
CITY OF LONDON
ST MARTIN'S LE GRAND / GRESHAM STREET JUNCTION
USER SURVEY AND SITE OBSERVATIONS

MARCH 2014

INTRODUCTION



This study was commissioned by the City of London's Built Environment Department in December 2013.

It investigates how the St Martin's Le Grand/Gresham Street junction is perceived by its different users. It also aims to assess its success in reducing vehicle speeds and improving pedestrian safety.

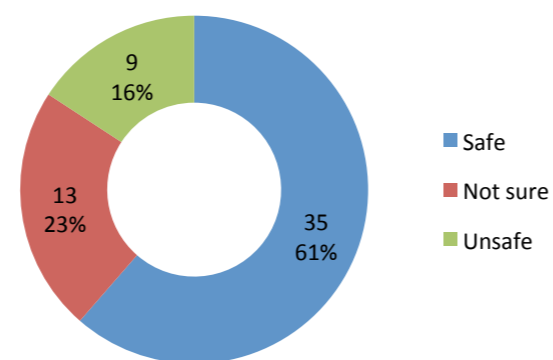
This has been done by:

- A. Site observations at peak hours
- B. Interviewing 61 users to understand how this junction is perceived:
 - 40 pedestrians,
 - 10 cyclists,
 - 5 taxi drivers,
 - 6 van drivers.

This site work was carried out in January 2014.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

FEEDBACK FROM ALL USERS INTERVIEWED TO THE QUESTION «DO YOU THINK THE JUNCTION IS SAFE»

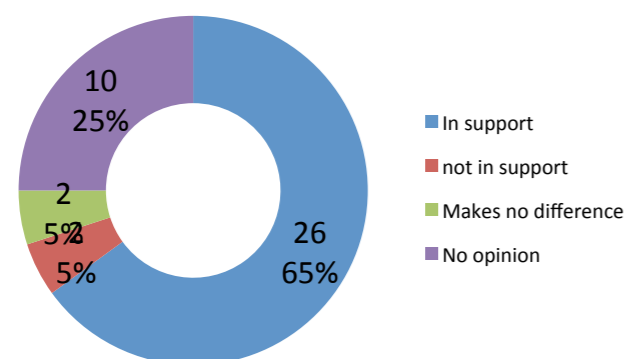


1. THE JUNCTION IS CONSIDERED TO BE SAFE BY MOST USERS

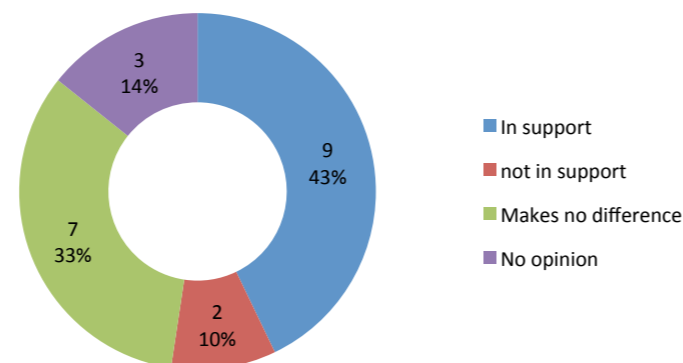
Most pedestrians and vehicle drivers consider this junction to function safely.

However, a number of pedestrians mentioned the sharp turning circles of vehicles entering Gresham Street and the speed of vehicles as factors hindering safety.

