



REPORT

HIGHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

12 November 2013

Subject Heading:

Proposed traffic improvements in Elm Park Avenue, Elm Park.

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The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Clean, safe and green borough	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Excellence in education and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities for all through economic, social and cultural activity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value and enhance the life of every individual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
High customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUMMARY

This report deals with the outcome of a consultation relating to provision of loading facilities for businesses, improving accessibility at existing bus stops and parking for shoppers in Elm Park Avenue, between The Broadway and Diban Avenue.

The scheme is within **St Andrews** ward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee having considered the responses and information set out in this report recommends to the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment that the measures as listed in Appendix A (Schedules 1, 2, 3 and 4) of this report are implemented and the necessary traffic orders are made.
 - i) Schedule 1 – ‘At Any’ time Waiting and Loading parking restrictions,
 - ii) Schedule 2 – Freight loading facilities for shops and businesses,
 - iii) Schedule 3 - Pay and Display parking for shoppers, visitors etc,
 - iv) Schedule 4 – Provision of clearway restrictions at existing bus stops.
2. That it be noted the cost of carrying out the works is £20,000. This would be met by Transport for London through the allocation for 2013/14 Local Implementation Plan for improving reliability of public transport package.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Background

As part of the Local Implementation Plan for 2013/14, funding has been allocated by Transport for London to improve reliability of public transport and freight loading facilities in the borough. As a result, Elm Park Avenue (between The Broadway and Diban Avenue) has been progressed to address the problems associated with inconsiderate parking at the existing bus stops which prevents buses from gaining kerbside access to the bus stops and provision for loading facilities for businesses.

2. Existing traffic conditions in Elm Park Avenue

- 2.1 Elm Park Avenue handles considerable amount of both local and through traffic. Traffic is permitted in both directions and it is connected to major junctions at both ends. The western end of Elm Park Avenue is connected to A125 Upper Rainham Road whereas the eastern end is connected to Abbs Cross Lane. The road is intersected at a roundabout by St. Nicholas Avenue in the north and The Broadway in the south.

- 2.2 There is a London Underground station in The Broadway for the District Line services which provides rail services between west London and Upminster via Victoria station. Commuters arrive at the station by public transport, taxis, private cars, walking and cycling. All this leads to considerable amount of traffic flow in the area during peak periods.
- 2.3 Elm Park Avenue mainly comprises of residential properties and there are a few businesses such as Tesco Express, Sainsbury, Co-operative food, bakery, hot food takeaways, estate agents, pharmacy, cafes, restaurants, florists etc. All these businesses attract significant number of customers and delivery of goods throughout the day.

Public Transport facilities in Elm Park Avenue

- 2.4 Elm Park Avenue conveys high frequency of bus services namely 165 (10), 252(10) 365 (10) and 372 (6). This equates to 36 buses per hour travelling in both directions. The figures in the bracket indicate number of buses operating per hour in both directions.

3. Review of existing waiting and loading restrictions

- 3.1 The existing waiting and loading restrictions in Elm Park Avenue operate between 08:30am to 06:30pm, Monday to Saturdays whereas loading is also permitted during these restricted times, for a maximum period of 20 minutes. Lack of dedicated loading bays for freight has a detrimental impact on the traffic flow, particularly during peak periods and often occurs at bus stops.
- 3.2 The existing bus stops in Elm Park Avenue (between The Broadway and Diban Avenue) are outside nos. 25 Elm Parade and 196. The stops do not have clearway restrictions to prevent waiting and loading 'At Any' time, applicable throughout the week. As a result, measures are considered necessary at this stage to improve accessibility which involves altering the kerb heights to enable buses to park close to the kerb side so that loading ramps can be deployed which are especially needed for people using wheelchairs.

3.3 Proposed loading bay in Elm Park Avenue, outside Tesco Express

Currently, there are no dedicated loading bays for businesses in Elm Park Avenue and lack of on-street loading facilities has been raised locally by shopkeepers. Businesses in Elm Park Avenue receive deliveries throughout the day. The delivery vehicles park in the road or close to a bus stop which prevents buses from pulling close to the kerb line.

As a result, it is important to provide a loading bay outside nos. 18 and 19 Elm Parade to ensure that deliveries are carried out safely and without disrupting the traffic flow. It must be empathised that the loading bay is not specifically proposed for Tesco Express but also to provide benefits to all the shops and businesses in Elm Park Avenue. The proposals are shown on drawing no. QL025-0B-230.

