and higher quality pedestrian and cycle facilities will make the area safer, easier to use and more attractive for walking and cycling across all age groups, particularly those currently underrepresented.
- 8.6 **Disability**

8.7 The proposals will make the area more accessible and inclusive for all road users, particularly more vulnerable groups. The detailed design process will include a review and update of disabled bay provision for residents in consultation with the Council's mobility team.

8.8 Race/ ethnicity

8.9 No negative impacts are expected from the proposals on the community in respect of ethnicity.

8.10 Faith/ religion

8.11 No negative impacts are expected from the proposals on the community in respect of faith.

8.12 Sexual orientation

8.13 No negative impacts are expected from the proposals on the community in respect of sexual orientation.

9. Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime and disorder)

9.1 The programme will have a positive impact on sustainability by encouraging a shift in transport mode from car use to cycling and walking. This will also contribute to improving the health and well-being of the local community and air quality through decreased congestion. The design guide includes an aspiration to employ low energy use equipment e.g. lighting units; using SUDS (Sustainable Urban Drainage System) compliant materials; and following the Council's Sustainable Procurement Strategy for sourcing materials. An increase in road safety is considered to provide an opportunity for modal shift to encourage walking, cycling and increased use of public transport.

9.2 The Mini-Holland programme will contribute to achieving the objectives set out within the councils Air Quality Action Plan.

10. Climate Change & Sustainability Impact Assessment

10.1 There are no climate impact implications to water, waste, land or buildings. Decreased congestion is considered to be a benefit to air quality. Any increase in road safety is considered to provide an opportunity for modal shift to encourage walking, cycling and increased use of public transport.

11. Council infrastructure

11.1 Whilst the size of this programme represents a significant investment of council resources, the programme is externally funded and there is sufficient funding to employ staff required for the project or to backfill existing council officers engaged in the programme.

12. CONCLUSION

The consultation shows that there is clear support for the proposed scheme and measures recommended within this report. It is therefore recommended that the scheme be taken forward to the detailed design stage and implementation.

Approved by

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Cllr Clyde Loakes
Environment Portfolio Holder

Date:

Approved by

.....
Michele Moloney
Director of Neighbourhoods

Date: