

Forward Plan reference number: Not Applicable

Report title: Proposed raised table at junction of London Road and Queenborough Lane, Black Notley/Braintree	
Report to: Councillor Kevin Bentley, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure and Deputy Leader	
Report author: Andrew Cook, Director for Highways and Transportation	
Date: 22 July 2020	For: Decision
Enquiries to: Erwin Deppe, Head of Major Projects (email: Erwin.Deppe@essexhighways.org)	
County Divisions affected: Three Fields with Great Notley and Witham Northern	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To seek approval to advertise proposals for the installation of a new raised table junction at the location of London Road and Queenborough Lane, Braintree/Black Notley to accommodate new footway and cycleway improvements.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree to advertise proposals to:
- (a) install a raised table junction at the junction between London Road and Queenborough Lane, Braintree/Black Notley
 - (b) Remove a road hump within Queenborough Lane.
- 2.2 To authorise the Director for Highways and Transportation to implement the raised table at the conclusion of the advertisement and consultation process, provided that if any representations are received the matter will be returned to the Cabinet Member for determination.

3. Summary of issue

- 3.1 The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) process is intended to highlight corridors, using a data driven approach, to generate an increased modal shift towards cycling.
- 3.2 London Road has been identified as a key corridor within Braintree under the LCWIP process. At this location cycles are required to cross Queenborough Lane in order to continue to use the off-carriageway facility along the identified cycle corridor adjacent to London Road.

Braintree LCWIP Routes – Advertisement for implementation of raised junction table.

- 3.3 It has been observed on site that there are many school children crossing Queenborough Lane by foot and cycle to reach Notley High School from Great Notley.
- 3.4 National Cycle Network Route 16 follows Queenborough Lane on-carriageway before joining the LCWIP corridor at the junction with London Road. At this point cycles are required to move between the carriageway and shared use cycle track in either direction.
- 3.5 To reduce the average speed of vehicles, increase safety and make the crossing of Queenborough Lane more comfortable for cycles and pedestrians, it is proposed to introduce a raised table at the junction of Queenborough Lane. This will manage the speed of approaching vehicles, thus improving pedestrian and cyclist safety. The crossing point is not controlled by any signals and it is proposed that it will remain that way.
- 3.6 However, London Road is a bus route. Raised tables situated on bus routes are usually required to have a plateau with a length of at least 12m for the comfort of bus passengers. This requirement, along with site constraints including vehicle accesses and a bus stop, resulted in the table originally being proposed to be located wholly within Queenborough lane close to the junction with London Road. This location was raised as a concern by Road Safety Auditors as motorcyclists would still be cornering when approaching the ramp, potentially leading to accidents.
- 3.7 To address this, it was recommended that the table is extended into London Road to form a raised junction. The introduction of the raised table at the Junction of London Road and Queenborough Lane will also remove the need for the existing road hump in Queenborough Lane outside a property known as Heaton which is to be removed as part of the scheme.
- 3.8 London Road is classified as a PR2 route. The introduction of a raised table at this location falls outside the Essex Speed Management Strategy and therefore requires a Cabinet Member Action. Details of conversations held with Road Safety Auditors can be found in Appendix A.
- 3.9 The proposal is for a raised table to be installed at the junction. The proposed raised junction can be seen in Figure 1, below. The table would extend along London Road for a length of 12m, so that all vehicles would be fully on the raised table when carrying out turning movements. This would ensure the comfort of bus passengers and the safety of motorcyclists, whilst providing a safer crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists. Further details of the junction table and adjacent scheme proposals can be found in Appendix B.

Braintree LCWIP Routes – Advertisement for implementation of raised junction table.

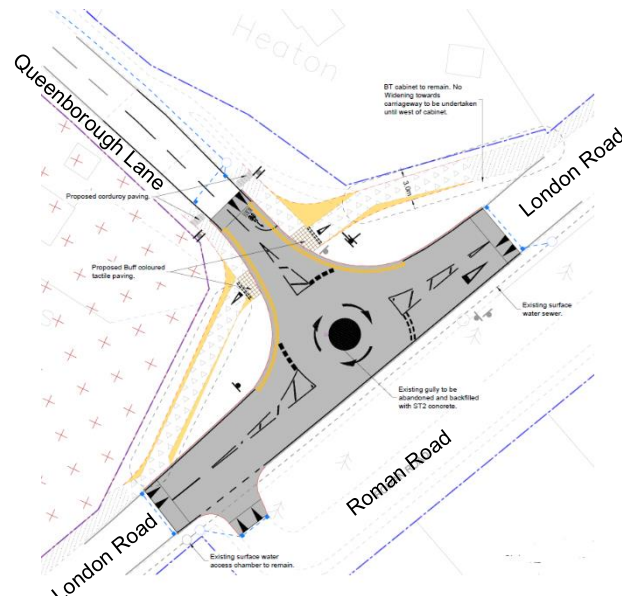


Figure 1 - Proposed Junction Table

- 3.10 Typically ramp entry/exit gradients for raised tables are 10%. However, following consultation with the Passenger Transport Service a ramp gradient of no greater than 5% has been incorporated into the design to accommodate buses.
- 3.11 The proposals will further enhance the location of the existing roundabout which formed part of a historical Casualty Reduction Scheme. Currently the road surface and markings at the roundabout are in poor condition as seen below in Figure 2 and 3:



Figure 2 - Condition of roundabout in 2009 after CRS works



Figure 3 - Degraded condition of roundabout in 2019

- 3.12 An ATC traffic survey completed in January 2016 on London Road, recorded 75% of southbound and 69% of northbound vehicles exceeding the 30mph speed limit, with an average daily 85th speed of 38.2mph. The proposals to implement a raised table would help manage vehicle speeds on London Road. Details of this traffic survey can be found in Appendix 4.