The loading bay will allow free loading for maximum 20 minutes with no return within 2 hours. The loading bay will operate from 08:30am to 06:30pm, Monday to Saturdays inclusive which will be in line with other loading bays in The Broadway.

4. Proposals to improve traffic flow in Elm Park Avenue

4.1 The average width of the carriageway in Elm Park Avenue between The Broadway and Diban Avenue is approx. 8.2 metres. Taking the location of the carriageway where the width is restricted is in the vicinity of the bus stop outside nos. 190 to 196 Elm Park Avenue and an articulated lorry outside Tesco Express ie nos.19 to 20 Elm Parade. With a bus parked (2.5 metre wide) at the existing bus stop and an articulated lorry (2.5 metre wide) parked, this arrangement leaves 3.2 metres of the effective carriageway space for two way traffic. This clearly demonstrates that the width is not sufficient to permit two way traffic thus resulting in build up of congestion.

4.2 To overcome the problem, it is proposed to widen the carriageway by one metre at specific locations i.e. existing bus stop (north side) and new loading bay in Elm Park Avenue. Carriageway widening will not impede the pedestrian movements as there is sufficient area for pedestrians on the footway. The proposals are shown on drawing no. QL025-0B-230.

4.3 The new measures will result in achieving 4.2 metres of carriageway for traffic which will assist the movements of larger vehicles such as fire tenders, delivery vehicles etc.

5. Proposals to improve accessibility for passengers at existing bus stops

5.1 At present, buses experience difficulties to gain access into the existing bus stops in Elm Park Avenue to pick up or alight passengers due to inconsiderate parking at existing bus stops or parking in the path where buses start to pull in towards the bus stop. This forces buses to stop in the road thus blocking the traffic.

5.2 Passengers with disabilities find it difficult to alight or board as buses are unable to pull close to the kerb. To overcome the problem, it is proposed to provide clearway restrictions at the bus stops. Clearways will reduce the problem of accessibility by allowing buses to pull close to the kerb and safely deploy their ramps. In addition, clearways allow buses to use the stops more efficiently thus minimising the length of time a bus is stationary. The proposals are shown on drawing no. QL025-0B-230.

5.3 The proposals also involve off setting the existing bus stop by 1 metre into the footway situated outside property nos. 20 to 28, Elm Parade. The measures will not involve to any loss of highway trees.

6. **Proposals to provide parking for shoppers**

6.1 It is proposed to provide parking for shoppers to enhance passing trade. The proposals involve provision 4 bays in Diban Avenue. Parking would operate by Pay and Display and a ticket machine would be installed at a convenient location to dispense tickets. The parking tariff would be the same as in The Broadway, Elm Park. The proposals are shown on drawing no. QL025-0B-230.

6.2 The proposals will result in displacing some minor parking, however, there is ample amount of parking in Elm Park such as the public car park in St.Nicholas Avenue, The Broadway and with free parking in Elm Parade and Tadworth Parade after 10am.

7. **Outcome of the consultation**

7.1 Following the Approval in Principle by the Council's Highways Advisory Committee as part of the 2012/13 Local Implementation Plan programme, Streetcare Services proceeded with the design and consultation on various proposals.

7.2 Approximately 237 letters were hand delivered in the consultation area. The proposals were also advertised in the Romford Recorder, London Gazette on 27th September 2013 and site notices were displayed at various locations in the consultation area. The closing date for receiving any comments was 18th October 2013. 11 (4.6%) responses have been received and these were analysed carefully.

7.3 Members of St. Andrews Ward, Highways Advisory Committee, Elm Park Regeneration Partnership and other local stakeholders were consulted. The purpose of consulting in advance was to provide an opportunity to

Members and other stakeholders to comment on the proposals before moving forward to a formal consultation process.

8. **Summary of consultation responses**

The comments are summarised in details and these are included in Appendix B of this report.

11 responses have been received of which only 1 respondent has objected the proposals. 8 respondents have agreed whereas the other two have not objected but queried if the Council will provide parking permits for the proposed parking bays in Diban Avenue.

9. **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the proposals as publicly advertised and consulted are agreed. The proposals involve provisions of clearway restrictions at existing bus stops, a loading bay for businesses, 4 parking bays by Pay & Display and general improvements in traffic flow etc. The measures are attached in Appendix A (Schedule of Proposals) of the report and are shown on drawing no. QL025-0B-230, attached to this report.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial Implications and risks:

It is estimated that the cost to implement the measures is £20,000, which would be met by Transport for London through the allocation for 2013/14 Local Implementation Plan for measures to improve reliability of public transport scheme. The funding will need to be spent by 31st March 2014, to ensure full access to the grant.

