

Appendix 2

Committee(s): Epping Forest and Commons Committee	Date(s): 9 th July 2007	Item no.
Subject: Proposed Pegasus Crossing Facility on the A232 Croydon Road		
Report of: Superintendent of the City Common	Public	
<u>Executive Summary</u>		
<p>Transport for London are seeking a definitive response from the City of London with regard to their proposals for a Pegasus crossing on the A232 Croydon Road, West Wickham prior to engaging in any further public consultation.</p>		
Recommendations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Committee approve option C including the dedication of land to highway purposes.• The Committee authorise the Superintendent to consult with TFL to accomplish the proposals.		

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. In particular specific concerns were expressed about the safety of children making their way to and from Hayes School.
2. In response to pressure from local residents TFL commissioned the area transport safety consultant Atkins Consultant Ltd to complete a survey of pedestrians and vehicles using the road in September 2004.
3. The survey revealed that between 7am and 7pm on a weekday there were 69 pedestrian crossing movements, 40% of which were made by children and 10% by elderly people. At the same time 19,000 vehicles used the road during the same time.

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4. Their study also found pedestrian waiting time could be up to 71 seconds, which is above the 60 second maximum waiting time as set out in the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy. This long waiting time increases the likelihood of pedestrians taking unnecessary risks in crossing a road with a speed limit of 40mph.
5. A public consultation exercise (including a public meeting) was held in February 2006 where TFL proposed two options involving pedestrian refuges. Both these 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.
6. Written feedback was sought from residents and stakeholders and 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.
7. As result of the public consultation these initial two proposals were rejected by the previous management team from the West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons with agreement from the local residents association. The situation remained quiet for a number of months but the scheme resurfaced again later in the year.
8. In autumn 2006 the Head Ranger Paul Ritchie and colleagues from the City of London and the London Borough of Bromley met on West Wickham Common with representatives from TFL to discuss alternative options. At this site meeting TFL sought views on the feasibility of installing a Pegasus crossing over the Croydon Road relatively close to the junction with Hartfield Crescent.
9. This initial proposal is shown in more detail on the drawing entitled Option A and involves creating hard surfaced routes for pedestrian and horse use to and from the crossing itself. Despite TFL's assertion that "*The current proposals cause comparatively little land-take...*" this Option A involves a significant loss of open space both sides of the Croydon Road for further urban development to resolve issues caused by increasing volumes and speed of passing traffic.
10. The officers from both the City of London and London Borough of Bromley rejected the scheme as it was being presented in Option A for the following reasons:

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- a) It would create an unnecessary intrusion into a currently unspoilt part of West Wickham Common, and
 - b) It would not contribute significantly to the safety of children crossing the road because it is in the wrong place and does not recognise a 'desire line' for pedestrians and horse riders.
11. It was also clear that TFL had failed to understand the City of London's overriding duty, under the Corporation of London (Open Spaces) Act 1878, to keep the Common unbuilt upon as open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the public.
12. At the meeting the City of London suggested that another proposal should be considered that sought to mitigate the land-take by reducing the amount of new build and allowing some restoration of existing hard standing.

Current Position

13. In response to that discussion TFL has developed a second Option B that seeks to install a Pegasus crossing over the Croydon Road at the junction with Hartfield Crescent. This proposal involves closing the section of Hartfield Crescent that crosses West Wickham Common except for emergency vehicles. It also proposes keeping all new development close to or part of existing hard standing thereby reducing land-take.
14. On the 13th June 2007 TFL sent a letter to the City of London detailing the proposals contained in the two aforementioned Options A and B with an explanation for the need for a Pegasus crossing on the A232 Croydon Road, West Wickham. In this letter TFL seek a definitive response from the City of London with regard to the proposals prior to engaging in any further public consultation.

Options

15. **Option A** - is a modification by TFL of an earlier proposal that was dismissed by the management team for West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons as unacceptable because of the extent of land-take (approx. 270 sq. metres) and the creation of extensive new hard surfaced routes over the open space.
16. **Option B** - is an improvement of the earlier proposal and was created by TFL in response to feedback from the Head Ranger, Paul Ritchie and colleagues from the City of London and London Borough of Bromley during the site visit. The land-take is less than Option A (approx. 210 sq. metres) and the creation of new hard surfaced routes is restricted to remaining close to existing development. However, there remains a net loss of open space to urban development.

