

RICKMANSWORTH ROAD/GREEN LANE, NORTHWOOD - PETITION REQUESTING “A SAFE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING AT RICKMANSWORTH ROAD/GREEN LANE”

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Jonathan Bianco
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Property, Highways and Transport
Officer Contact(s)	Dr. Alan Tilly – Place Directorate
Papers with report	Appendix A

HEADLINES

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Member that a petition has been received asking for a safe pedestrian crossing at the junction of Rickmansworth Road/Green Lane, Northwood.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the Council objective of <i>Our People</i> . The request can be considered as part of the Council’s annual programme of road safety initiatives.
Financial Cost	Subject to the outcome of discussions with petitioners, the Cabinet Member may be minded to commission Transport for London to assess all aspects of providing a pelican crossing at the junction. Transport for London charge £5k for this service and can be funded from the allocated Transport for London Grant.
Relevant Select Committee	Property, Highways and Transport Select Committee
Relevant Ward	Northwood

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member Property, Highways and Transport:

- 1. meets and discusses with petitioners their request to provide a pedestrian Pelican crossing at the junction of Rickmansworth Road and Green Lane, Northwood.**
- 2. Notes that previous independently collected pedestrian crossing data at the junction of Rickmansworth Road and Green Lane showed relatively low pedestrian flows; and,**
- 3. notes that only one police recorded accident with slight injury was noted in the vicinity of the junction of Rickmansworth Road and Green Lane during the last five years.**

4. Further notes that changes to the traffic signals of any crossing in the manner suggested would need the support of Transport for London, the body responsible for all traffic signals across Greater London.
5. Notes that Transport for London would levy an upfront charge of £5k for any investigation work; and,
6. Subject to his consideration of the above, considers instructing officers to engage with Transport for London on this matter.

Reasons for recommendations

The Petition Hearing will provide a valuable opportunity to hear directly from the petitioners of their concerns and suggestions.

Alternative options considered / risk management

None at this stage.

Select Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. An e-Petition mainly signed by residents living in the Northwood area, has been submitted to the Council under the following heading:

"Provide a safe pedestrian crossing at the junction of Rickmansworth Road and Green Lane in Northwood".

In an accompanying statement the Lead Petitioner has helpfully supplied the following supplementary information.

*"We the undersigned petition Hillingdon Council to install a safe pedestrian crossing at Rickmansworth Road/Green Lane. **Justification:** We strongly recommend the Council review the design of this junction and prioritise it for walkers and cyclists. It is currently very dangerous to navigate especially during peak times. The junction sits on the main walking and cycling route for children and their parents commuting to Northwood College, The Hall nursery, Weatherby House Montessori nursery, Holy Trinity School, St Helen's School, Little Crickets nursery and Frithwood School. It is also used by students who walk to the London School of Theology, and members of the public who work in the Mount Vernon Hospital and Northwood station/shops.*

The traffic light that is in place makes it both difficult and dangerous to cross the road. When it is "safe" to cross, members stop in the middle of the road, where the island is. However, it can be difficult to know if there is any oncoming traffic coming from Green Lane and/or cause any oncoming cars to stop – which, in turn, is quite dangerous. The traffic islands are not big enough to accommodate more than one buggy or mobility scooter leaving others stranded mid-way through the crossing.

In fact, in the last 5 years (2017 – 2021) there have been 11 accidents recorded within a 0.25mile of the junction, and this, heart-breakingly, included fatalities. The council must ensure there are adequate measures for the volume of traffic now on Rickmansworth Road/ Green Lane and the volume of pedestrians, especially during peak school run times.

With the council and national government trying to encourage more people to 'go green' and use their cars less, it seems only logical to provide safe crossing points to allow pedestrians to cross safely. This will in turn promote more families walking and cycling to schools in the area”.

