

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: - WOODBERRY DOWNS TO WALTHAMSTOW WETLANDS
GREENWAY: CLAPTON COMMON IMPROVEMENTS**

Agree to:-

1. Note the outcome of the consultation exercise.
2. Give approval to proceed with the implementation of pedestrian and cycle improvements at Clapton Common.

Reason

The proposals will:

- 1.0 Create a greener and more attractive space where pedestrians and the more vulnerable cyclists can feel encouraged to enjoy the open air in Hackney.
- 2.0 Improve the local cycling environment which will encourage everyone living and working in the borough to take up cycling as a sustainable mode of travel by improving accessibility and removing obstacles that tend to discourage walking and cycling.
- 3.0 Improve the local streetscape by extending the green areas from the common into what is existing carriageway with additional trees and soft landscaping.
- 4.0 Whilst a majority of the consultation responses were against the proposals the scheme has been modified to respond to a number of the key objections and on this basis had support from the Ward Members.
- 5.0 That the scheme is supportive of the objectives and targets within the Council's approved Transport Strategy.

BACKGROUND

Encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport is one of the Council's key transport priorities. The recently adopted Transport Strategy 2015-2025 aims to more than double the existing cycling levels of around 7% to 15% by 2025. The Strategy also commits the Council to encourage more walking trips, improve

resident's access to green spaces and increase the level of tree canopies and green infrastructure in the borough.

The Woodberry Downs Wetlands are due to be opened soon adding to the extensive network of green spaces and watercourses that already exists in Hackney.

The Council has obtained funding from the Mayor of London's Big Green Fund to help kick start a 3km long walking and cycling greenway to link Woodberry Wetlands in Hackney with Walthamstow Wetlands in Waltham Forest. Both wetlands centres are due to be opened to the public for the first time by 2017. The greenway will encourage visitors to walk or cycle between the wetlands by linking parks, marshland, quiet roads and towpaths, and avoiding busy roads. The greenway will also connect key regeneration areas in north and north-east London at Woodberry Down and Walthamstow/Blackhorse Road.

The Council recently consulted on proposals at Clapton Common and Newton Close, both located on the wetlands to wetlands route. The proposals at Newton Close have already been approved and are scheduled to start towards the end of February 2016.

PROPOSALS

The proposals at Clapton Common include:

- Refurbishing the existing pavements and creating smaller pedestrian crossings using standard paving materials.
- Installing a raised footpath / cycle path with gentle ramps between Overlea Road and the pedestrian access to Ilam Square. The footpath / cycle path would be installed using black top materials where coloured markings can be installed to create a quiet space.
- Introducing soft landscaping with trees adjacent to the improved section of road.
- Replacing the old concrete bollards and railings that mark the parks / highway boundary with precast concrete edgings.
- Re advertising the 'prohibition of entry' order for the closed section between Overlea Road and the southern entrance to Buccleuch House.
- Installing wayfinding signs and branding along the route.

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

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

500 copies of the public consultation document were sent out to local residents around the Clapton Common area. The consultation document was also available on the web through the Council's Citizen Space website.

The public consultation period started on 26 November 2015 and finished on 18th December 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.

The Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and ward members for Springfield had been consulted the consultation document before it was distributed.

Streetscene officers also met with the Ward Members for Springfield before the consultation started.

Highlights of the public consultation

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 scheme proposals	Total not in favour of scheme proposals
500	72	53 (73.6%)	19 (26.4%)	29 (40.3%)	41 (57 %)

- Nineteen online submissions were received through Citizen Space, seventeen were in favour of the proposals and two were not.
- Fifty three paper submissions were received, twelve were in favour of the proposals and thirty nine were not.

Summary of comments received against the proposal

The following are some of the comments that were received from people who were not in support of the proposals.

1.0 Concerns regarding the safety of children in play areas

This comment was received from 21 people. Concerns regarding the safety of children who use the local play area in the park were raised by residents. Residents were worried that the cycle path would in time attract high volumes of cyclists at speed and these could be a potential risk to children who use the local play area.

Officer Response

After meeting with residents and ward members for Springfield, it was decided that the scheme would be reduced in size to leave the area next to the play area and appropriate choice of materials used to emphasize the character of this path as a low speed, low volume cyclepath.

2.0 Concern over loss of parking outside Ilan Square

This comment was received from 12 people who expressed concern over the loss of parking for residents of the Ilan Square and visitors accessing the school, park and local synagogue.

Officer response

Historically, Clapton Common has remained closed to traffic between Overlea Road and the southern entrance to Ilan Square. This closure was temporarily suspended in order to assist construction works at Ilan Square while the development was in progress. With the completion of the construction works at Ilan Square, the Council is proposing to close the road again to motorised traffic. Pedal cyclists and pedestrians will however continue to have access.

3.0 Re-route the cycle path to by-pass Clapton Common

This comment was received from five respondents with some residents providing an indicative alternative location for the cycle path.

Officer response:

At a meeting held at Overlea Road with residents and Streetscene officers, it was agreed the route of the greenway at Clapton Common would be re-directed along Overlea Road onto Spring Hill. However, Clapton Common would remain an option for the more vulnerable cyclists. Residents were keen to reserve the area outside the playground for children activities such as cycle training. Officers will look at options for this as part of future work and in discussions with the Parks Service.

4.0 Clapton Common does not need the scheme- enough green space and cycle provision as it is

This comment was received by 3 people.

Main comments in support of the proposals

The main points can be summarised as follows:

1.0 Happy with proposals & suggested additional interventions

This comment was received from 11 people who wanted to see more works done to improve the crossings at the Clapton Common - Portland Avenue junction, improved lighting and additional cycle parking requests.

Officer comments;

The Council (and TfL) are aware of these issues and will look to implement improvements along the route incrementally as and when funding becomes available.

2.0 Sounds great/full support of the proposals for walking/cycling

This comment was received from 10 people

Officer comment: shows support for the scheme

3.0 Support for link to both Wetlands areas

This comment was received from 3 people.

Officer response Shows support for the scheme.

IMPACTS

Permanent Impacts

The proposals will provide a safer, greener and more coherent route for pedestrians and cyclists between the two wetlands. The route will be modified slightly to pass through Overlea Road onto Spring Hill. Clapton Common will remain an option for the more vulnerable road user.

The proposals will add more greenery, shrubbery and trees added to that already owned by the Council.

The scheme will reinstate the closure of Clapton Common to motorised traffic between Overlea Road and the southern entrance to Ilan Square.

Temporary Impacts

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 February/March 2016.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Funding has been secured through Section 106 and the Mayor of London Big Green Funding for implementation during the 2015/16 financial year.

The total budget for the scheme is £80k.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the proposals outlined in this decision audit be agreed and taken to implementation stage.

APPROVAL

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

Signed.....

Dated01/03/2016.....

Seamus Adams

Interim Assistant Director –Parking, Markets and Streetscene

cc Andrew Cunningham – Head of Streetscene

cc Councillor Demirci – Lead Member – Neighbourhoods