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17. It is worth noting that this proposal requires the section of Hartfield Crescent that crosses West Wickham Common to be closed to vehicular traffic except emergency vehicles. It will require a turning head for vehicles, which will need to take alternative routes to gain access to the A232 Croydon Road. It is not clear whether the local community will support such a proposal and will require the London Borough of Bromley to instigate as the local Highway Authority.
18. **Option C** – is a proposal based on the aforementioned Option B but was suggested by the local City of London staff. This option seeks to mitigate the loss of open space caused by the construction of the crossing and associated hard surfaced tracks by closing the public car park that remains since the closure of the café on West Wickham Common.
19. This approach would return a proportion of the tarmac surface (approx. 140 sq. metres) of the car park back to grassed open space, balancing the loss of land south of the Croydon Road to the scheme. It is important to note however, that this option would require a modification of the entrance to the lodge known as Treetops to ensure the incumbent Ranger and other staff could access the property safely.
20. Both Options B and C will require a safe holding area for horses to be built on the existing common close to the Pegasus crossing. Consideration should be given to utilising part of the closed section of Hartfield Crescent for the horse holding area to further reduce the impact on West Wickham Common.
21. **Option D** – refuse any further development of the public open space on the grounds that there is insufficient justification to dedicate the land as highway, given the City of London's duties under the Corporation of London (Open Spaces) Act 1878. This approach will not address the safety issues raised by the local residents.

Financial Implications

22. All the costs associated with this project will need to be met by TFL.

Legal Implications

23. In order to enable the turning head for vehicles in Hartfield Crescent, the holding area for horses and the proposed pedestrian tracks it will be necessary to dedicate these areas as highway under section 10(g) of the Corporation of London (Open Spaces) Act 1878. If in the future they are no longer required for highway purposes they would revert to the Common.

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Community Strategy & Other Significant Implications

24. This TFL proposal could be considered to link to two themes from the City of London Community strategy as follows:

- a) **Good transport for a thriving City** – by encouraging walking, cycling and horse riding across West Wickham Common under Option C.
- b) **An inclusive and outward looking City** – by permitting the proposal to install a Pegasus Crossing we would be supporting an initiative which benefits an area beyond the City.

25. This TFL proposal also provides an opportunity to link to three priorities from the City of London Corporate Plan as follows:

- a) Adopting a joined-up, corporate approach and working in partnership with others.
- b) Ensuring that the way we do business and deal with customers is consistent with modern best practice and responsive to the needs of our stakeholders.
- c) Communicating and consulting effectively, including giving feedback.

26. In responding to this TFL proposal we have considered the Strategic Aims from the Open Spaces Department Business Plan as follows:

- a) To provide high quality Open Spaces with access for all, in accordance with nationally recognised standards, for the benefit of London and the nation.
- b) To adopt sustainable and sensitive working practices, promote biodiversity and protect the Open Spaces for the enjoyment of future generations.
- c) To ensure the profile of the Open Spaces is further recognised through working in partnership with others to promote our sites and through influencing policies at a local, regional and national level.

Consultees

27. The earlier Options discussed in this report were considered by the West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committee and rejected at their meeting on the 21st September 2006.

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28. The other public consultation on this proposal has been managed by Atkins Consultants Ltd, who were commissioned by TFL.

Conclusion

29. The implication for the City of London is balancing the need to protect the integrity of the open space in accordance with the principles of the Corporation of London (Open Spaces) Act 1878 with providing facilities to enhance the safety of the local community.
30. We consider it is necessary to take action to improve the safety of this crossing particularly for children and horse riders.
31. Of the options discussed we consider option C is going to deliver the best solution in terms of public safety and the future of the Common.

Background Papers:

32. Letter from Transport for London to Superintendent of the City Commons dated 13th June 2007 reference DRND/S/BRO/3630/1.aa

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