

DECISION AUDIT FORM

For use by Assistant Directors in Exercising (Category 3) or delegated powers
– (Protocol for Officer Delegation)

**DEPARTMENT: HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DESIGN AND
ENGINEERING TEAM**

DECISION: - Regents Row cycle accessibility and permeability scheme

Agree to:-

1. Give approval to take up and rationalise the existing cobbled paving along Regents Row and resurface the road in asphalt. Approximately 50% of the existing cobbles will be retained in the new road design
2. Give approval to proceed with removing all railings between Regents Row and the Canal Tow Path, and the introduction of strategically positioned access points between the two by removing small sections of wall.
3. Agree to the closure of Marlborough Avenue at the junction with Regents Row with an Emergency Access barrier gate. The closure will be installed on an experimental basis initially using an Experimental Traffic Management Order

Reason

The proposals will:

- 1.0 Encourage more people to take up cycling as a sustainable mode of travel by improving accessibility and removing obstacles that tend to discourage cycling.
- 2.0 Help reduce journey times for cyclists by providing access onto direct routes.
- 3.0 Improve the carriageway surface along Regents Row.

BACKGROUND

Encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport is one of the Council's key transport priorities. Hackney is very fortunate to have an extensive network of river and canal towpaths. They are a huge asset to the borough providing shared space routes and places which attract thousands of visitors as well as providing much needed access to green space for Hackney residents.

Currently towpaths are subject to competing demands for space from boaters, anglers, pedestrians, joggers and cyclists. The numbers of users have increased exponentially over the past decade and there has also been significant development adjacent to the canal creating additional demands on space and capacity. In turn, this

has led to increased incidents of conflict between users of the canal Tow Paths - which is most apparent during peak times.

Currently, the carriageway surface along Regents Row is in a poor condition, where many sections have sunken and broken away due to the large flow of vehicles that are currently using Regents Row as a rat run. As a result, cyclists have been less inclined to use Regents Row itself as a route because of the two factors mentioned and instead are using the towpath, which results in a number of conflicts between various users.

As a result of the ongoing conflicts along the towpath and the increased footfall, the following proposals have therefore be developed.

PROPOSALS

The proposed changes include

- The removal of all railings between Regents Row and the Canal Tow Path and creation of three access points in the existing separating wall at strategic locations, to allow cyclists to make the transition from the towpath onto Regents Row itself.
- Closing Regents Row to through traffic through the introduction of a barrier gate in Marlborough Avenue at its junction with Regents Row. Local access will be maintained to the six existing residents parking bays currently located in regents Row, and for servicing purposes.
- Resurfacing Regents Row with asphalt to provide an improved road surface. Approximately 50% of the existing cobbles shall be re-used and relaid in an aesthetically pleasing way.

These proposals will improve cycle accessibility along the route and encourage cyclists to transfer from the towpath onto Regents Row, which will consequently reduce the number of users and conflicts currently occurring along the towpath.

All materials will comply with those detailed in the Public Realm Design Guide.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Four hundred and fifty (450) copies of the public consultation document were sent out to local residents around the Regents Row area. A Web based consultation was also made available for residents as the document was uploaded on the web.

The public consultation period started on 16th December 2014 and finished on 16th January 2015. The consultation document is attached to this report for reference.

Stakeholder Consultation

Prior to sending out the documents to residents key stakeholder groups were consulted including the Council's Parking Service, Living Streets in Hackney or LSiH, London Cycling Campaign in Hackney or LCCIH, The London Fire Brigade

or TLFB, Age Concern (representing Disability Backup) and the Police. TFL Buses were also consulted. All the key stakeholder groups were generally supportive of the proposals and where possible their comments/suggestions were taken on board.

Main points raised by the stakeholders:

Concerns regarding the loss of cobbles were raised by members of our internal conservation team. London Cycling Campaign also were concerned of the turning movement given to cyclists, where the gated closure is proposed to be installed.

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and the ward councillors for Haggerston had approved the consultation document before it was sent out.

A summary of the consultation results is shown on the table below.

Paper Leaflets sent out	Total responses received	Paper responses received	Web based responses received	Total in favour of road closure	Total in favour of scheme proposals	Total not in favour of road closure	Total not in favour of scheme proposals
450	80 (17.7%)	23 (5.1%)	57 (12.6%)	60 (75%)	64 (80%)	20 (25%)	16 (20%)

Main objections raised by the public

The main points raised in objection to the proposals along with Officers' response are as follows:

1.0 Road closure would restrict emergency access

This comment was received from eight residents who wrote that the road closure would hinder emergency access to Regents Row and to the adjacent estate.

Officers' response: – The Road closure will not hinder emergency access and all emergency services will still be able to access Regents Row and also have the required key to unlock the gated closure at the junction with Marlborough Avenue.

2.0 Road closure will result in the loss parking bays and disabled access.

This comment was received from eight residents who wrote that the scheme proposals and road closure will result in the loss of parking bays and also the disabled bays along Regents Row.

Officers' response: - The road closure and scheme proposals will not affect the current parking situation along Regents Row and all parking bays and disabled bays will remain in their current arrangement.

3.0 Would prefer a one way route instead of road closure.

This comment was received from six residents who wrote that they would rather Regents Row to be a one way route instead of the proposed road closure.

Officers' response: The council does not implement new one way systems as a general principle due to the impact on vehicle speeds and pedestrian and cyclist safety.

Meeting with Suffolk Estate TRA

Following on from the consultation, we received a few concerns from residents of the Suffolk Estate regarding the proposed road closure at Marlborough Avenue junction with Regents Row. As a result of these concerns, we agreed to meet with the concerned residents on 5th February 2015 to discuss these issues. The residents' main concern was the diverted route they would have to take to access Marlborough Avenue from Regents Row. Therefore, we have agreed to put the road closure in on an experimental basis which we will then review.

