



# Highbury Corner

Response to issues raised

March 2018

## **Executive Summary**

Between 5 February and 20 March 2016 TfL and Islington Council consulted jointly on proposed improvements to Highbury Corner for pedestrians and cyclists, and on changes to bus services.

In August 2016 we published a report which summarised the consultation process and the responses we received. This new report provides our response to the issues commonly raised during the consultation and explains the changes to the scheme we plan to make as a result.

### **Overall responses to consultation**

We received 2,823 responses to the consultation. The overall responses show that the majority of respondents believed the new road layout proposals for Highbury Corner would:

- Improve conditions for pedestrians (71%)
- Improve conditions for cyclists (67%)
- Improve conditions for tube/rail passengers (59%)
- Make conditions worse for motorists (35%)
- Make conditions worse for bus passengers (33%)

When asked to select a preference for the proposed new public space:

- 14% chose Option 1 (keep the arboretum closed to the public)
- 56% chose Option 2 (open up the arboretum for public use)
- 17% didn't want either option
- 13% did not answer the question

Some of the main issues raised were:

- Supportive comments that the changes would create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists
- Concerns that the proposals would lead to increased traffic congestion and longer journey times for motor traffic
- Concerns regarding the impacts of proposed changes to bus route 277

### **How we intend to proceed**

Having considered the feedback to the consultation, and subject to approvals, we intend to proceed with the changes to Highbury Corner, with some changes to what was proposed at the last consultation in 2016. These changes include partially opening the arboretum to public access to protect trees while creating a single high quality space which incorporates the western arm of the roundabout and Highbury & Islington station forecourt.

Other planned changes are outlined on page 4 of this report and include a longer cycle lane on Canonbury Road, and changes to the design of the Corsica Street junction.

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## **1. Conclusion and next steps**

Subject to approvals, we intend to proceed with the changes to Highbury Corner, with some changes to the proposals we consulted on.

### **Summary of design changes following consultation**

Our planned changes are summarised below:

- The arboretum is proposed to be partially open to public access in a way which protects existing trees. The new public space would incorporate the western arm of the roundabout and Highbury & Islington station forecourt, providing local residents with more green space whilst protecting the most vulnerable trees
- The previously proposed new pedestrian crossing allowing for access to the south-eastern corner of the arboretum at the junction of Upper Street with Canonbury Road (option 2) will no longer be required. The proposal to partially open the arboretum on the western side means that the eastern half of the arboretum, including the option to open up a path from the south-eastern corner will not be carried forward
- The entrance to Corsica Street has been made a 'blended footway' which provides a continuous footway over the junction to give pedestrians priority
- A shared pedestrian / cycle 'toucan' crossing will be included across St Paul's Road to allow two-way cycling to and from Corsica Street
- The cycle lane on Canonbury Road will be extended to Canonbury School

### **Next steps for Highbury Corner**

TfL and Islington Council will continue together to progress with the scheme as set out in this report.

We will further develop the detail of the design for the scheme and, subject to securing the necessary technical and governance approvals, including environmental screening, will aim to start construction after the bridge works are complete (currently planned for spring 2018). We anticipate that construction will take around 12 months.

As the project progresses, we will update the consultation website and all of those who responded to the consultation and who provided contact details.

## **2. Responses to issues commonly raised**

We have considered all of the points made in response to the consultation and used the feedback to help refine and improve our proposals.

The main themes to arise from responses have been summarised below and arranged in categories, along with an explanation of how we intend to respond to them.

### **2.1 Traffic impacts**

#### **‘The proposals will increase traffic and congestion in the local area.’**

TfL is committed to doing everything possible to improve health in London through the services it delivers. The Mayor has adopted the Healthy Streets approach to help improve air quality, reduce congestion and make London's diverse communities become greener, healthier and more attractive places in which to live, play and do business.

TfL and Islington Council want to help everyone to use cars less and walk, cycle and use public transport more. Our plans to improve pedestrian and cycling access at Highbury Corner will achieve this whilst maintaining traffic movement.

Traffic modelling has been carried out with estimated information for the year 2021 to replicate the predicted road network conditions after construction works are completed.

We have assessed traffic impact of the completed scheme using traffic modelling analysis looking at average journey time changes at the busiest hours in the morning and evening peaks. All data is based on fixed signal timings; however, TfL will utilise SCOOT technology to manage the traffic signals at Highbury Corner. This technology uses sensors buried in the carriageway to detect real-time traffic conditions and make real time changes to traffic light timings to optimise traffic movement and reduce delays.

TfL and Islington Council will actively monitor and manage traffic conditions on the main roads and surrounding local streets following the delivery of the scheme. The appropriate measures to manage the effects of traffic reassignment as a result of the changes will be considered.

#### **‘Any increase in motor traffic journey times is unacceptable’**

Our analysis shows that the Highbury Corner scheme would mean longer journey times for some road users at the busiest times. The biggest predicted increase is by up to three minutes in the busiest part of the morning rush hour for general traffic travelling northbound between Canonbury Road and Holloway Road. Traffic on this route will likely see an increase in journey time of up to three minutes in the morning peak.