FEEDBACK FROM PEDESTRIANS



FEEDBACK FROM VEHICLE DRIVERS

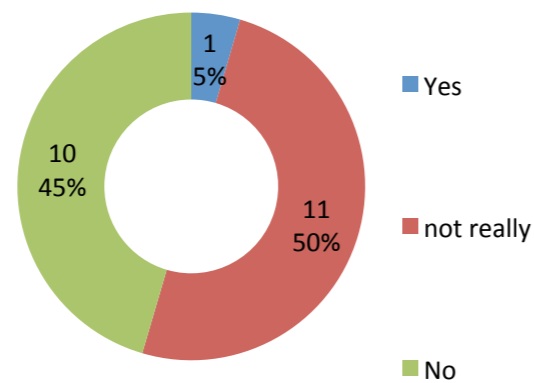


2. PEDESTRIANS ARE IN SUPPORT OF THE RAISED TABLE TREATMENT, VEHICLE DRIVERS ARE NOT CONVINCED

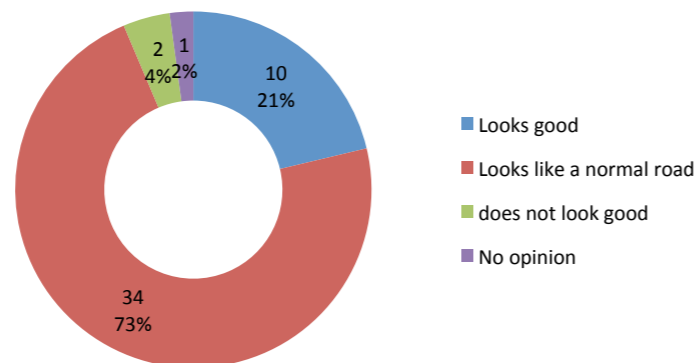
Around two thirds of pedestrians are in support of having the road surface raised, mainly for accessibility reasons. A large number of users mentioned benefits for mobility impaired people.

However, whilst few vehicle drivers are against this approach, a third consider that it does not have any impact on their behavior. A few explained this by the fact that the gradient of the approach is too shallow to force vehicles to slow down. Site observations confirmed that only around half of vehicles slow down when entering the crossing area.

FEEDBACK FROM PEDESTRIANS TO THE QUESTION «DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU HAVE PRIORITY OVER VEHICLES?»



OVERALL FEEDBACK ON THE AESTHETICS OF THE JUNCTION



3. PEDESTRIANS DO NOT FEEL THAT THEY HAVE PRIORITY OVER CARS

95% of the users interviewed felt like the design of the junction did not give priority to pedestrians over vehicles. This was confirmed by site observations that showed that vehicles stop to give way to pedestrians in approximately only a quarter of cases.

4. THE JUNCTION IS CONSIDERED BY MOTS USERS TO LOOK LIKE A STANDARD CITY JUNCTION

When asked if they thought that the junction looked good, most users were surprised by the question and replied that it looked like a normal road. However it is interesting to note that very few users (2 out of 61) considered that it did not look good.

OVERALL, THE JUNCTION IS CONSIDERED TO LOOK AND FUNCTION LIKE A STANDARD CITY JUNCTION

Most pedestrians and vehicle drivers consider that this junction is safe but does not look or feel different from other junctions in the City. Whilst the raised surface is considered to be a positive feature for accessibility reasons, most vehicle drivers state that it does not modify their behavior. Site observations tended to verify this.

DETAILED USER FEEDBACK

The following pages present the detailed feedback and site observations for :

- pedestrians,
- cyclists,
- taxi drivers,
- van drivers.

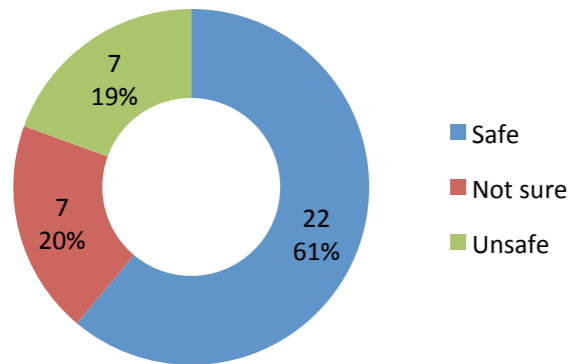
The following questions were asked to users:

1. Do you think the junction is safe?
2. Are you in support of having the road surface raised?
3. Do you feel you have priority over vehicles (this question was only asked to pedestrians)?
4. Do you think that the junction looks good?
5. How often do you use the junction?

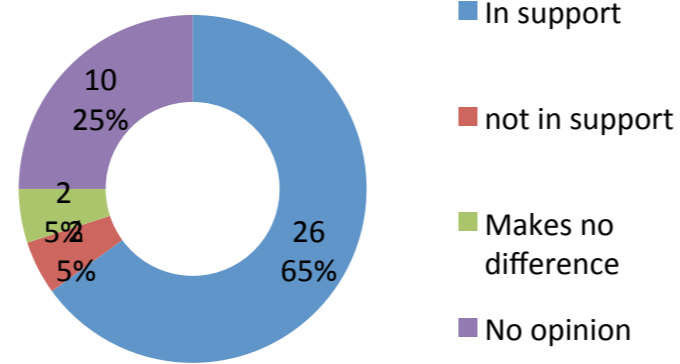
These surveys were carried out the 15, 16 and 17 January 2014.