This is a standard project for Streetcare and there is no expectation that the works cannot be contained within the cost estimate. There is an element of contingency built into the financial estimate. In the unlikely event of an over spend, the balance would need to be contained within the overall Streetcare Capital budget.

Legal Implications and risks:

Parking restrictions and loading bays require public advertisement and consultation of proposals before a decision can be taken prior to their implementation.

Bus Stop Clearways do not require traffic orders, but the Department for Transport guidance suggests that local consultations should take place.

Human Resources Implications and risks:

The proposal can be delivered within the standard resourcing within Streetcare, and has no specific impact on staffing/HR issues.

Equalities Implications and risks:

The Council has a general duty under the Equality Act of 2010 to ensure that its highway network is accessible to all users. Where infrastructure is provided or substantially upgraded, reasonable adjustments should be made to improve access. In considering the impacts and making improvements for people with protected characteristics (mainly, but not limited to disabled people, the young and older people), this will assist the Council in meeting its duty under the Act.

The provision of fully accessible bus stops assists with making public transport more inclusive to all sectors of the community, but most especially disabled people and people using pushchairs. Accessible bus stops will be of benefit to people using wheelchairs, but also people who have walking, balance and dexterity difficulties and blind and partially-sighted people.

Loading restrictions do not allow parking by blue-badge holders, but are sometimes necessary in order to maintain traffic flow, traffic capacity or to improve road safety by preventing all parking in key locations.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Scheme project file: QL027 – Improving reliability of buses (Elm Park Avenue).

Appendix A

(Notice of Proposals)

Draft schedule for recommendations

- Waiting and Loading parking restrictions
- Clearway restrictions at existing bus stops
- Freight loading facilities for businesses
- Pay and Display parking for shoppers

Schedule of Proposals

SCHEDULE 1

Diban Avenue, both sides, between the southern kerb-line of Elm Park Avenue and a point 10 metres south of that kerb-line.

Elm Parade, Elm Park Avenue

- (a) the north side, between a point 3.8 metres east of the common boundary of Nos. 14 and 15 Elm Parade and a point 20.1 metres east of that common boundary;
- (b) the north side, between a point 3.1 metres east of the common boundary of Nos. 20 and 21 Elm Parade and a point 5.8 metres east of that common boundary.

Elm Park Avenue

- (a) the south side, between a point 2.9 metres west of the common boundary of Nos. 196 and 198 Elm Park Avenue and a point 16.9 metres west of that common boundary;
- (b) the south side between the common boundary of Nos. 188 and 190 Elm Park Avenue and a point 10 metres east of the eastern kerb-line of Diban Avenue.

SCHEDULE 2

Elm Parade, Elm Park Avenue, the north side, from a point 2.4 metres east of the common boundary of Nos. 17 and 18 Elm Parade extending eastward for a distance of 19.0 metres.

SCHEDULE 3

Diban Avenue, Elm Park, the west side, from a point 10 metres south of the southern kerb-line of Elm Park Avenue extending southward for a distance of 24 metres.

SCHEDULE 4

Elm Parade, Elm Park Avenue, the north side, from a point 2.7 metres east of the common boundary wall of Nos. 20 and 21 Elm Parade extending eastward for a distance of 25 metres;

Elm Park Avenue, the south side, from the common boundary of Nos. 188 and 190 Elm Park Avenue extending westward for a distance of 25 metres.

Appendix B

Summary of Consultation Responses

1. London Buses operations (LB), part of Transport for London stated that the proposals will operationally make it easier for buses to serve the existing bus stops and hence LB fully supports the proposals.
2. London Buses (Infrastructure Control) support the proposals.

3. Metropolitan Police, Traffic Management Unit

The Metropolitan Police have responded that they support the scheme for Elm Park Avenue.

4. Elm Park Regeneration Partnership (EPRP)

EPRP was consulted prior to the consultation and had provided the following comments:

- The shopkeepers will provide better and constructive feedback on the proposals than EPRP.
- There were problems in Elm Park Avenue recently whereby a Tesco lorry was illegally parked for 25minutes on the zig-zag road markings by the Zebra crossing and later it moved to park directly outside Tesco to unload. This had created chaos in the road.