The consultation [website](#) provides a table showing the journey time impacts. In most cases, the changes in journey time for general traffic and buses would be less than one minute, although certain movements could incur longer delays, particularly during peak times. Other journeys will be unaffected or quicker.

The changes at Highbury Corner have primarily been designed to improve safety and the street environment for cyclists and pedestrians, who are not well catered for by the current layout.

There were 13 collisions involving injury to cyclists in the 36 months leading up to March 2017. Pedestrian overcrowding on the existing footways on the approach to Highbury and Islington Station is common. We have therefore concluded that the impact on traffic is reasonable when balanced against the substantial safety improvements that the proposals would bring for the many pedestrians and cyclists who pass through the junction each day.

TfL and Islington Council will continue to work together to monitor traffic levels on local roads and will consider mitigating measures if there are significant increases in traffic flows along particular routes.

**‘There should be specific data on journey time impacts and pollution impacts.’**

The proposals would mean changes to journey times for road users. We have published a report that explains the impacts we expect our proposals to have, and this is accompanied by a data table providing specific details of expected impacts on journey times throughout the scheme area. Both can be found on the consultation [website](#).

The assessment [table](#) shows the current on-street situation, the 2021 situation without the scheme, the 2021 situation with the scheme and the difference between the two future scenarios.

We carry out environmental evaluations for all major schemes, including an assessment of changes in noise levels and air quality predicted as a result of the scheme to understand any changes in the area from the proposals. We do not expect this scheme to cause significant traffic congestion or to increase air pollution.

Motor traffic is one of the major causes of air pollution in Greater London, with vehicle exhausts and braking systems contributing to NOx and particulate matter in the air. This scheme is expected to help provide a long-term improvement in air quality in the Highbury Corner area by encouraging more journeys to be made by walking and cycling, reducing the number of motor traffic journeys.

TfL is conducting an air and noise assessment for purposes of obtaining an Environmental Impact Assessment screening opinion from Islington Council as the Local Planning Authority, and will provide any additional assessments required as the scheme is developed.

**‘Will coaches and school buses be able to use the repositioned bus stops?’**

Because of the high number of bus routes serving the area, the bus stops have to be fully dedicated to London Buses. This is how bus stops around Highbury Corner have been used for some time.

**‘Have you considered the impacts on these changes for long vehicles with abnormal loads?’**

Yes, we have. The Metropolitan Police is responsible for the management of abnormal loads, and we have discussed this issue with them. We have also held discussions with major freight companies, and will continue to do so to ensure that the impacts of abnormal loads on London’s major roads are managed.

**‘The traffic signal timings for pedestrians should be minimised to ensure motor traffic is not unduly delayed.’**

The traffic signal timings and other changes to the road network should achieve a balance between all road users. Where possible, traffic signal timings will give priority to critical traffic movements in a given direction, while also providing concurrent pedestrian movement at other junctions. This helps ensure that traffic movement and safe pedestrian crossings can be achieved.

## **2.2 Impacts on residents**

**‘Local residents will be negatively impacted by the scheme more than anyone else.’**

We appreciate that some local people are concerned by the potential impacts of these changes on their daily lives, and we will continue to give full consideration to any opportunity there is to reduce these impacts.

It is also clear that many local people regard these changes more positively and share our view that there is much to be gained by improving the provision of public space at Highbury Corner, making cycling and walking more attractive and safe travel options, and tackling the extent to which the area is dominated by motor vehicles.

TfL and Islington Council are fully committed to working together to ensure these changes improve the day-to-day experience of Highbury Corner for residents, and that the enhanced street environment is well used by the people who live and work in the area.

**‘The proposals will limit the number of roads that residents can use for access to their homes.’**

TfL and Islington Council have carefully considered the potential impacts of introducing traffic restrictions on residential roads. Generally, new restrictions are

proposed to either address a safety issue or physical constraint, or to help a signalised junction operate more efficiently.

We acknowledge that restrictions will inconvenience some motorists and residents who own a car. However, we need to balance this inconvenience against the wider benefits that this scheme will deliver, such as much improved public spaces, and improvements to pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure.

Corsica Street (to the north of Highbury Corner), and Highbury Station Road & Hampton Court (both to the west) are the only point-closures for motorised traffic that are proposed as part of the scheme. Access to residential streets in the Highbury Fields area would still be possible using alternative routes. Access to properties in the vicinity of Highbury Station Road and Hampton Court will still be possible via Swan Yard.

## **2.3 Corsica Street closure**

**‘The closure will result in an increase in motor vehicle journey times for residents to get to their properties.’**

Journey times to Corsica Street, Liberia Road, Calabria Road, Fergus Road and Gallia Road may increase slightly, depending on the direction from which they are approached.

**‘It will limit access options for motor traffic to the Highbury Fields area.’**

The closure of the Corsica Street junction with Highbury Corner junction will not prevent motorised traffic from accessing any roads in the area. It will require the use of Baalbec Road and Fieldway Crescent to reach the small network of largely residential streets in the Highbury Fields area.

**‘It will cause vehicle reassignment to other local roads such as Baalbec Road and Fieldway Crescent.’**

We carried out traffic surveys of Corsica Street and these showed that in the busiest AM peak hour approximately one vehicle enters the street every minute and in the PM peak one to two vehicles every minute. This gives an approximate sense of the number of vehicles that would need to use roads such as Highbury Grove and Baalbec Road in order to access Corsica Street and other roads in this area. The surveys along with a note were published on the Islington Council [website](#).