PEDESTRIANS - 40 INTERVIEWED

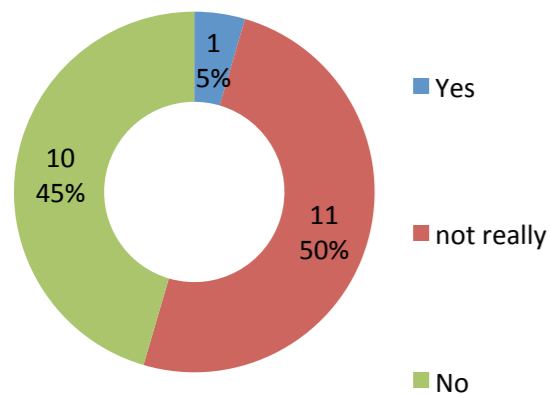
DO YOU THINK THE JUNCTION IS SAFE?



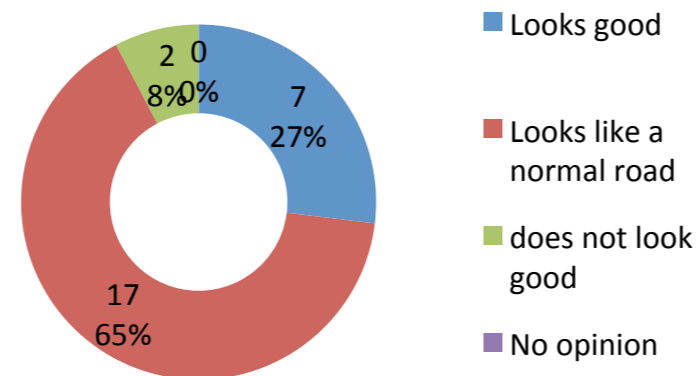
ARE YOU IN SUPPORT OF HAVING THE ROAD SURFACE RAISED?



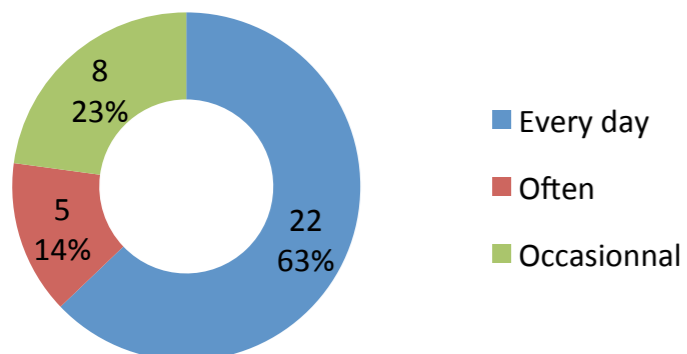
DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE PRIORITY OVER VEHICLES?



DO YOU THINK THE JUNCTION LOOKS GOOD?



FREQUENCY OF USE



FEEDBACK

The survey indicates that most pedestrians consider this junction to be safe and are in support of having the road surface raised at footway level, this is seen as particularly useful for mobility impaired people.

However, the general feeling is that this junction functions like a standard City junction, pedestrians do not feel that they have some sort of priority over vehicles or that the junction looks different from other City roads.

MAIN COMMENTS

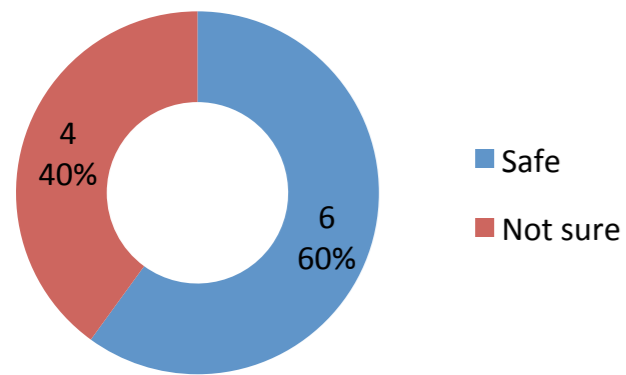
- 5 mentioned that vehicles do not always slow down when entering the junction
- 3 mentioned that vehicles often come close to pedestrians
- 3 stated that cars take sharp turns when entering Gresham Street
- 4 stated that the main safety issue is that some pedestrians assume that they have priority and cross through traffic

