

For General Release

REPORT TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE 5 February 2019
SUBJECT:	HIGH STREET CROYDON – EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC RESTRICTION ORDER - OUTCOME OF EXPERIMENTAL SCHEME
LEAD OFFICER:	Shifa Mustafa, Executive Director of Place Jon Judah, Head of Highways
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Paul Scott, Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Regeneration (job share)
WARDS:	Fairfield
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON: This report recommends measures which are in accordance with objectives to improve the business, social and cultural offering in Croydon Town Centre as detailed in: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Croydon Plan; Transport Chapter.• Croydon’s Community Strategy; Outcome 1: Priority Areas 1, 3, 4 and 5• Croydon Corporate Plan 2018 – 22• www.croydonobservatory.org/strategies/ Vision for Croydon	
FINANCIAL IMPACT: The financial implication of the proposed expenditure is not significant. The proposals will be fully funded from the Growth Zone budget.	
KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: Not a Key Decision	
1. RECOMMENDATIONS That the Traffic Management Advisory Committee recommend to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Regeneration (job share) that they: 1.1 Consider the public responses to surveys and monitoring carried out during the Experimental Traffic Order restrictions and highway changes relating to the effect of closing the High Street to motor vehicle traffic from 16 October 2017. 1.2 Agree to proceed with the making of a permanent Traffic Management Order to keep the High Street closed to motor vehicle traffic. 1.3 Agree to make permanent the related amendments to one way working, bus lanes, taxi ranks, loading bays and motor cycle bays - High Street Croydon, Park Lane, Park Street and St Georges Walk.	

- 1.4 Agree to make permanent the revocation of 5 pay and display only parking bays in the Park Lane slip road.
- 1.5 Agree to make permanent 3 disabled parking bays located Park Street with reduction of the loading bay length

If the above measures are agreed delegate to the Highway Improvements Manager the authority to make the Experimental Traffic Orders permanent.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report considers the outcomes of surveys and monitoring of the experimental closure of High Street, Croydon, to motor vehicle traffic, between Park Street and Katherine Street. The report summarises the findings of monitoring and surveys with the public, as well as the effects on public transport and movement through the High Street corridor and the views of local businesses regarding its impact on them.
- 2.2 In light of the findings it is recommended that the Council proceeds with making permanent the Experimental Traffic Order (ETO) restricting motor vehicle traffic from the High Street, between Park Street and Katherine Street, along with the associated measures in adjacent streets, as listed in this report.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 The scheme was included in a list of projects comprising the Growth Zone programme of projects and was reported and approved by Cabinet on 11 July 2016. More detail was reported to Informal Cabinet on 27 November 2017. Plans of the area showing the highway layout are at the end of this report titled Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The purpose of the scheme is to make available new open space for public realm enhancements to the town centre and to improve the night time economy. The vision for the pedestrianised part of the High Street is to create an area where the public can gather, relax and enjoy entertainment in a space that is attractive, safe and comfortable to be in. It is also envisaged that businesses which complement such leisure and cultural use will establish themselves in the vicinity, providing opportunities for economic growth and employment. This has been supported by the Council and its partners by organising events over the summer and autumn. These events have included screening of Wimbledon live tennis matches, live dance, theatre and music, aimed at bringing people together in the new High Street public space.
- 3.3 Croydon town centre is at the commencement of a major transformation in terms of its business, retail and leisure places (the Whitgift Centre redevelopment amongst others). The town centre will also be home to an increasing residential population, with several thousand new homes being provided in the immediate vicinity of the town centre. The opportunity for Croydon's new and current residents to have some public open space to socialise and relax in is of vital importance. It will make an important contribution to the quality of life for those living in, working in or visiting the town centre.

3.4 In early 2017 discussions were held with Senior Officers and the Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment, the Cabinet Member for Economy and Jobs and the Cabinet Member for Homes and Regeneration. As part of these discussions it was agreed to proceed with issue of the Public Notice for the Experimental Traffic Order (ETO) to carry out the proposed pedestrianisation of part of High Street, Croydon, along with the issue of Public Notices for other traffic management measures to facilitate this. These notices were made public via the press, on site and on the Council's website in October 2017.