We expect there to be some reassignment of residential traffic onto other local roads, but our survey of vehicles currently using Corsica Street suggests that the number of journeys which are reassigned onto other roads will be manageable.

TfL and Islington Council will actively monitor and manage traffic conditions following the delivery of the scheme, and would aim to mitigate and manage any problematic traffic reassignment as a result of implementation.

**‘There is no rationale for the closure.’**

We consider the closure of the Corsica Street/ Highbury Corner junction to be essential to the delivery of the Highbury Corner scheme, because it enables the safe progression of cyclists via the new cycle lane eastbound towards St Paul’s Road.

This was reflected in the Road Safety Audit that was carried out on the proposals which suggested that allowing motor traffic to turn across the cycle lane and into Corsica Street would have undermined the safety of the scheme.

The junction of St Paul’s Road and Holloway Road could not accommodate more than three traffic signal phases without significant congestion impacts across the area. Combining a traffic phase to allow both motor vehicle access to Corsica Street and simultaneous use of the segregated cycle track would not be safe.

## **2.4 Cycling**

### **Proposed infrastructure / facilities**

**‘There should be a cycle lane on the western side of the arboretum.’**

We considered the idea of providing a cycle lane on the western arm of the roundabout, however, we believe that the closure of that area to all traffic, including cyclists, is the best way to realise the full potential of the scheme.

Providing a fully separated protected cycle space around the roundabout and a separate new open space for pedestrians will maximise the benefits of the scheme for all parties, and will reduce the potential for conflict between pedestrians and cyclists.

This scheme presents the opportunity to create a single high-quality open space, linking the partially open arboretum with the pedestrianised western arm. The open space would lead directly to the new, unobstructed Highbury and Islington Station forecourt area to be delivered as part of the current TfL bridge reconstruction works.

Responses to the consultation suggest that, on the whole, cyclists agree with our view that the proposals represent a significant improvement to the convenience and safety of cycle journeys around Highbury Corner. The opportunity to travel north through the area via a fully segregated route is a substantial upgrade on the current cycling conditions at Highbury Corner and we expect most cyclists will choose this option over others, including the new public space.

**‘Cycle lanes should be even wider.’**

A balance has been drawn between optimising footway space, retaining the existing arboretum, and cycle facilities whilst considering the need for the junction to perform operationally. The cycle lanes proposed are appropriate for the numbers of cyclists expected to use them. The provision for cyclists was assessed, with consideration given to the six design outcomes set out in the London Cycling Design Standards: safety, directness, coherence, comfort, attractiveness

and adaptability.

When setting the widths of cycle lanes, we have had to balance the requirements of other users of the area, as well as the physical constraints of the area, including the perimeter of the arboretum. The widths of the cycle lanes in our proposals were the widest they could be, measuring 1.5 metres to 2 metres across, while still providing footways and carriageways that can safely accommodate the volume of pedestrian and road traffic that uses Highbury Corner each day.

We do not intend to widen the cycle lanes further and are satisfied that they are in line with the recommended dimensions for lanes of this type and the predicted volume of cyclists using them.

**‘Cycle lanes should be completely segregated.’**

The scheme provides separation in time and space for cyclists where it is practical to do so.

The proposed cycle facilities around Highbury Corner will be separated from general traffic with a kerb, meaning there will be a physical barrier separating cycles from cars.

On some approaches to the junction, for example on St Paul’s Road and Holloway Road, there is no kerb separation, but clear lane markings will be provided to give clear guidance for road users and cyclists.

This is the standard provision on many London roads. Kerb separation will be included where the geometry of the road network provides enough space to do so.

The cycle crossings proposed in the scheme run in their own signal phase and do not conflict with general traffic, meaning cyclists will be able to pass safely through all junctions.

**‘There will need to be more cycle parking around Highbury & Islington station.’**

We want cycling to be a convenient travel option and we understand that parking facilities play a role in that.

There is a large cycle parking area on Highbury Station Road, and other secure locking points located in the wider area. We will review cycle parking facilities in the area as part of the next stage of design.

**Requests for cycle hire to be extended to Highbury Corner**

Presently the Santander Cycles scheme covers more than 100km<sup>2</sup> of London, with more than 12,000 bikes, around 830 docking stations and approximately 22,000 docking points, making it one of the largest cycle hire networks in the world.

Santander Cycles continues to grow in popularity, with 2016 being the most successful year yet, with over 10 million hires. TfL continually explores opportunities for expansion with boroughs and land owners with the focus on agreeing suitable funding packages.

At this time there are no firm plans to extend the scheme to Highbury Corner. Securing the required funding for both the capital and operational expenses related to expansion is a challenge, but we can work with interested parties to try and achieve this.

### **Requests for more local cycle routes in the area – lack of connection from Highbury to Dalston and Highbury to Angel**

TfL has recently published the [Strategic Cycling Analysis \(SCA\)](#), which presents what the latest datasets, forecasts and models show about potential corridors and locations where current and future cycling demand might be.