BEHAVIOUR OBSERVATION

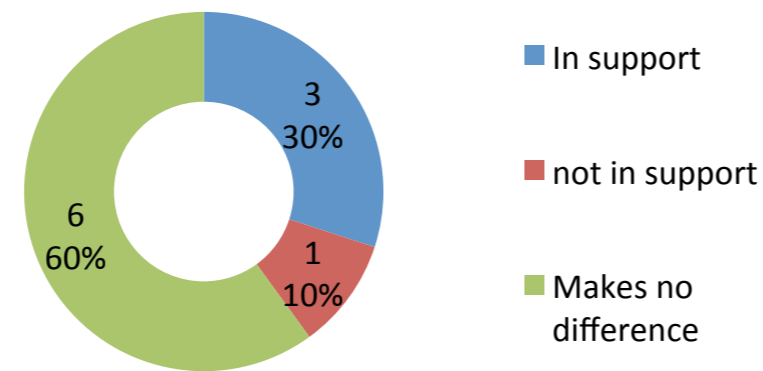
- Most pedestrians wait for the junction to be free of vehicles to cross
- A small number of pedestrians were observed crossing without looking left or right, assuming that they had priority
- vehicle drivers stop to give way to pedestrians only if forced to (i.e. when pedestrians are already engaged)

CYCLISTS - 10 INTERVIEWED

DO YOU THINK THE JUNCTION IS SAFE?



ARE YOU IN SUPPORT OF HAVING THE ROAD SURFACE RAISED?



FEEDBACK

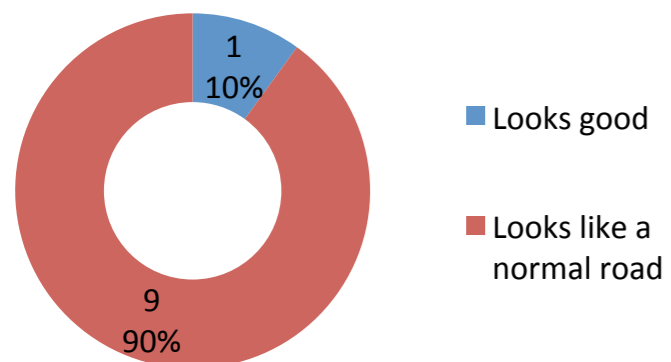
Feedback was generally positive, most cyclists did not have any particular comments to make and considered the junction to be safe. 2 mentioned that the recent enhancement works have improved the junction.

However, 9 out of 10 thought that the junction looked like a standard City junction and 6 out of 10 stated that the raised surface treatment did not make any difference to the way the junction functions.

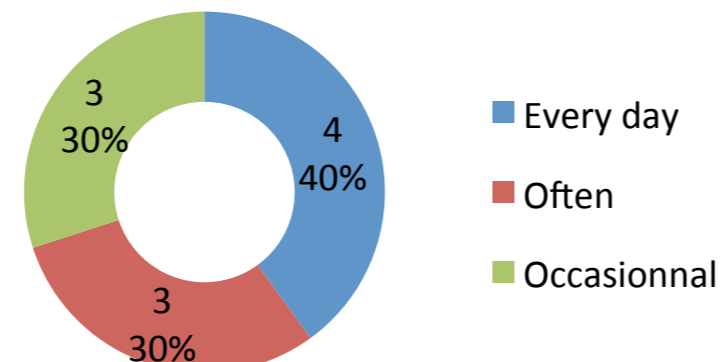
BEHAVIOUR OBSERVATION

- Most of the cyclists do not slow down when entering the junction
- Cyclists generally manage to merge through pedestrian traffic

DO YOU THINK THE JUNCTION LOOKS GOOD?