3.5 Public Notices which were issued on 18 October 2017, closing the High Street to motor vehicles, along with other notices to enable this were:

- to introduce a pedestrianised area and prohibit any motorised vehicle entering the High Street, Croydon, between its junctions with Katharine Street and Park Street;
- to revoke the bus lane on Park Street;
- to amend the existing one-way working in Park Street (between High Street, Croydon and St George's Walk) to operate from south-west to north-east and to introduce two-way working in the remainder of Park Street (between Park Lane and St George's Walk) with mandatory turns at the junction with St George's Walk;
- to relocate the existing solo motorcycle bay in St George's Walk from its current position adjacent to the junction with Katharine Street to the flank wall of Nos 28 to 30 St George's Walk;
- to revoke the existing taxi ranks in High Street, Croydon (between Katharine Street and Park Street) and introduce two new taxi ranks on the north side of Park Street, adjacent to the flank wall of Nos. 7 to 11 High Street and outside Nos. 3 to 7 Park Street;
- to revoke and enlarge the existing loading bay/taxi rank outside Nos. 3 to 7 Park Street and relocate it to the opposite side of the road between the junction with St George's Walk and No. 14 Park Street;
- to revoke the 5 pay and display only bays in the Park Lane slip road either side of the entrance to Smith's Yard and replace them with bus stands.
- On 18 June 2018 public notice was served to reduce the length of loading bay in Park Street in order to accommodate 3 disabled bays, coming into force on 25 June 2018, included as an amendment to the experimental High Street scheme. The time in which the public were able to make written objections to this ended on 25 December 2018.

Note: the scheme also included the amendment of bus stops and bus stands within Park Street; relocated to St Georges Walk, Park Lane (slip road) and Park Lane (east side) however these alterations did not require a public notice nor traffic management order.

3.6 Croydon Town Centre is undergoing major changes due to inward investment and redevelopment, as well as redesign in how the Town Centre works in terms of transport. Should the High Street require reopening to motor vehicle traffic in future years then this possibility will be fully funded via the Growth Zone funding stream.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 Informal Consultation and opinion surveys

Local businesses were informed of the proposals prior to any changes to ensure that their day to day deliveries and access requirements did not impact on them adversely. The town centre Business Improvement District (BID) Management Team were closely involved in making the changes and were also a strong supporter of pedestrianising the High Street. Any concerns local businesses had were addressed via the BID team and by written communication from the Council's Growth Zone team, keeping them informed of progress.

Several businesses reported increased trade during the Street Live performances. New street trading areas were also implemented by Nando's and Lloyds within the High Street site.

Please see Appendix 3 for a summary list of stakeholders consulted with along with dates.

A market research company was appointed to carry out interviews seeking the opinions of the public using the High Street.

Passers-by were asked a number of questions about the High Street. These surveys were carried out in two rounds, prior to and after the series of cultural/entertainment events were scheduled. Each interview was 15 minutes in length and results were weighted to the borough's demographic profile.

Round 1 – 12-27 March 2018	220 interviews
Round 2 – 7-25 September 2018	224 interviews

A brief conclusion of the surveys showed that the public broadly supported the use of the High Street as a pedestrianised public space, and would like to see more of:

1. Live music/music events
2. Improved food and drink venues
3. Improved entertainment/cultural events such as screenings of films

Many responses also revealed reservations regarding the experimental closure of the High Street which were:

1. Respondents said they would feel safer if the area had improved lighting after dark.
2. Respondents also felt more policing would help them feel safer, predominantly at night. They felt intimidated by groups of youths.
3. Respondents said the retail offering was in need of improvement, they would come to the High Street if there were better shops and the public realm were improved.

Any concerns as expressed above should be taken into consideration in the design of future public realm proposals for the High Street.

In response to the above and building on the success of the summer 2018 programme – it is proposed to run a comprehensive programme of events for 2019 (in partnership with Croydon BID from May – Sept 2019). Highlights of this will include performances from Croydon young musicians, a day of entertainment from the Brit School, Professional street artists, Buskers and Sports related events. In addition the successful screening of Wimbledon will return for the first 2 weeks in July 2019.

Appendix 2 at the end of this report contains a summary of pedestrian footfall surveys in the High Street, measured by the town centre BID team over a number of months, including the months where events took place. The data collected includes North End pedestrianised shopping area for comparison. The footfall numbers for the High Street showed an increase over the summer months when compared against the preceding two years. In contrast, footfall in North End has declined significantly over the same years. A conclusion by the BID team is that closing the High Street to motor vehicles has attracted more pedestrians to the area, bucking a national trend of general decline in footfall for town centre shops.

Transport for London were consulted in their capacity as public transport provider but have not responded with any issues at this stage.

The Metropolitan Police local area team were consulted about public safety issues arising from the High Street closure but no response was received at this stage.