The SCA documents the planned cycling infrastructure set out in TfL's latest Business Plan and identifies the additional cycling connections needed to deliver a strategic cycling network for London.

A cycle route from Highbury to Dalston is not currently planned but TfL is happy to work closely with the London Boroughs of Islington and Hackney to develop proposals for better connections between the areas via their roads.

TfL is working on Quietway 10 and planning the forthcoming Canonbury to Highgate Quietway which will provide connections from Highbury, close to Angel via quieter backstreets.

#### **'The scheme should allow for two-way cycling on Corsica Street.'**

In response to the comments received during consultation, we have now included a toucan crossing across St Paul's Road that will allow two-way cycling to and from Corsica Street.

#### **'The scheme should link up to Canonbury School to encourage cycling.'**

We have extended the segregated southbound cycle path to the school's "Keep Clear" marking to enable safer cycling to the school.

## **2.5 Safety**

#### **'More traffic calming measures are needed in the area.'**

The scheme includes a number of new traffic signals that we expect to improve road safety and help reduce vehicle speeds through the junction.

TfL and Islington Council will assess how well these new and existing traffic signals are working, once the new scheme is in operation. Wherever there are opportunities to change and improve these signals, and other traffic calming measures, we will take the necessary steps to do so.

**‘There are gaps in links with proposed and existing cycling routes, which could bring cyclists into conflict with motorists when joining or leaving Highbury Corner.’**

The scheme addresses road safety concerns at the junction itself by providing cycling facilities that are segregated from general traffic. Where possible, these facilities have been tied into existing routes across Islington.

TfL and Islington Council will work together to review any future plans for cycle routes into Highbury Corner, and every possible opportunity will be taken to effectively connect them with the cycling facilities included in this scheme.

**‘The proposals will increase the potential for conflict between motorists and cyclists generally.’**

The majority of the proposed cycling infrastructure at Highbury Corner will be segregated from motor traffic, by means of physical barriers in the carriageway and separate signal phasing at junctions, where practical.

Cycle lanes which bound the roundabout will be completely segregated, with some advisory cycle lanes on the approaches where available space does not allow segregation. We expect the scheme to significantly reduce the likelihood of conflict between cyclists and motorists.

**‘Motorists might be tempted to follow cyclists into Corsica Street, which is a safety concern.’**

We intend to place a raised traffic island between the general traffic lane and the segregated cycle track as it passes by the entrance to Corsica Street. This would prevent access for motor vehicles, while enabling access for cyclists using the segregated track.

It would be a criminal offence to drive over the kerb and segregated track.

**‘Cyclists progressing straight on from St Paul’s Road towards Holloway Road are at risk from vehicles turning left across their path.’**

Due to space restrictions, it has not been possible to provide both eastbound and westbound segregated cycle infrastructure on St Paul's Road. Eastbound segregation was considered to have greater benefits as it improves the progression for cyclists exiting onto St Paul's Road and reduces the potential for conflict with motor traffic as they merge.

To protect westbound cyclists while maintaining the operation of the junction we have proposed an 'early release' facility for cyclists waiting at the Advanced Stop Line at the junction of St Paul's Road. This will enable cyclists to establish themselves at the head of the junction and avoid conflict with left turning traffic as they progress towards the segregated cycle track in the direction of Holloway Road.

The traffic modelling indicates that the vast majority of cyclists will arrive at the junction during the red signal phase, meaning that they will benefit from this facility.

### **Cyclists' behaviour**

**'The new public space on the western side of the roundabout will lead to conflict between pedestrians and cyclists that use it, even if they're not supposed to.'**

The segregated cycle lanes around the perimeter of the arboretum will offer excellent progression for cyclists around Highbury Corner and we expect most would use this instead of the new public space, which is likely to be busy at peak times with pedestrians and therefore inconvenient to cycle through.

The design will consider how to discourage cyclists from using the pedestrianised western arm, such as with the strategic placement of new trees and street furniture. This will be determined during the next design stage.

If necessary, Road Traffic Enforcement Officers would be responsible for discouraging cyclists from using the new pedestrian space.

**'Cyclists won't stick to dedicated lanes.'**

The cycle infrastructure within Highbury Corner will be fully segregated, and will offer faster progression than general traffic through the junction in an anti-clockwise direction, and the same progression in a clockwise direction.

Journey times for cyclists using the infrastructure should therefore either be very similar or better than general traffic. Cyclists are permitted by law to continue to use general traffic lanes if they choose to do so, but we expect most to choose the dedicated cycling facilities.

**'Cyclists always cycle on the pavement, jump red lights, etc.'**

Research shows that most cyclists ride responsibly and that cyclists are no more likely to disobey the road rules than other road users. Safe and law-abiding cycling on our roads is something we take seriously, and we are actively working to encourage and enforce good behaviour in a number of ways.

We promote adherence to the Highway Code by all road users and encourage 'responsible cycling' and mutual respect between road users. We work to eliminate cycling offences through a combination of Police enforcement and educational programmes.

For example, TfL contributes significant funding to the Metropolitan Police Service Roads and Transport Policing Command, made up of 2,300 officers dedicated to policing London's roads and surface transport network.