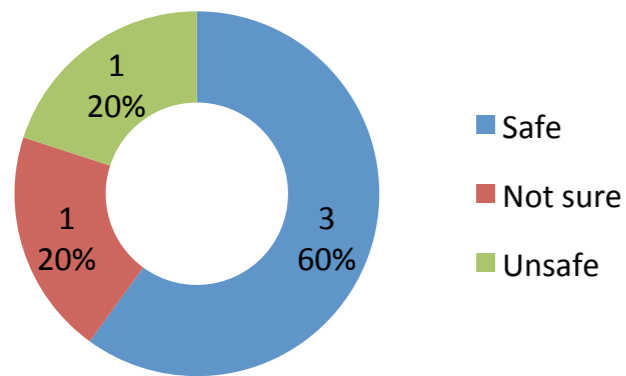


FREQUENCY OF USE

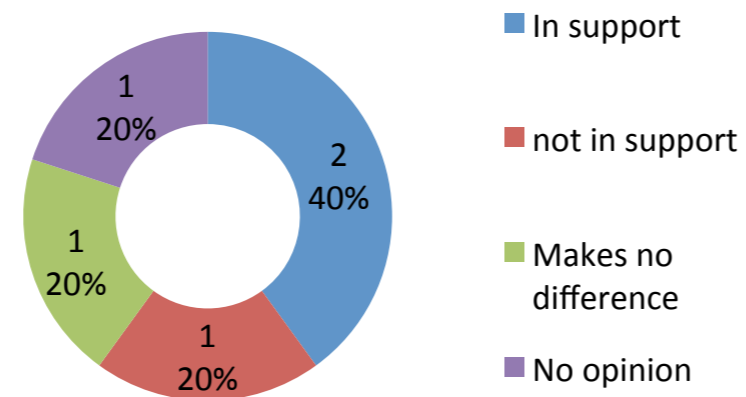


TAXI DRIVERS - 5 INTERVIEWED

DO YOU THINK THE JUNCTION IS SAFE?



ARE YOU IN SUPPORT OF HAVING THE ROAD SURFACE RAISED?



FEEDBACK

Most taxi drivers considered the junction to be safe.

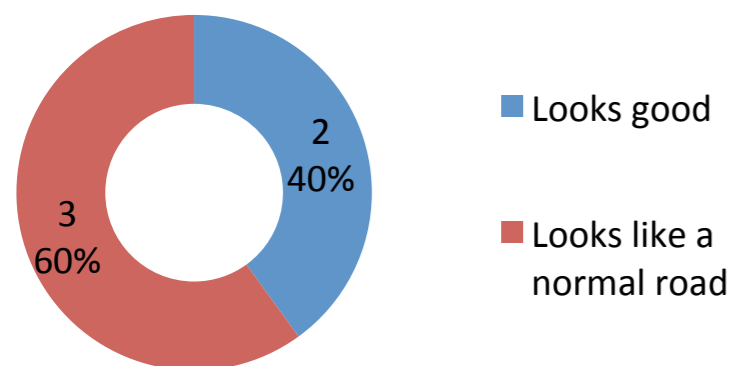
However they were divided on the benefits of having the road surface raised. 2 mentioned that it was good for mobility impaired people whilst one thought it encouraged pedestrians to cross through traffic which was seen as dangerous. Another one thought it made no difference.

They mostly considered that the junction looked like a standard City road.

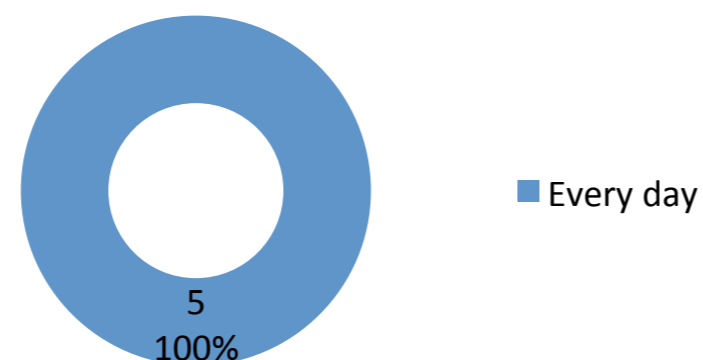
BEHAVIOUR OBSERVATION

- approx half of motor vehicles slowed down when entering the crossing area - the shallow gradient of the raised table does not seem to force drivers to slow
- a number of taxis were observed taking sharp turn at relatively high speed when entering Gresham Street
- a number of taxis were observed stopping to pick up and drop off costumers on and just before the junction

DO YOU THINK THE JUNCTION LOOKS GOOD?

