

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	9 <sup>th</sup> March 2015
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Public</b>
Proposed Pedestrian Crossing at West Wickham Common	
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>For Decision</b>
Superintendent of Burnham Beeches, Stoke and City Commons	

### Summary

In July 2007 your Committee considered and agreed a proposal by Transport for London (TFL) to locate a Pegasus crossing on the A232 Croydon Road at West Wickham Common, subject to TFL gaining support from local residents for the scheme.

The public consultation was unfavourable, and TFL have recently provided a revised proposal to locate a Pelican crossing 20 metres further west along the Croydon Road that is more likely to gain local support. TFL are seeking the City's agreement, prior to the necessary further public consultation on this revised proposal.

### **Recommendations**

I RECOMMEND;

- Members approve Option 3 i.e. to facilitate the installation of a Pelican crossing on West Wickham Common. Location as shown in Plan - 3.
- The Committee authorise the Superintendent of the Burnham Beeches, Stoke & City Commons to liaise with Transport for London on the proposal, minimising the impact on the Open Space as far as is reasonably practicable.
- The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches, Stoke and City Commons is instructed to report back to the Committee on the outcome of the public consultation and TFL's response, with more detailed proposals clarifying any subsequent requirement to dedicate land for highway use.

### Main Report

#### **Background**

1. In 2004 Transport for London (TFL) received several letters from local residents concerned about the safety of pedestrians crossing the A232 Croydon Road, West Wickham close to Hartfield Crescent.

2. TfL commissioned a survey in September 2004. During a typical day the survey found the following: 69 pedestrian crossings movements, 40% of which were made by children and 10% by elderly people. There were 19,000 vehicle movements during the same period.
3. A public consultation exercise followed in February 2006 where TFL proposed two options involving pedestrian refuges. Both options required the carriageway to be widened and a significant land-take from open space owned by the City of London at West Wickham Common.
4. Written feedback from residents and stakeholders indicated that 10% of respondents rejected the idea of a crossing facility outright, because the proposals failed to preserve the rural character of the area. Over 29% of the 85 written remarks received by TFL advocated a signalised crossing and most of the negative feedback stated that the proposals did not go far enough to facilitate easy pedestrian access across the Croydon Road.
5. As a result of the public consultation these two proposals were rejected by the previous Superintendent with agreement from the local Residents Association.
6. In autumn 2006 Officers of the City of London and the London Borough of Bromley met TFL on West Wickham Common. TFL sought views on the feasibility of installing a Pegasus crossing over the A232 relatively close to the junction with Hartfield Crescent.
7. Officers from the City of London and London Borough of Bromley felt that the proposal would:
  - Create an unnecessary intrusion into a currently unspoilt part of West Wickham Common,
  - Not contribute significantly to the safety of children crossing the A232 because it is in the wrong place
  - Failed to recognise a 'desire line' for pedestrians and horse riders.
8. To better reflect the above and the City's overriding duty to keep the Common unbuilt upon the Superintendent suggested that another proposal should be considered i.e. to mitigate the land-take by reducing the amount of new build and returning the public car park at West Wickham to open space.
9. In June 2007 TFL responded by letter detailing new proposals for a Pegasus crossing. This also set out proposals to either close Hartfield Crescent to traffic or create a one way system, a matter of no direct consequence to the City but of potential debate and disagreement within the local community. TFL sought a definitive response from the City of London with regard to the proposals prior to engaging in any further public consultation. **(Appendix 1)**
10. In July 2007 your committee received a report of the Superintendent of the City Commons outlining all of the above issues. Having considered its contents Members approved the creation of new hard surfaces upon City of London land

on the basis that it would be mitigated in part by the closure and return to its natural aspect of the public car park at West Wickham. This approval represented a total loss to the open space of approximately 140sqm.  
**(Appendix 2)**

11. TFL then consulted the local community and published the results in June 2008. The majority of respondents (67%) were in favour of the proposed location of the crossing. However, 71% were against the closure of Hartfield Crescent, an intrinsic component of the design.
12. As a result TFL felt unable to implement this scheme, and now wish to present revised options for consideration instead.

### **The current situation**

13. On the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2014 TFL met with your Officers and presented 3 new options for the construction of a pedestrian (Pelican) crossing on the A232 at West Wickham Common. The revised options include alterations to the existing bus stops, the widening of Hartfield Crescent and the development of a new footway.
14. These three options discount the previously agreed position of returning all or part of the car park at West Wickham Common to open space as mitigation for the net loss of common. It is now felt by your Officers that loss of this amenity would be a significant detriment to the local community in terms of accessibility, in particular for users with impaired mobility, as well as restricting access to the open space for emergency vehicles.
15. Transport for London now wishes to consult local residents on the proposed designs and location for a Pelican crossing to be located 20 metres to the west of Hartfield Crescent. Prior to this consultation taking place it requires the City's support and approval to dedicate the required area of land at a future date to implement the proposal.
16. Members of the West Wickham Consultative Committee were presented the three options at their recent meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> January 2015. These responses indicate approval for the scheme in general and for Option 3 (as shown below) in particular
17. Representatives from the local Residents Association have indicated that there is likely to be strong local support for the general proposal and for Option 3 in particular.

