

Merry Fiddlers Junction Improvements – Proposals and Implications

Consultation proposals recommended to take forward	Level of support (No/%)*	Benefits/Implications
2. Replace the paving around the junction.	Yes – 175 (52%) No – 63 (19%)	<p>This will lead to a vastly improved street scene. The aim is to introduce high quality footways similar to that outside the leisure centre.</p> <p>New paving will reduce the amount of time/money needed to undertake repairs to existing footways and will reduce potential trip hazards that could result in injuries to pedestrians and subsequent insurance claims against the Council.</p> <p>Additional improvements to the public realm are also being considered, including greening the street scene and removing redundant street furniture. Proposals are also being developed for public realm improvements outside the Merry Fiddlers shopping parade. Similar improvements are currently being implemented outside the Whalebone Lane shopping parade.</p>
4. Reduce the number of lanes on Wood Lane next to the leisure centre from 5 to 3 so that there is 1 to turn right, 1 for straight ahead and 1 to turn left.	Yes – 168 (49%) No – 141 (42%)	<p>A key issue affecting the operation of the junction and its capacity is the traffic signal phasing and cycle times. Traffic signal timings at the junction will be shortened to ensure that sufficient capacity for vehicles is maintained and that lengthy queues do not occur. Discussions are being held with Transport for London to convert the signals to UTC [Urban Traffic Control] which would allow them to be operated and monitored remotely. There is also the potential for them to be upgraded to SCOOT (Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique) which would allow the signals to respond automatically to traffic flows and as a result traffic flows should be improved</p> <p>The layout of the crossing is such that pedestrians find it difficult to use it safely. In particular, pedestrians often get caught out by traffic on Wood Lane turning left past the leisure centre which uses a filter lane which operates in advance of the straight ahead and right hand turn movements.</p> <p>Reducing the number of lanes along Wood Lane East, together with enlarging the pedestrian traffic island, will enable the pedestrian crossing to be shortened, which in turn will enable pedestrians to cross the junction more safely and in a shorter time. Detailed modelling has shown that the number of lanes at this part of the junction can be reduced without having an adverse impact on the way it operates.</p>

<p>5. Make the dangerous Wood Lane/Homestead Road junction safer.</p>	<p>Yes – 248 (73%) No – 15 (4%)</p>	<p>Proposals will focus on reducing the number of vehicular collisions which occur at this junction as well as improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>A study will be completed to examine specific measures, taking into account suggestions offered by consultees. Ward Councillors will be consulted on recommended measures.</p>
<p>6. Make sure the pedestrian crossing opposite Morrisons does not stop traffic when there is a green light on the main junction.</p>	<p>Yes – 282 (83%) No – 34 (10%)</p>	<p>The signal timings at the pedestrian crossing have recently been adjusted as a result of this project to ensure that they work in sync with those at the main junction. This has helped ensure that traffic can pass through the main junction in its allotted green signal time. It appears to have reduced queuing in this location as a result.</p>
<p>7. Link the Becontree Leisure Centre and Morrisons car parks together.</p>	<p>Yes – 232 (68%) No – 60 (18%)</p>	<p>It has been observed that both car parks are currently operating below capacity. Moreover, since the implementation of parking charges, it has become apparent that some leisure centre customers now choose to park elsewhere (including at Morrisons) to avoid these charges - not because the charges are excessive but because they are inconvenient.</p> <p>Discussions are currently being held with Morrisons to establish the potential for shared management arrangements for both car parks which will enable both the leisure centre and supermarket to operate efficiently, as well as to protect future parking revenue streams for the Council. In the interim, the link between the two car parks will be one-way only (from Morrisons into the leisure centre car park) to accommodate the different charging regimes. This arrangement ensures that the Morrison's car park is no less easy to access than at present.</p> <p>Linking the car parks together will enable the banned right-turn out of Morrisons car park onto Wood Lane south to be implemented.</p> <p>The proposals will result in the loss of around 6-7 car parking spaces in total (3-4 from the leisure centre car park and the same number from Morrisons).</p>
<p>8. Ban the dangerous right hand turns into and out of Althorne Way and out of Morrisons onto Wood Lane. Open up Stour Road to allow access from Althorne Way to Rainham Road North.</p>	<p>Yes – 267 (79%) No – 55 (16%)</p>	<p>There was overall support for connecting Althorne Way to Stour Road but some road safety concerns were raised. However, these can be mitigated through careful design. The proposals also present an opportunity to address the inconsiderate parking that occurs at school opening and closing times which themselves undermine road safety</p> <p>Banned turns will address most of the vehicular collisions which occur at these junctions as well as reducing localised congestion by ensuring the free-flow of traffic. Each of proposed three banned right hand turns are addressed separately below.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banned right hand turn out of Althorne Way onto Wood Lane. 		<p>This right hand turn is dangerous because it involves turning across two/three lanes of oncoming traffic at the point Wood Lane widens heading towards the junction and narrows heading away from the junction. At peak times it is very difficult to find a gap in the traffic and cars often take risks in exiting this junction.</p> <p>This affects cars heading east towards Rush Green and Romford or south along Rainham Road North into Dagenham. It is proposed that cars would have to exit onto Rainham Road North via Stour Road. This is no less convenient than the current arrangement but significantly safer.</p> <p>The re-opening of Stour Road to traffic may result in the loss of some residential parking and existing green space. Also there is a slightly increased road safety risk given the proximity of William Bellamy school.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banned right hand from Wood Lane into Althorne Way 		<p>This turn is dangerous as cars often queue in the outside "lane" leaving a narrow space for cars to proceed towards the Civic Centre roundabout. This causes tailbacks back towards the Merry Fiddler junction and causes cars wanting to proceed straight ahead to jockey for position as they try and get underneath the cars turning right. Instead cars coming from the west wishing to access the leisure centre car park will either have to proceed to the Civic Centre roundabout and come back and turn left into Althorne Way, (this is not a significant detour) or enter the leisure centre car park through the Morrisons car park via the proposed new link.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banned right hand turn out of Morrisons onto Wood Lane 		<p>It is important to note that the right hand turn out of Morrisons is a dangerous manoeuvre. To make this manoeuvre cars have to cut across the dedicated right hand turn lane into Morrisons from Wood Lane. This obstructs cars wishing to turn into Morrisons and also interferes with the free flow of traffic along this stretch of Wood Lane.</p> <p>Linking the two car parks will allow cars which would have normally turned right out of Morrisons onto Wood Lane to instead access Althorne Way and turn left onto Wood Lane or to advance along Stour Road and onto Rainham Road North. Cars will still be able to turn left out of Morrisons.</p>