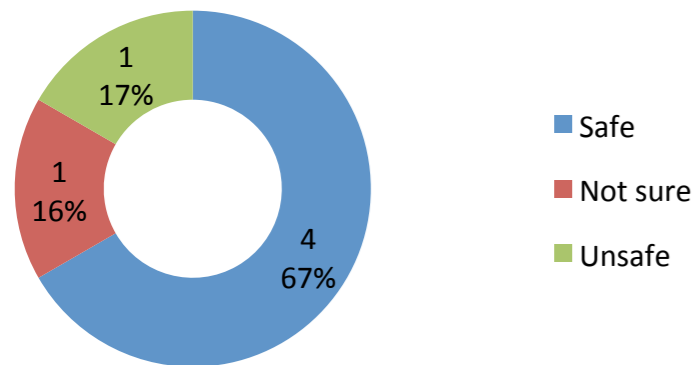


FREQUENCY OF USE

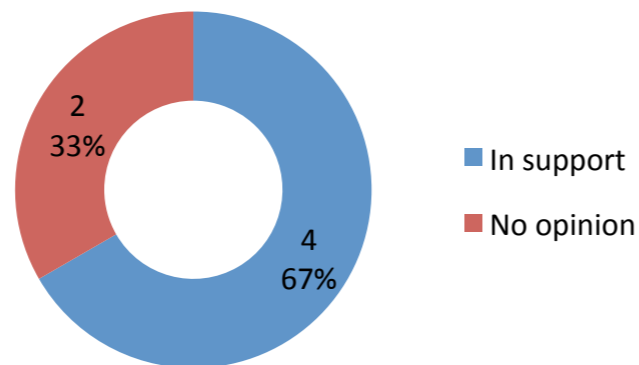


VAN DRIVERS - 6 INTERVIEWED

DO YOU THINK THE JUNCTION IS SAFE?



ARE YOU IN SUPPORT OF HAVING THE ROAD SURFACE RAISED?



FEEDBACK

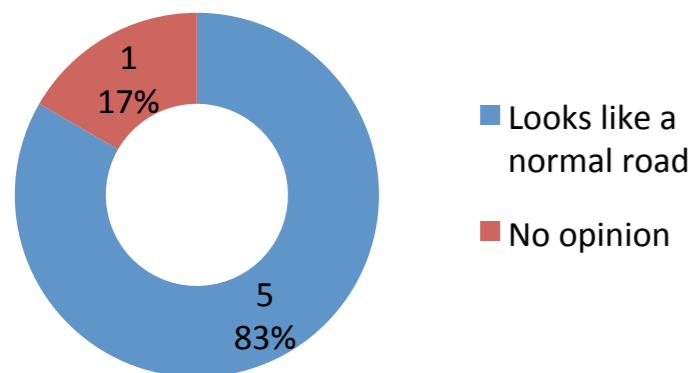
Van drivers had little to say about the junction. They mostly considered it to be safe and were in support of the raised carriageway treatment, seen as good for pedestrians and mobility impaired people.

However, they overwhelmingly considered the junction to look and function as a standard City road.

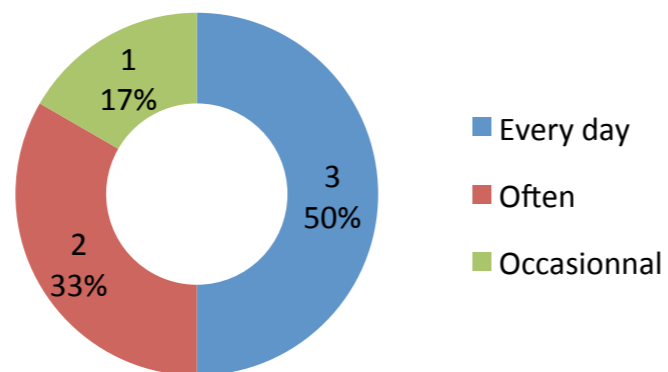
BEHAVIOUR OBSERVATION

- approx half of motor vehicles slowed down when entering the crossing area - the shallow gradient of the raised table does not seem to force drivers to slow

DO YOU THINK THE JUNCTION LOOKS GOOD?



FREQUENCY OF USE



CONCLUSION

As part of this study, 61 users of the St Martin's Le Grand/Gresham Street junction were interviewed. This was completed by site observations at peak times. Whilst this cannot be considered as a full survey of the junction's road users, the findings provide useful insights that can help further develop the City's approach to junction design.

In particular, this research suggests that this junction is considered to function safely by most users. However, whilst the accessibility benefits of the raised table treatment are widely recognised, it does not seem to modify the behavior of vehicle drivers, in terms of speed reduction or giving more priority to pedestrians. Neither is it considered to improve the aesthetics of the space.

Overall, this study suggests that the design of the junction is functional but could be improved to better pedestrian comfort, reduce vehicle speeds and enhance the aesthetics of the area.