### **Proposals**

18. That Members consider Transport for London's proposals for the installation of a pedestrian crossing on the A232 at West Wickham Common.

**Option 1.** Installation of Pelican Crossing 20 meters to the west of Hartfield Crescent. Full provision of pathways to bus stops north and south of main carriageways. Creation of a safe pathway on the western side of Hartfield Crescent. Full 'double carriageway', 5.5 m

road widening at Hartfield Crescent. Loss of City of London Open Space: **239m<sup>2</sup>. Plan 1.**

**Option 2.** As Option 1 but with no provision of pathways to bus stops, Loss of City of London Open Space: **118 m<sup>2</sup>. Plan 2.**

**Option 3.** As Option 2 but with provision of a single carriageway 3.5 m road at Hartfield Crescent. Loss of City of London Open Space: **78.5 m<sup>2</sup>. Plan 3.**

- **Option 4.** Reject all options as currently presented.

19. All three schemes require the City of London to release land to facilitate the proposals. Option 1 has by far the greatest impact but the proposal is designed to provide more formal approaches to the bus stops on either side of the carriageway. The construction of the footpath adjacent to the carriageway on Hartfield Crescent is an improvement on previous designs and will facilitate safer passage for pedestrians in all cases.
20. Options 1&2 represent an opportunity for TFL to carry out some road widening at this junction. They state “the narrow widths of Hartfield Crescent at its entrance does cause occasional problems with conflicting traffic affecting movements on the busy Croydon Road”. This might be viewed as a secondary issue to that of providing safe pedestrian access across the A232.
21. Option 3, is TFL’s least favoured option stating that they would be widely criticised if they did not design a project which stood the test of time or was sub standard, from their perspective. This view is unsympathetic to the City’s duties under the City of London Open Spaces Act, 1878.
22. All three options provide an opportunity to resolve long standing issues with some of the extensive and intrusive street furniture on common land at the junction of Hartfield Crescent and the A232, most of which is out of date and/or in poor condition.

### **Financial Implications**

23. All the costs associated with this project will need to be met by Transport for London

### **Legal Implications**

24. Members must consider whether the proposal is in the best interests of the West Wickham Common and Spring Park charity, including the promotion of its objects, being the preservation of the open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the public.
25. Under section 10(g) of the Corporation of London (Open Spaces) Act 1878 the City has the power to make new footpaths and roads over West Wickham Common, and to dedicate these to the public, subject to applicable highways legislation.

26. However, under section 7 of the Corporation of London (Open Spaces) Act 1878 the City must preserve the natural aspect of West Wickham Common as far as possible, and must protect the trees, shrubs, underwood, heather, gorse, turf, and herbage growing thereon.
27. In balancing these provisions, it is open to your Committee to agree to the dedication of additional land at West Wickham Common for highway purposes, if Members consider this to be desirable in order to improve access to and across the open space for the public, having particular regard to the City's responsibilities to disabled users under the Equality Act 2010. However the amount of land so dedicated should be limited to the minimum necessary to safely and effectively achieve this purpose.
28. If in the future any land dedicated for highway purposes was no longer required for these purposes then it would revert to being part of the Common.

### **Community Strategy & Other Significant Implications**

29. This Transport for London proposal could be considered to link two themes from the City of London Community Strategy as follows:
  - a) **Good transport for a thriving City** – by encouraging walking across West Wickham Common.
  - b) **An inclusive and outward looking City** – by permitting the proposal to install a pedestrian crossing we would be supporting an initiative which benefits an area beyond the City.

### **Conclusion**

30. The unfavourable outcome of the 2008 public consultation on the previous proposal for a Pegasus crossing at West Wickham Common has led local residents to demand further options be developed. Transport for London (TFL) is willing to meet this demand, but requires the City's prior approval for any new design it presents for public consultation.
31. TFL wish to consult local residents on three new designs for a crossing at a new location 20m to the west of Hartfield Crescent and requires a commitment from the City of London based on the options provided in this report.

### **Background Papers:**

Appendix 1: TFL Proposed Pegasus Crossing June 2007

Appendix 2: Epping Forest and Commons Committee report of 9<sup>th</sup> July 2007

Appendix 3: City of London aerial photographs detailing the extend of land required under the 3 proposals

Appendix 4: Visual & Schematic representations of typical pelican crossing.

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