Main comments in support of the proposals

1.0 Current Road surface not suitable for cyclists.

This comment was received from 9 people.

Officers response:

Shows the proposals are strongly supported by the public

2.0 Reduce conflict between all users.

This comment was received from 6 people.

Officer's Response:

These comments show the number of current conflicts that occur along Regents Row and the Canal tow path.

3.0 In support of the road closure

This comment was received from four people.

Officers response:

Shows that currently Regents Row is being used as a rat run and there are a number of conflicts between oncoming vehicles and the speed they are travelling at.

4.0 In support of the strategically placed access points.

This comment was received from four people.

Officers response:

Shows the proposals are supported by the public

IMPACTS

The proposals will provide an easier route for cyclists where currently they are using the adjacent towpath and reduce the number of conflicts between various users.

Whilst pavement works are in progress, normal chapter 8 signing and guarding will be in place.

All works will be carried out under normal working hours of 08:30am to 4:30pm Monday to Saturday.

The works will be implemented in March 2015.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Funding has been secured for the introduction of these proposals during the 2014/15 and 2015/16 financial year's

The total expected cost of this scheme is £220,000, of which £100,000 will be funded by TfL LIP (£25000 in 14/15 and £75000 in 15/16), with the remaining £120,000 being funded by the Council Capital Developing Borough Infrastructure (DBI) programme

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the scheme is to be installed as requested subject to satisfactory statutory consultation.

APPROVAL

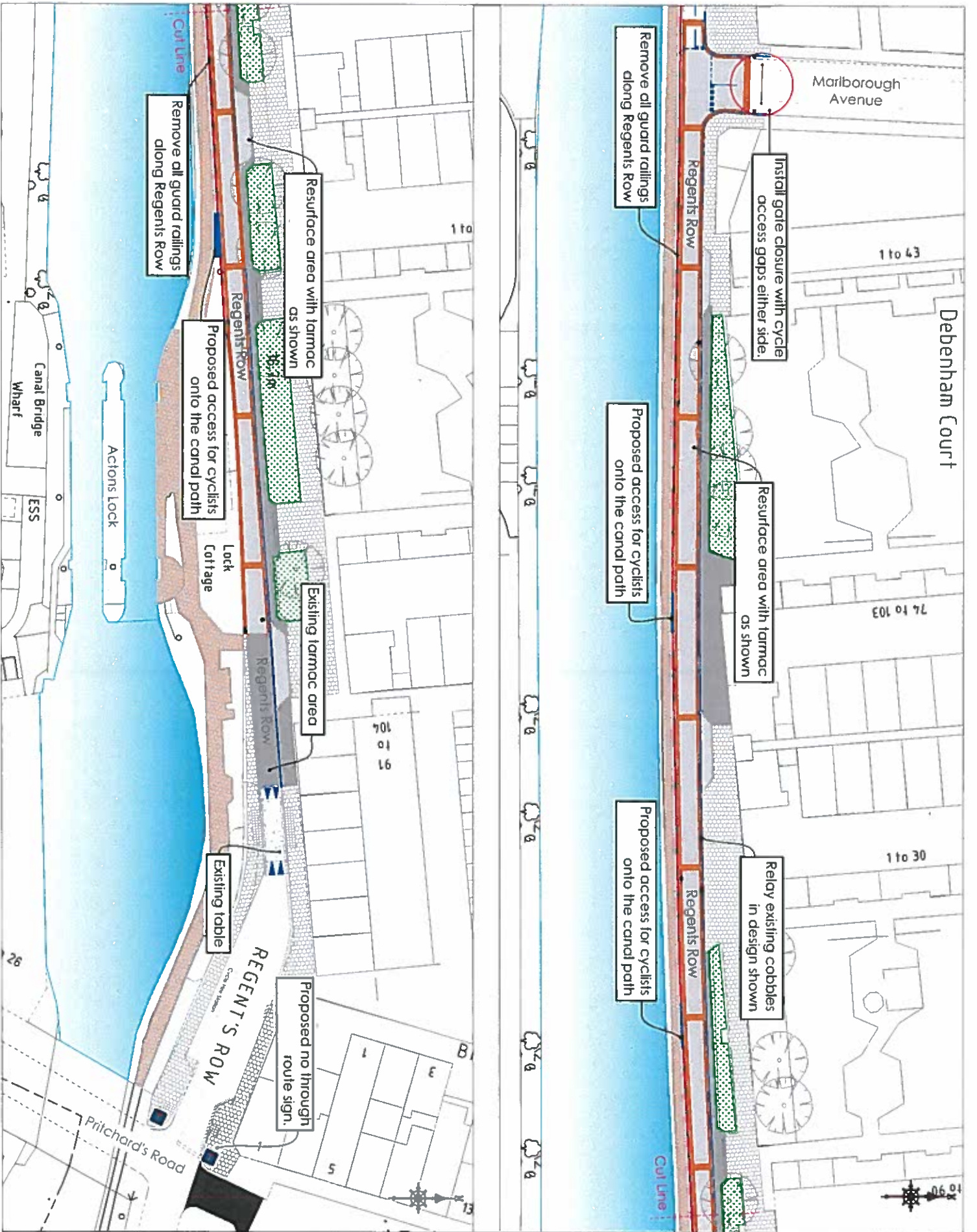
I have noted the contents of this summary and agree with the recommendations contained therein.

Signed.....

Dated12/2/15.....

Tom McCourt
Assistant Director – Public Realm

cc
Councillor Demirci – Lead Member – Neighbourhoods
Andrew Cunningham – Head of Streetscene
Christopher Proctor – Design & Engineering Manager



Regent's Row

Consultation Drawing

November 2014

RL/AM

N.T.S