There are regular intelligence-led roads policing activities to reduce danger on London's roads, including Operation Safeway, which sees up to 1,000 officers deployed at around 100 junctions, twice a month to tackle dangerous or illegal behaviour by all road users.

This approach is yielding significant results. In 2015 alone, over 5,000 cycle related offences were detected. We publish information about all roads enforcement within our annual Roads Policing Enforcement Statistics Bulletin, <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/road-safety> .

Members of the public can feed into the intelligence-led activities and report any road traffic incidents using the MPS Road Safe London online portal <https://www.met.police.uk/roadsafelondon/> .

## **2.6 Pedestrians**

### **Proposed infrastructure / facilities**

**'Zebra crossings rather than signalised crossings should be used, giving pedestrians priority.'**

UK traffic laws dictate that zebra crossings cannot be incorporated into signal controlled junctions. Zebra crossings at sites with high pedestrian flow can also severely restrict the movement of vehicles, which can often result in vehicles failing to concede priority to pedestrians.

Signalised crossings are particularly effective where visibility between road users and pedestrians is an issue.

**'Better pedestrian crossings and linkages are needed, especially towards Canonbury Primary School.'**

The pedestrian facilities included in our proposals will represent a significant improvement on current conditions. We intend to replace the existing two-stage crossing near the junction of Canonbury Road and Highbury Corner with a 'straight-across' option that will enable direct access from one side to the other.

The pedestrian crossing at the entrance to Upper Street will also be upgraded to a straight across facility.

The pedestrian crossing over Holloway Road will be widened to cater for high demand, and the pedestrian crossing over St Paul's Road is being relocated to a position where pedestrians habitually attempt to cross.

**‘There should be a diagonal crossing to St Paul’s Road from the arboretum.’**

A pedestrian crossing directly linking St Paul's Road to the arboretum was considered but cannot be accommodated within the proposed layout without significant reductions in traffic capacity. The consequences that this would have on journey times, in particular on extending bus journey times, could not be justified.

**‘An underpass should be included in the road layout to increase pedestrian safety.’**

We have a policy to replace existing subways with surface-level crossings, where it is feasible to do so.

Underpasses often encourage antisocial behaviour and give rise to concerns over personal security. They are also very expensive to construct and can have ongoing maintenance problems. We are also aware through feedback from people with mobility issues - including wheelchair users - that underpasses can often be difficult to navigate because of the access gradients required at either end.

**‘The path through the arboretum should have a better link with the entrance to Highbury & Islington station.’**

The path through the arboretum was intended to provide a direct link between Canonbury Road and Highbury & Islington Station.

The proposed path was designed to have minimal impact on the plants in the arboretum and accommodate the long term health of the existing trees. Unfortunately, further investigations have shown that opening this area up fully for public access would threaten the survival of the trees.

We have reviewed the proposed use of the arboretum with Islington Council and decided that it will be partially open to public access in a way which minimises any detrimental impact on the arboretum.

Whilst the proposed pedestrian link between Canonbury Road and Highbury & Islington Station via the arboretum will not be implemented, relatively few people currently take this route when compared with people walking to and from the station from other directions.

For pedestrians heading to the station from other directions, the creation of a new high quality space, which combines part of the existing arboretum with a pedestrianised western-arm and new station forecourt, should make the journey simpler and more pleasant.

**‘Wider pavements are needed to enhance pedestrian safety, particularly along the southern arm of the road layout (Upper Street & Canonbury Road).’**

The scheme allows for wider footways where possible. The western arm of the roundabout will also be fully pedestrianised.

We recognise that the footways in Canonbury Road and Upper Street are not as wide as at other locations around the roundabout; however they are difficult to improve whilst maintaining two-way traffic flow and taking into account the various requirements of other road users and local property owners.

**‘More facilities for pedestrians should be added, such as seating within the arboretum.’**

Street furniture, such as seating, has been considered in the design and will be considered further in the next design stage.

**‘More congestion will mean worse air quality for the pedestrians that need to use Highbury Corner.’**

Concerns about pollution are often based on the perception that the scheme will increase congestion, which would cause queuing motor traffic to emit more noxious gases. However, we do not expect this scheme to cause significant congestion or to increase air pollution.

Motor traffic is one of the major causes of air pollution in Greater London, with vehicle exhausts and braking systems contributing to NOx and particulate matter in the air. This scheme is expected to help provide a long-term improvement in air quality in the Highbury Corner area by encouraging more journeys to be made by walking and cycling, reducing the number of motor traffic journeys.

## **2.7 Public transport**

### **Objection to any increase in bus journey times**

Traffic modelling has been undertaken for the bus routes which go through the scheme area to understand the potential impact of the scheme on bus journeys.

The details of the expected impacts on bus journey time through Highbury Corner can be found on the explanatory note on the consultation [website](#). We have endeavoured to minimise any delays to journey times in the proposed design, but where there are increases on journey times for bus routes impacted by the scheme, further mitigation will be considered.

This scheme is expected to help provide a long-term improvement by encouraging more journeys to be made by walking and cycling, and encouraging use of public transport.

## **‘Will taxis be able to pick up and set down mobility impaired passengers where segregated cycle lanes are proposed?’**

In general, taxis will not be able to drop off mobility-impaired passengers next to the segregated cycle lanes, and in most instances it would be dangerous and inconvenient to attempt to access the footway in this way.