Policy Objectives

- 3.13 By encouraging people to cycle, through the provision of safer cycle routes, ECC is meeting one of its key strategic objectives to improve the health of people in Essex.
- 3.14 The provision of a high quality, safer cycle link, connecting communities will help address severances in existing cycle facilities and encourage an alternative to private cars for short journeys, thus improving the environment
- 3.15 The identified LCWIP routes, supports the Strategic Objectives outlined in the Essex Cycling Strategy. In particular, improving links to schools (Notley High School and John Ray Junior School) provides school children a healthier alternative to travel safely to school. Similarly, links to the employment zones in the wider area also offer opportunities for those without access to a motorised vehicle.
- 3.16 There has been no formal consultation on the proposals, however informal consultation with Braintree District Council officers and ECC Passenger Transport has indicated support for the proposal.
- 3.17 Contact has been made with the County Members representing the Divisions directly affected by the proposed cycle improvements, namely: -
- Cllr Abbott (Witham Northern),
 - Cllr Butland (Three Fields with Great Notley)
 - Cllr Schmitt (Braintree Town)
- At the time of finalising this report no responses had been received apart from Cllr Abbott who voiced his support for the scheme.
- 3.18 Local highway authorities have a statutory duty to consult the police (Highways Act 1980) when road hump schemes are proposed. The Highways (Road Humps) Regulations 1999 also require consultation with the fire service, ambulance service and organisations representing those who use the road. This would include residents, stakeholders, road users and bus operators. Formal consultation in line with the regulations will take place if the recommendations in this report are approved.
- 3.19 Should there be any objections then a further report will be brought back to the Cabinet Member.

4. Alternative Options to the Junction Table.

Retain an at grade crossing facility

- 4.1 The 'do nothing' option is to retain the existing cycle route on London Road with no improvements to the Queenborough Lane crossing point. The aim of LCWIP corridors is to target locations for infrastructure that will generate the most significant modal shifts towards cycling. The 'do nothing' approach will not

address vehicle speeds using the junction or enhance cycle links and therefore does not improve safety or increase comfort of cyclists moving along the corridor.

Reduce the table to the side road only

- 4.2 The option of providing a raised table in the side road only was explored, however this would result in vehicles turning into the side road and immediately encountering a traffic management feature. This could create a road safety issue for motorcyclists which has been highlighted previously.
- 4.3 Following comments raised as part of the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit, moving the crossing point further into the side road was also considered, however the location of the raised table would then conflict with an existing bus stop and driveways.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Subject to the CMA the proposals will be published. If the Council receive any representations, a further report will be brought to the Cabinet Member for further consideration.

6. Issues for consideration

6.1 Financial implications

- 6.1.1 The estimated construction costs for the raised junction is £60,000. Additionally, there will be a further cost of £1000 for preparing Notices and advertising the raised table. Funding for the above costs has been included within the approved capital budget.

6.2 Legal implications

- 6.2.1 The LCWIP routes support the Council's objectives within its Cycling Strategy, however, the proposed raised junction falls outside current policy. Should any representations be received the matter will be returned to the Cabinet Member for determination on whether the raised junction should proceed to implementation.

7. Equality and Diversity implications

- 7.1 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.

- 7.2 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).
- 7.3 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.

8. List of appendices

Appendix 1 – Email detailing road safety auditor’s assessment of Queenborough Lane raised table.

Appendix 2 – Drawing B355377A-00-01-001 showing the junction table proposals.

Appendix 3 – Stage 2 Road Safety Audit.

Appendix 4 – London Road Traffic Survey – Jan 2016.

Appendix 5 – Equalities Impact Assessment

9. List of Background papers

Essex Speed Management Strategy

(https://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/files/strategy_speed_management_strategy.pdf)

Highways Practice Note 033. 2015.

Essex Cycling Strategy (<https://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/docs/ecc-cycling-strategy-novemeber-2016.pdf>)

I approve the above recommendations set out above for the reasons set out in the report.	Date
Councillor Kevin Bentley,	
Cabinet Member for Infrastructure	14/10/2020

In consultation with:

Role	Date
Director, Highways and Transportation Andrew Cook	15/09/2020
Essex Traffic Manager /Head of Network and Safety Liz Burr	27/07/2020
Head of Major Projects – Essex Highways Erwin Deppe	23/07/2020
Executive Director for Corporate and Customer Services (S151 Officer) <i>Please send to your Head of Finance/Finance Business Partner who will arrange S151 sign off.</i> Nicole Wood	Consent not needed
Director, Legal and Assurance (Monitoring Officer) Paul Turner	15/09/2020