

Forward Plan reference number: Not Applicable

Report Title: Proposed 18 Month Experimental Order: Prohibition of Right Turn - Noak Hill Road/ Wash Road (West), Basildon	
Report to: Councillor Ian Grundy, Cabinet Member for Highways	
Report author: Andrew Cook, Director for Highways and Transport	
Date: 21 March 2018	For: Decision
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County Divisions affected: Wickford Crouch	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to implement an 18 month experimental Prohibition of Right Turn out of Wash Road (west) onto A176 Noak Hill Road, Basildon, Essex (the Proposal). Essex County Council (ECC) have received several objections to the Proposal following informal consultation. The objections to the Proposal are outlined in Appendix 3, and the Proposal design is shown in Appendix 1.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree to implement an 18 month experimental Prohibition of Right Turn out of Wash Road (west) onto A176 Noak Hill Road, Basildon, Essex; as set out in Option A (as per section 4.1 of this report).

3. Summary of issue

- 3.1 The A176 Noak Hill Road and Wash Road (west) junction is located on the north-west edge of Basildon (the Site). The A176 is a single carriageway road classified as a PR1 radial feeder route with a 40mph speed limit. Wash Road is a single carriageway road classified as a PR2 link road and has a speed limit of 30mph.
- 3.2 There have been 13 recorded injury collisions at this Site over the past 10 years (01/04/2006 to 31/03/2016). Nine (7 slight and 2 serious) of these collisions involved road users turning right out of Wash Road (west) into the path of northbound and southbound road users. A fatal collision on 25 March 2016 further underlined the urgent need for casualty reduction measures at this Site.
- 3.3 The number of injury collisions at this Site alongside the cost, policy and traffic management implications of potential improvements has led to a casualty

reduction site investigation and a number of detailed studies in 2012-13, 2014-15 and 2015-16.

- 3.4 The 2012 casualty reduction site investigation recommended the introduction of an experimental right-turn ban. Following this recommendation, a study was undertaken in 2012-13 to explore the feasibility of introducing a roundabout at the junction, as an alternative to the Prohibition of Right Turn. The study concluded that installing a roundabout could cause “significant delays” on A176 Noak Hill Road during AM peak times and may be counter to ECC’s Traffic Management Policy by giving equal priority to PR1 and PR2 roads. Accordingly in June 2013, Basildon Local Highway Panel (LHP) agreed to progress with the implementation of an 18 Month Experimental Order in the form of a Prohibition of Right Turn.
- 3.5 In 2014 the experimental prohibition of right turn was initially supported and approved by the former Cabinet Member for Highways. However, upon receipt of passionate correspondence from residents and negative media coverage during informal consultation, ECC agreed to further consider alternative measures.
- 3.6 Accordingly a further study by the Highway Improvement Design Team was undertaken in 2014/15. This study looked at all possible alternatives to a right turn ban – namely a mini roundabout, traffic signals, and once again a conventional roundabout. The study found that a mini roundabout would not be appropriate for a PR1 route with a 40mph speed limit. The study also highlighted a number of potential problems with the roundabout and traffic signal options. A conventional roundabout would be contrary to policy on the grounds that it would give priority to a PR2 over a PR1 road. In addition to this it would cause additional delays along the A176 and would cost in excess of £200,000. The traffic signals would cost in the region of £150,000 with additional issues in relation to the junction’s proximity to a nearby pedestrian crossing on Noak Hill Road.
- 3.7 In order to definitively assess the suitability of a conventional roundabout, prohibition of right turn and signalised junction options, the design team recommended that a further traffic modelling study be undertaken in 2015-16 by the transport planning team. This study would also be useful in assessing the impact that any improvement would have on neighbouring roads such as Dunton Road and High Road North, where LHP Members had complained about a perceived problem with “rat-running,” drivers using this route as a short-cut.
- 3.8 The 2015-16 study outlined the congestion and road safety implications of various traffic signal and conventional roundabout layouts before concluding that “all options could potentially improve the safety issues at the junction. However, with the exception of the right turn ban, all options tested were shown to worsen the levels of capacity and delay at the junction particularly for the main road.” The recommendation of the study, therefore, was “to implement a ban on the right turn movement out of Wash Road West, either

as a trial, as has previously been suggested, or permanently, to reduce the number of collisions at the junction.”