Our plans include two loading bays:

- One on Upper Street which incorporates disabled parking space
- One on Holloway Road

These have been designed to be accessible by all users and can be used as taxi-drop off points for mobility-impaired users when they are not otherwise occupied.

In addition, the segregated cycling tracks do not extend far back into the approach roads and side roads around Highbury Corner, ensuring that the distance between other suitable dropping-off points and the pedestrianised area remains small.

## **2.8 Route 277 curtailment and route 30**

### **‘Connection with tube and rail services at Highbury & Islington station will be affected.’**

Route 277 passengers would still be able to interchange with rail services and other bus routes at Highbury & Islington by changing to route 30, to the east of Kingsland Road. Like route 277, route 30 is a high frequency service.

### **‘It will increase travel costs as people will be forced to pay for more than one bus journey or use the Overground.’**

TfL introduced a new Hopper bus ticket from September 2016. This allows Oyster and contactless card users to make unlimited bus journeys for free within one hour of touching-in on the first bus. The majority of route 277 passengers making onwards journeys to Highbury & Islington station will be able to transfer to route 30 at no extra cost.

### **Route 277 alternative suggestions**

We have investigated various options to extend route 277 beyond its current terminus in order to retain a direct link to Highbury Corner. However, all of these options would be very expensive as additional buses and drivers would be required to cover the extra distance while maintaining existing frequencies. As such, the cost of extending the route could not be justified.

Making the route longer would mean that the service would be very difficult to operate reliably. TfL wants to provide bus services that are useful to customers but that are also efficient and proportionate to the level of demand.

Given the availability of a reliable interchange from routes 277 and 30, in most cases at no extra cost to the passenger, we do not feel there is a case for making further changes to route 277. The performance of these and all other London bus routes is subject to regular review and TfL will consider making changes wherever there are strong justifications.

**‘The proposal for the 277 will cause crowding on route 30.’**

Route 30 will give links for customers continuing their journeys from Highbury Corner. We will keep the routes under review to ensure sufficient capacity is provided.

**‘The increased level of service on route 30 will not be sufficient to cope with existing passenger demand.’**

We forecast that the additional journeys proposed for route 30 will be sufficient to meet passenger demand to and from Highbury Corner. However, the route will remain under review following the service change.

## **2.9 Bus infrastructure**

**‘It would be more useful to have a bus lane around the arboretum instead of a cycle lane.’**

One of the key aims of the scheme was the desire to improve the public realm and non-motorised transport opportunities around the roundabout. For this reason the option of a dedicated bus lane instead of a cycle lane has not been taken forward.

As well as creating an attractive new public space, the proposed design achieves a balance between the provision of road safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists, and the efficient movement of traffic, including buses. As described above, bus journeys to and from Highbury Corner will still be possible once the scheme has been implemented. Furthermore, bus lanes will remain on all approaches to Highbury Corner, which will help to protect bus journey times in all directions.

**‘Bus stops should be closer to the station to help interchange.’**

We recognise that interchange between bus and rail services is important, and we do not plan to move bus stops further from the station than their current positions.

Bus stop A on Holloway Road will be moved closer to the station; back to the position it occupied before the Highbury Bridge works. Our approach has been to place all bus stops as close to the station as possible without affecting the efficient operation of the junction.

## **2.10 Arboretum**

**‘The arboretum should be completely opened up, without any fencing so that pedestrians can walk amongst the trees.’**

TfL and Islington Council arboriculture experts believe that the arboretum would not withstand the impacts of being opened up in that way.

The roots of most trees in the arboretum are already partially exposed, due to the relatively low depth of soil there. In order to provide a safe and accessible environment for pedestrians to use the area we would be required to level the surface in some parts of the arboretum, which would pose risks to the health of those roots. This would be made worse by the constant footfall of pedestrians; the soil could become 'compacted,' meaning it is less able to conduct the air, water and nutrients that are vital to the health of trees.

Also, we expect that it would be necessary to lift the crowns of certain trees and to install lighting columns in order to provide the required levels of light for a public place. We understand the view of many respondents that the arboretum is a valuable area of green space that could be enjoyed by more people than is now the case. However, we also share the view that everything necessary should be done to preserve the integrity of the arboretum for future generations.

With these considerations in mind, a more balanced option of a partially opened arboretum is proposed to provide additional green space whilst preserving the survival of the most vulnerable trees.

**'The arboretum needs to be well-lit to improve public safety.'**

We agree that public safety is important. Lighting for the partially opened arboretum will be considered in the next design stage. We will involve the relevant stakeholders, such as, the Metropolitan Police and the Community Safety & Crime Protection Manager when developing the design.

**'The proposed path design doesn't need to go in a straight line as pedestrians can walk around trees, having a longer path may preserve more trees.'**

The proposed path was designed after assessing the location of the trees and identifying the clearest line of sight for pedestrians. It would require the removal of up to four additional trees. Any other route through the arboretum would require the removal of a similar amount or even more, and would be at risk of not being utilised because it does not provide a direct desire line for pedestrians.

The new proposed option of a partially open arboretum does not require a path. This design will ensure that as many trees as possible are preserved.