5. Mr W. Dowd has objected the proposals on the following grounds:

- Considers that by restricting parking outside the shops will take away the passing trade.
- It is the delivery lorries of Tesco that create the congestion problem. Buses currently do not have the restrictions in the road, therefore, a bus can stop to alight or collect passengers, so there is no need for parking restrictions.

Staff comments: The respondent was advised that the current proposals include provision for 4 parking bays in Diban Avenue. These bays have been designed to assist passing trade for shops. He was further informed the importance to provide clearway restrictions at existing bus stop ie to prohibit inconsiderate parking at bus stops.

6. Ms H. Elliott supports the proposals ie the measures are in the right direction. She had queried if the existing tree outside The Taj Restaurant will be removed, queried the meaning of accessibility zone and if the Council will issue parking permits to park in the parking bay proposed in Diban Avenue.

Staff comments: The respondent was informed that the existing highway tree will not be removed outside the Taj Restaurant. The respondent was informed that accessibility zones involves raising existing kerbs to 140mm above the road level so that buses can park close to the footway to allow easy boarding and alighting.

The parking bays proposed in Diban Avenue will operate by Pay and Display, from 08:30am to 6:30pm, Monday to Saturdays. Parking after the prescribed times will be free including on Sundays.

For Pay and Display parking, the Council does not issue parking permits but drivers have to purchase a parking ticket and display it in their cars. Such type of parking generally leads to short term parking so that drivers park for short durations for shopping. This parking has a greater turnover for drivers to park in the bays to ensure that passing trade is maintained which the local shops heavily rely on.

7. Mr. T. Mathews has commented that he supports the proposals.
8. Ms J. Pickering a resident of 186A Elm Park Avenue had queried if the Council will issue parking permits to park in the proposed parking bay in Diban Avenue.

Staff comments: Ms Pickering was advised that Pay and Display parking operates between 08:30 to 6:30pm, Monday to Saturdays and parking will be free thereafter.

9. Mr C. Cole, Street Leader of Elm Park has welcomed the proposed measures in Elm Park Avenue. He has provided the following comments:
 - The proposed loading bay and the bus stop outside nos. 18 to 21 Elm Parade could be extended to help buses and delivery vehicles to manoeuvre safely.
 - Proposals should have included provisions for a loading bay outside the Hobby shop as they receive deliveries of building timber.
 - Has welcomed the proposals of Pay and Display in Diban Avenue.
 - Buses experience problems on west side of Greggs bakery due to inconsiderate parking whereby buses have to stop in the road to load or collect passengers.

Staff comments: Mr Cole was advised that the bus lay-by could not be extended up to No. 26 Elm Parade due to the presence of underground statutory services which would be costly to divert. The same applies with his suggestion to provide a loading bay on south side o/s the Hobby shop and inseting the bus lay-by into the footway.

In regards to the inconsiderate parking problems in Elm Park Avenue between Greggs Bakery and Sainsbury, Mr Cole was informed that the Council had proposals in the past to provide clearway restrictions at existing bus stops to prevent inconsiderate parking. The proposals were, however, rejected by the Council's former Area Committee.

As Sainsbury has recently opened their store and it is anticipated that this section of the road will become busy and there is a potential need for a pedestrian crossing. The Council will investigate if Transport for London can provide funds to undertake the works to improve safety and accessibility for passengers.

10. Mrs Clifford a local resident and two other residents have off street parking next to the shops. Because of inconsiderate road users they frequently cannot access the parking area or find it has been used by other drivers.

She further considers that three parking spaces in Diban Avenue are taken up by the blue badge holders, so the proposals will limit parking even more, therefore, the current proposals will lead to more difficulties than it will solve.

Staff comments: Mrs. Clifford was informed the owner of local premises has purchased the vacant land next to his shop and has plans to formalise parking. If this happens then the parking problem for the residents particularly those who live above the shops will be resolved.

She was further advised that the Pay and Display will operate between 08:30am to 06:30pm, Monday to Saturdays. Parking will be free after the prescribed times and also on Sundays (all day), therefore, she and other residents can park in the bays on first come first serve basis. Furthermore, drivers displaying Blue badge permits are only allowed to park for free for 3 hours, thereafter, normal parking tariff will apply.

11. A local shop catering the needs for mobility and health care requirements support the proposed loading bay in Elm Park Avenue.

Appendix C

Proposed layout drawing

QL025-0B-230