- 3.9 The information in the 2015-16 study indicated that only approximately 4% of the traffic movements at the junction make the movement to turn right at Wash Road (West) and so this would not cause a significant impact on the wider network, should the movement be banded. A right turn ban would likely force around 70 vehicles during the AM and PM peak times to use the A127 as an alternative route, which may perhaps cause a small increase in the number of vehicles using High Road North as those living near the junction may use it to access the A127. Appendix 2 outlines the proposed diversion route.
- 3.10 Results were presented to the Basildon Local Highway Panel where no further alternative solutions were suggested and it was agreed that only a prohibition of right turn would address safety issues without reducing capacity or increasing delays.
- 3.11 In April 2016, a report once again recommending the proposed right turn ban was presented to the previous Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, in order for Essex Highways Officers to be instructed on how to progress the scheme. The Cabinet Member decided that officers may only proceed with the experimental order subject to another robust informal consultation to local residents. The decision was confirmed on 3 May 2016 (FP/494/04/16).
- 3.12 On the 8th of May 2017, a letter was sent to 776 residents inviting them to complete an online consultation, to seek their views on the Proposal, by the 31st of May 2017.
- 3.13 The Proposal includes the installation of a bolt down island that would prevent vehicles from turning right out of Wash Road (west), in unison with bolt down highway cones along Noak Hill Road to enforce this manoeuvre. This would also be enforced by an experimental ‘No Right Turn’ Traffic Regulation Order with associated signage at the junction of Wash Road West and Noak Hill Road. The Proposal would not prevent vehicles from turning right into Wash Road (west) from Noak Hill Road.
- 3.14 The experimental order would last for 18 months, with formal consultation taking place over the first 6 months. The experiment would determine whether introducing a prohibition of right turn out of Wash Road (west) into Noak Hill Road, would reduce the number of injury collisions at the junction within 12 months of its introduction.
- 3.15 Following a request received during the consultation, it was decided to extend the consultation area and its duration to a further 213 residents until the 23rd June 2017.
- 3.16 Out of 113 respondents who replied to the consultation, 36% supported the Proposal. ECC received 75 comments concerning the proposal.

- 3.17 Many expressed their preference of either a roundabout or traffic signals at the junction rather than a prohibition of right turns. However, the studies have shown that there would be significant delays on Noak Hill Road (southbound) at AM peak times if a roundabout was implemented. A roundabout at this location may at times give priority to minor roads over major roads, subsequently causing increased delays. This is contrary to the ECC Traffic Management Policy. Other roundabouts in the local area would have been installed according to the guidance in place at that time. Any new proposals are in accordance with current guidelines. The Design Manual for Roads and Bridge Volume 6 Section 2 part 2 TD 54/07 states that 'Mini-roundabouts must only be used on roads with a speed limit of 30mph or less'. Reducing the speed limit at this location would contradict the Speed Management Strategy due to there being an insufficient number of properties in this area to fall within this policy. Furthermore, the use of Traffic Calming measures, would also contradict the Speed Management Strategy as the two roads at this location are classified as PR1 and PR2 roads, which should be restricted from having Traffic Calming measures on them, in accordance with the Speed Management Strategy.
- 3.18 Studies have shown that installing signals at this junction with the nearby pedestrian crossing facility on Noak Hill Road, would significantly worsen the overall performance of the junction over capacity and cause delays particularly in the AM peak.
- 3.19 Many also expressed concerns over any possible congestion that may result from the prohibition, and its impact on the local area, including the use of small roads as 'rat runs'. Less than 4% of the traffic movements at the junction make the movement to turn right at Wash Road (West) and therefore would not cause significant congestion on the wider network should the movement be banned. A right turn ban would likely force around 70 vehicles in the AM and PM peaks to relocate to the A127. There may also be a small increase in the number of vehicles using High Road North as those living near the junction may use it to access the A127.
- 3.20 New developments would potentially increase traffic queues at the junction in question, therefore increasing waiting times and the potential for collisions. The Proposal would therefore restrict right turn movements, eliminating the potential for collisions as a result of vehicles turning left and increasing the capacity of the junction. The Transport Planning Study 2015-2016 found that there was 'little quantitative evidence to support anecdotal evidence' to support that Dunton Road had undue high traffic flows and speeds.
- 3.21 Some expressed concern over the diversion, and its impact on access to their local facilities. Appendix 2 highlights a suggested diversion route and its approximate length. It is accepted that this Proposal will cause some inconvenience for road users, however it is felt that the highway benefits of this scheme outweigh any negatives.
- 3.17 A full objection report can be found in Appendix 3.

- 3.18 In January 2018, Basildon LHP withdrew their support of the Proposal, following concerns received from local residents as detailed in Appendix 3.
- 3.19 An experimental order has been proposed over a permanent order, to allow ECC flexibility with these proposed works. Although the proposals currently appear unpopular, and may initially cause some inconvenience to local residents; introducing an experimental order allows the scheme to be installed, followed by a period of further consultation once drivers have had a chance to become accustomed to the changes. Furthermore, if at any point it is deemed that the works are not suitable for the site, or the experiment has not been successful, then the scheme can be removed instantly and reverted to the previous road layout. However, if the experiment is deemed successful, then permanent design features will be installed before the end of the 18-month period.
- 3.20 Essex Highways Road Safety Engineering Team wish to include the Prohibition of Right Turn Proposal as part of their 2018/19 Casualty Reduction programme.