**‘Opening up of the arboretum could lead to damage to the existing trees.’**

Having further reviewed proposed access to the arboretum, TfL and Islington Council agree with the comment above, and we have decided that the arboretum will be partially open to public access. This will preserve its integrity and prevent damage to the existing trees, whilst providing additional green space.

**‘What will happen to the WW2 memorial?’**

There is a plaque at Highbury Corner commemorating the deaths of 26 people caused by a World War II bomb on 27 June 1944. It is situated on the gable end of Compton Terrace, on the southern side of the roundabout. The plaque and Compton Terrace will not be affected by our proposals in any way.

Rather than being a war memorial, as is sometimes assumed, the arboretum was intended as an experiment to assess the durability of trees in a modern, urban environment and without any human intervention. The trees were planted in the 1960s and ‘70s and fenced off. Maintenance works are carried out on the trees only when absolutely necessary.

**‘It is unacceptable to reduce the arboretum in size to improve the road layout.’**

TfL and Islington Council agree that any reduction of the size of the arboretum should be minimised. However, there are safety issues resulting from overcrowded footways and lack of safe cycling facilities that need to be resolved through reallocation of space in this area.

The details given in the [consultation document](#) provided the ‘worst case scenario’. We will be working with arboricultural experts throughout design and construction in order to preserve as much of the arboretum as possible.

Furthermore, we will explore ways to balance the loss of trees by looking into planting new trees or perhaps extending the arboretum into the western arm.

## **2.11 Tree planting**

**‘Can we have more trees in the area?’**

TfL and Islington Council are committed to planting new trees wherever appropriate and possible, and Highbury Corner has been assessed for potential locations. Trials will be undertaken to assess the suitability of these sites, and if underground conditions are deemed suitable then planting would be undertaken at the most appropriate time.

In addition to tree planting in the arboretum itself, new planting is proposed for the surrounding footways.

The size of trees to be planted will largely be determined by the size of pits we are able to dig; the larger the tree, the larger the pit it requires. Due to underground conditions and the depth available, it is unlikely that we will be able to plant large

trees (i.e. trees which are large at the time of planting). However, in keeping with the recognised principles of 'right place, right tree', we will seek to plant trees that will achieve the largest final canopy cover that is possible for each location.

It is also worth noting that even if it were possible to plant mature, large trees, it is not necessarily desirable to do so. Typically, smaller planted trees have a better chance of surviving and flourishing into maturity than larger ones.

We will also consider the likely desire lines of pedestrians travelling through the new public space so that new plantings complement the area and do not make it more difficult to use.

## **2.12 Tree removal**

**'You should not remove any trees for this scheme.'**

Our proposals include planting new trees inside and outside the arboretum, with the objective of achieving a total net gain of trees. Existing trees would only be removed as a last resort and if there was a very strong justification for doing so; for example, if it was necessary to the delivery of the scheme as a whole or if it was in the interests of safety.

We will carry out trials on the extent of the root system in each area, which should enable us to remove fewer trees than we have predicted in the 'worst case scenario' presented in our consultation material.

## **2.13 Public space**

**'The area will be used for anti-social behaviour.'**

This potential problem will be considered in the detailed design of the new public space by working closely with urban designers and learning from the lessons of similar projects across the city and beyond. We will consider the use of appropriate street furniture, CCTV and lighting options to ensure that the public space is a safe, pleasant place to visit.

**'The area would become an overspill for local pubs/restaurants.'**

In accordance with standard practice, the use of this area will continue to be monitored by Islington Council's licensing authorities and the owners of nearby pubs and restaurants.

**'There will be lots of litter.'**

Litter bins will be provided in the new public area, and the street furniture will be designed and placed to minimise potential litter traps. Refuse collection and street cleaning will remain the responsibility of Islington Council.

**‘The area will be overcrowded on match days at the Emirates Stadium.’**

The new public space on the western arm of the roundabout will be much larger than the current narrow and cramped pedestrian layout and will be better suited to accommodate the increased pedestrian demand on match days and events.

Discussions with the Metropolitan Police indicate that the new public space would be easier to police than the current road layout during match days. The final design will consider options to help minimise anti-social behaviour on match days, as on other days.

**‘The area could become dangerous at night.’**

The revised scheme will be designed to provide an open, safe and attractive public space. The public space is overlooked by adjoining buildings and will be well lit at night to reduce the potential for anti-social behaviour. We recognise that fully opening up the arboretum to public access could potentially lead to an increase of fear of crime in the area at night.

We are now proposing a partially open arboretum and will continue to involve the Metropolitan Police and the Community Safety & Crime Prevention Manager in the design to reduce the potential for anti-social use of the new public space.

**‘There is no need for a new public space at Highbury Corner, given that Highbury Fields and other parks are close by.’**

The existing road configuration has poor pedestrian facilities with very narrow footways in Upper Street, which is a key link towards the Highbury & Islington interchange. The proposed new public space will address these issues while also creating an appealing space that people will enjoy travelling through and spending time in, and integrating the arboretum more closely with the street environment.