2. The junction of Rickmansworth Road/ Green Lane is situated in the north of the Borough within Northwood Ward, and is a signalised junction. Rickmansworth Road is a trunk road and Green Lane a distributor road that connects with Northwood High Street at its eastern end. The location of the junction is shown in Appendix A. The petitioners have highlighted that despite there being several schools and nurseries in the vicinity of the junction, there are few formal crossing facilities; the nearest zebra crossings to the junction are c.350 metres away at Kewferry Road and c.470 metres away at Maxwell Road.
3. As the Cabinet Member will be aware, all traffic signals within Hillingdon are owned, operated, managed and maintained by Transport for London. The signals at Rickmansworth Road/ Green Lane were provided primarily to facilitate traffic turning right from Green Lane into Rickmansworth Road and right from Rickmansworth Road into Green Lane. Without these signals there would be conflicting movements between right-turning vehicles. The traffic signals do not include any provision for pedestrians, which therefore means that in practice, a pedestrian crossing any arm of the junction must decide for themselves when it is safe to do so. Depending on where they are crossing, pedestrians could choose to cross in front of vehicles being held at a red signal, however there would be moving traffic in the opposite lane and vice versa if they were crossing in the opposite direction.
4. There are pedestrian refuge islands on all the Green Lane and Rickmansworth south arms of the junction. These refuges are small and have been provided primarily to host the signal heads. They do however serve as an informal crossing facility for pedestrians, although the refuge is small, the waiting area is flush with the carriageway and there are no pedestrian guard rails.
5. There have been a number of requests for a signal-controlled crossing at this junction dating back for several years. In June 2017 a petition with 26 signatures was received under the heading “*We the undersigned petition the London Borough of Hillingdon to help us keep our children safe by installing a pedestrian pelican crossing on Rickmansworth Road, at the junction with Green Lane*”. In January 2020 a second petition was received with 25 signatures worded “*Addition of enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities at the junction of Green Lane and Rickmansworth Road*” and in February 2020 a third petition was received with 100no. signatures worded “*We the undersigned petition Hillingdon Council to install a pelican crossing at Rickmansworth Road/ Green Lane*. These petitions were variously heard or dealt with in other ways, in conjunction with the Cabinet Members of the time; various requests have also been raised with TfL.
6. In response to the above, work has been undertaken to determine whether a Puffin crossing at this junction would improve road safety and how could one be provided. The most in-depth review of this junction was undertaken as part of an area-wide study prior to the recent

Pandemic. This included a high-level modelling exercise to determine whether a proposal to introduce controlled pedestrian crossings at this location might be feasible. This modelling showed that there is potential for a pedestrian signal stage to be added without undue impact on capacity, although pedestrian crossing data showed relatively low pedestrian flows.

7. In September 2020, Transport for London were contacted requesting that a fresh review of the signals at the junction be undertaken, Transport for London responded by stating that increasing the red times between traffic movements to give pedestrians more time to cross would be contrary to national guidance provided by the Department for Transport. It could *“increase the risk of confusion and driver disobedience”* which, considering the low pedestrian flows, would represent a net increase in the risk to the safety of all road users.
8. If a Council has local concerns about the operation of traffic signals, they can commission Transport for London to undertake a study of their operation. For them to do this Transport for London charge a fee of £5k up front (this cost to be regarded as in effect a non-refundable deposit against any subsequent scheme). To date, such a Study has not been undertaken, in part due to the lack of funding. Normally such a Study would be paid for using the Transport for London Local Implementation Plan budget, however as the Cabinet Member will be aware, this funding has not been forthcoming due to the financial pressures experienced by Transport for London due to the Corona Virus pandemic and the large fall in income from passenger fares. However, this budget has now been re-instigated and could, should the Cabinet Member wish, be used to fund a Transport for London study to determine whether there is a road safety issue at the junction that justifies measures to improve pedestrian safety and if so what type of road safety mitigation measures would work best – possibly a pedestrian crossing.
9. Subject to the Cabinet Member's decision, officers could approach Transport for London and commission a such a Study, although it should so be borne in mind as noted that Transport for London currently levy an upfront charge but that this cost would be included within the overall cost of any scheme which arose from the investigation.

Financial Implications

If the Cabinet Member is minded to agree to commissioning Transport for London to Study the options for introducing pedestrian facilities at the junction the cost would be £5k, which can be funded through the 2022/23 Transport for London, Local Implementation Plan Allocation subject to the usual Cabinet Member release protocols and agreements with Transport for London.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?

To allow the Cabinet Member to consider the petitioners' request.

Consultation carried out or required

None at this stage.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed the report and concurs with the financial implications set out above noting that the proposed cost of £5k associated with commissioning Transport for London to Study the options for introducing pedestrian facilities at the junction are to be funded from the 2022/23 TfL Grant LIP Allocation.

Legal

Legal Services confirm that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Infrastructure / Asset Management

None at this stage.

Comments from other relevant service areas

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Petition received.

TITLE OF ANY APPENDICES

Appendix A - Location plan