Croydon Council's Mobility Forum were consulted. Their view was that the relocation of bus stops on Park Street meant that those with reduced mobility would find it more difficult to access the post office on the High Street. They would have to walk further by around 40 yards. As a mitigating measure 3 additional disabled parking bays have been added within Park Street, located closer to the post office.

4.2 Statutory Consultation

In order to carry out the legal processes required in the making of Experimental Traffic Orders (ETOs) the Highway/Traffic Authority on receiving authority (via its Traffic Management Advisory Committee or its Delegated Authority process) must issue public notices stating the intention to proceed with ETOs. The date on which the orders come into force must also be given within the notices.

Once ETOs come into force there is a six month statutory consultation period within which anyone may object. These objections must be in writing and sent to the addresses stated on the public notices.

No written objections have been received in response to the measures introduced in the High Street, Park Street, St Georges Walk and Park Lane (slip road).

5 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The proposals set out in this report will be fully funded from the Growth Zone Budget. The table below set out the financial impact of the proposed expenditure on the available budget.

1 Revenue and Capital consequences of report recommendations

	Current year	Medium Term Financial Strategy – 3 year forecast		
	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Revenue Budget available				
Expenditure				
Income				
Effect of decision from report				
Expenditure				
Income				
Remaining budget				
Capital Budget available				
Expenditure	1,763			
Effect of decision from report				
Expenditure	0.5			
Remaining budget	1,762.5			

2 The effect of the decision

A decision to proceed with making the scheme permanent would result in an expenditure of approximately £500. This cost relates to administration and advertising, placing of Public Notices and making the Traffic Management Orders, as well as updating highway records.

The removal of 5 pay and display bays resulted in a loss of revenue income of around £1,000 per month to the Council.

3 Risks

Should the scheme not receive approval then the Experimental scheme must be removed and the road layout prior to issue of Public Notice would have to be reinstated. The cost of this would be around £80,000.

4 Options

The only options currently available are to make the scheme permanent or to reinstate the original road layout. Should there be a need to revoke the Traffic Management Orders in the future and revert to the High Street being used by motor vehicles then funding for this is confirmed as being available via the Growth Zone budgets.

5 Future savings/efficiencies

There are no savings nor future efficiencies arising from the scheme.

Approved by: Flora Osiyemi, Head of Finance, Place, Residents & Gateway

6. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 The Council should note the special procedural provisions for an Experimental Traffic Order as set out in regulations 22 and 23 and Schedule 5 to the Local Authorities Traffic Order (Procedure) Regulations 1996.

Approved by: Sandra Herbert Head of Litigation and Corporate for and on behalf of Jacqueline Harris-Baker Director of Law, Monitoring Officer and Council Solicitor.

7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 7.1 There is no immediate HR impact for the Council at this present time, however if any arise these will be managed under the Council's policies and procedures.

Approved by: Jennifer Sankar, Head of HR Place on behalf of Sue Moorman, Director of Human Resources

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1 An Equalities Analysis (Appendix 4) has been carried out to ascertain the impact of the proposed change on groups that share a protected characteristic. This found that the eastward relocation of bus stops in Park Street impacted on those with reduced mobility. To address this, an additional 3 disabled bays were added in Park Street west. This has in part reduced the impact of the additional walking distance from the new bus stop location to Croydon main post office and North End shops.

Approved by: Yvonne Okiyo, Equalities Manager

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 9.1 There are no environmental impacts, although removing motor vehicle traffic from a short length of the High Street could result in a small improvement in localised air quality and traffic noise reduction. However as traffic is displaced and not reduced there would be a corresponding increase in pollution, noise and traffic congestion elsewhere.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 10.1 Should this scheme be approved to become permanent it is envisaged that footfall will increase, especially when events are taking place. It is hoped that natural surveillance resulting from this increase in footfall will contribute towards the area feeling safer where people gather together to enjoy events. Planned future investment in the public realm will also help in making the area look more cared for, giving it a safer feel.

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 11.1 The recommendation to provide a safe and entertaining environment for those visiting and living in the town centre will contribute to the quality of life and make Croydon a more attractive place to live, work, study, visit and relax in. It will improve the cultural offering for the town centre and encourage businesses to come to and invest in Croydon. It will help to create a better sense of community and identity, putting some of the heart back into Central Croydon.

12. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 12.1 The “do nothing” option will not achieve the aims in paragraph 11.1 above.

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APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT

Appendix 1 Highway Layout
Appendix 2 Footfall Surveys
Appendix 3 Business Stakeholder Consultee Schedule
Appendix 4 Equality Analysis

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.