The new public space should take advantage of the existing green infrastructure and help to address the fact that Islington (with the exception of the City of London) is the borough in London with the least green space. The Highbury Corner Arboretum is a site of great local importance; a collection of rare and unusual trees providing a substantial green area and significant volume of canopy in a busy urban environment. The benefits delivered by the arboretum go beyond aesthetic considerations (although these are also very important) and include improvement in air quality, reduction in noise and a mitigation of the heat island effect.

Although the existing configuration would change, TfL and Islington Council will ensure that the character of the area is enhanced by retaining as much of the arboretum as possible.

The creation of a new and attractive place at the heart of the neighbourhood will ensure that Highbury Corner is of equivalent quality to nearby green spaces and it would act as the entry point into Islington for those seeking to visit Highbury Fields.

## 2.14 Basis for the scheme

### **‘The Scheme is a waste of money’ / poor cost and benefit ratio**

The Business Case for this scheme shows improvements for pedestrians and cyclists which aligns with the draft [Mayor’s Transport Strategy \(2017\)](#) to promote active travel. Islington Council also supports this scheme.

### **‘There is no need for the scheme in the first place’**

A large number of pedestrians use the area, resulting in crowded footways around Highbury & Islington station.

The roundabout can also be difficult for cyclists to navigate and has been identified as a key barrier to cycle movement. Although cyclists make up 22 per cent of all traffic at Highbury Corner roundabout in the morning rush-hour, there are currently limited cycle facilities there.

The proposed changes would make Highbury Corner a more welcoming area and balance the needs of all users more effectively.

### **‘It is more important to focus efforts on improving traffic flow than creating new public space’**

We want to create a better balance for all users. Creating a new integrated and attractive public space at Highbury Corner and improving safety and access will improve the attractiveness of the area and encourage more people to walk, cycle, and use public transport. Reducing the reliance on use of the private car and increasing the number of people walking, cycling and using public transport is a major priority for TfL and the Mayor, as set out in the Mayor’s Transport Strategy. This scheme can help improve the lives of all those who live in, work in, and visit Highbury Corner and help create a greener, healthier London.

### **The scheme is heavily biased towards cycling to the detriment of other modes The scheme aims to balance the needs of all road users.**

Cycling is a sustainable method of transport and the number of cyclists on London’s roads is expected to increase.

Nearly half of car trips made by London residents could be cycled in around ten minutes, and two-thirds in under 20 minutes. Encouraging people to walk or cycle these journeys is important to free up road space for vital journeys – e.g. those vehicles that are carrying large quantities of goods or drivers unable to use other modes such as public transport, walking or cycling.

### **‘Extend the congestion charge further north to tackle congestion problems’**

There are no plans to alter the congestion charge zone at this time.

Between 4 April and 25 June 2017, TfL consulted on proposals to introduce an Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) in Central London (and the residents' sunset period) 17 months earlier in central London.

For more information visit:

<https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/environment/air-quality-consultation-phase-3a/>

## **2.15 General comments on the proposed design**

### **'A roundabout is a better road layout for Highbury Corner'**

Roundabouts can perform well in terms of traffic flow, but often do not allow the introduction of safety facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. Pedestrianising the western arm also creates new areas of public space, linking the arboretum with the new space.

### **'Maintain the western arm of the roundabout but use the southern section as a public space'**

A consultation carried out in 2008 recommended the western arm of the roundabout as the preferred option for closure. The footway along this side of the roundabout has the heaviest footfall and is currently overcrowded due to the numbers of people using it for access to and from Highbury & Islington station.

Pedestrian numbers have increased in recent years following the opening of the London Overground in 2007 and the East London Line extension in 2010. Closing this arm and providing extra public space along the western side therefore provides the greatest benefit to pedestrians. It also increases the desirability of the area for new business opportunities.

Using the southern section as a public space would not provide the same degree of benefits to pedestrians. There are no retail frontages along this arm, and therefore a public space in this area would have fewer opportunities for additional benefits such as business opportunities to attract people to the area. Furthermore, the public space would be north-facing, so would be shaded from the sun during the day. This would make it a less pleasant space for pedestrians to stop and relax.

For these reasons, we will continue with our plan to close the western arm of the roundabout.

### **'Reinstate the historic kerb lines and road layout of Highbury Corner'**

Reinstatement of the historic kerb lines of Highbury Corner is in effect the same as using the southern section as a public space and would incur the same problems. It would not deliver the required benefits to pedestrians along the western arm, which has the highest footfall and is currently overcrowded.

## 2.16 Consultation

**‘You deliberately avoided consulting with bus users and residents of Hackney, who are more likely to object to these changes.’**

All bus users with their Oyster cards registered were emailed so they could access the consultation website and register their opinion. This included any Hackney residents using the routes serving Highbury Corner who had registered.

The scheme boundary is contained in LB Islington and therefore the residential letterdrop was focused on this area. However, we informed a wide range of stakeholders, including Hackney Council of the consultation so they could assess the information and provide a response. The consultation was open to all interested parties.

**‘There should have been a consultation at an earlier stage, in which the basic options for the scheme were decided.’**

An initial [consultation](#) was carried out in 2008 to gather public opinion on the preferred side of the roundabout to be closed. The most favoured option was the closure of the western arm. Since then TfL and Islington Council have been working together to progress this concept.