4. Options

Option A – Implement the Proposal

- 4.1.1 This option seeks to improve safety at the junction of Wash Road (west) with A176 Noak Hill Road, by reducing the likelihood of collisions at this junction, as highlighted in recorded collision patterns. Furthermore, this option would have the least impact on the area in terms of congestion, compared to other options which have previously been investigated.
- 4.1.2 Any collisions that occur within the first 12 months of the 18 month period, will be monitored and cross-referenced against previous collision data at this location to determine whether there has been a reduction in collisions. If the experiment proves successful and ECC receive support from residents and/or Cabinet Member approval, then the Proposal will become a permanent Traffic Regulation Order. If the scheme proves unsuccessful or ECC are unable to balance the conflicting interests of residents, then the scheme will be removed, with the current road layout reinstated.
- 4.1.3 This option provides flexibility to remove the Prohibition of Right Turn if the measures prove unsuccessful in terms of reducing collisions. It would also allow further amendments to the design to be made, following any issues identified.

Option B - Abandon the Proposal entirely

- 4.1.4 This would not achieve any additional highway benefits, and it is expected that the current pattern of collisions at this junction will continue. Many of the local residents who provided comments to the most recent consultation

acknowledged that there is a problem at this location which should be addressed, objections were generally received in relation to the solution which has been proposed.

Option C – Advertise the permanent introduction of Prohibition of Right Turn out of Wash Road (west) into A176 Noak Hill Road, Basildon, Essex

- 4.1.5 This option would also seek to improve safety at this junction, as per Option A. This option, however, would seek to avoid the 18 month experimental period and introduce the casualty reduction measures permanently, following the statutory 3 week advertisement period. Comments and objections from this advertising period would need to be considered by the Cabinet Member before the scheme is implemented. However, this option would not allow local stakeholders opportunity to comment on the changes following its implementation. Furthermore, this option would not allow any flexibility if the measures prove unsuccessful or unsuitable following implementation. Future changes would need to be treated as a new request and funded by an appropriate Local Authority budget.

5. Issues for consideration

5.1 Financial implications

- 5.1.1 As of 2017/18 all road safety schemes are approved directly by the Cabinet Member and taken from the Local Highway Panel budget without any prior approval by the Local Highway Panel. As the Noak Hill Road / Wash Road junction is a casualty reduction site which still meets the current criteria, it has been agreed that this scheme is not included on the Basildon LHP programme and instead directly taken to the Cabinet Member as part of the 2018/19 casualty reduction programme.
- 5.1.2 The total estimated cost of the Proposal is £65,500. The implementation of the experimental prohibition of a right turn is expected to be delivered in the 2018/19 financial year.
- 5.1.3 Additional funding may be required out of the 2019/20 Local Highway Panel budget, if the experimental order is to be made permanent.

5.2 Legal implications

- 5.2.1 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 gives ECC a statutory duty to exercise its traffic functions to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic of all kinds, including pedestrians and to provide suitable and adequate parking facilities. So far as practical the council is also required to have regard to:
- (a) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;

- (b) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the roads run;
- (c) the importance of facilitating the passage of buses and their passengers.

5.2.2 Justifiable speed limits assist with the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic and pedestrians.

6. Equality and Diversity implications


- 6.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty applies to the Council when it makes decisions. The duty requires us to have regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other behaviour prohibited by the Act. In summary, the Act makes discrimination etc on the grounds of a protected characteristic unlawful
 - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - (c) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.
- 6.2 The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, gender, and sexual orientation. The Act states that 'marriage and civil partnership' is not a relevant protected characteristic for (b) or (c) although it is relevant for (a).
- 6.3 The equality impact assessment indicates that the proposals in this report will not have a disproportionately adverse impact on any people with a particular characteristic. The Equality Impact Assessment can be found in Appendix 5.

7. List of appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1 Drawing No. DS5017-1200-001
- 7.2 Appendix 2 Drawing No. DS5017-000-002 (Diversion Route)
- 7.3 Appendix 3 Objection Report
- 7.4 Appendix 4 Site Photos
- 7.5 Appendix 5 Equality Impact Assessment

8. List of Background papers

- 8.1 Transport Planning Study 2015-2016
- 8.2 HIDT Feasibility Study 2014-2015
- 8.3 Transport Planning Study 2012-2013
- 8.4 25-03-2016 Fatal Collision
- 8.5 Background papers are available on request.

<p>I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p> <p>Councillor Ian Grundy, Cabinet Member for Highways</p>	<p>Date</p> <p>26/04/18</p>
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In consultation with:

Role	Date
Director for Highways and Transport	25.04.18
Andrew Cook	
Executive Director for Corporate and Customer Services (S151 Officer)	Consent not needed
Margaret Lee	
Director, Legal and Assurance (Monitoring Officer)	
Kim Cole, Principal Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer, on behalf of	24.04.18
Paul Turner	
Head of Network and Safety/Traffic Manager	20.04.18
Liz Burr	