Additional proposals suggested by respondents recommended to take forward	Level of support	Benefits/Implications
Banning the right hand turn out of the Shell petrol station onto Wood Lane South.	10 comments made.	<p>There is a traffic island which is intended to prevent traffic turning right out of the Shell petrol station. However drivers often avoid this by driving against the flow of traffic heading south along Wood Lane to merge with the traffic heading north along Wood Lane. Obviously this is a dangerous manoeuvre. However the traffic island can only be extended to prevent this if the right hand turn from Wood Lane into Becontree Avenue is removed. This would prevent traffic turning right into and out of the Shell station and remove the threat of any traffic interfering with the free flow of traffic heading north along Wood Lane through the junction. (This is explained in the next proposal). However it would mean that the Shell Station could only be accessed by traffic heading south along Wood Lane. Although it is important to clarify that there is no formal provision currently for traffic turning right into or out of the station.</p> <p>Proposal to be investigated to establish if feasible.</p>
Banning the right hand turn to the Merry Fiddlers parade from Wood Lane and replacing this with a new left hand turn from Green Lane.	Proposal made by Regeneration.	<p>The right hand turn lane on Wood Lane (southbound) into Becontree Avenue has the unintended consequence of allowing cars to turn right into and out of the Shell Station. This access could be closed and re-provided from Green Lane without disadvantaging those who want to access Becontree Avenue. It would remove another accident risk along this stretch of Wood Lane and facilitate the flow of traffic up to and across the junction.</p> <p>Proposal to be investigated to establish if feasible.</p>
Undertake consultation for the introduction of a localised parking plan for the area.	Proposal made by Housing & Environment.	<p>This proposal is intended to ensure that on-street parking arrangements are managed more effectively and equitably. It will compliment the proposal to open up Stour Road and will help address the road safety issues caused by inconsiderate parking in the vicinity of William Bellamy School.</p> <p>Residents of Althorne Way and Stour Road often experience parking problems. These are exacerbated due to the proximity of the nearby shops, leisure centre and primary school. Similar issues often arise outside the Merry Fiddlers shopping parade on Becontree Avenue.</p> <p>A consultation will be undertaken on the nature and extent of a localised parking plan for the area, including the Stour Road area and the area outside the Merry Fiddlers shopping parade.</p>

Consultation proposals not being taken forward	Level of support (No/%)*	Benefits/Implications
1. Ban the right hand turn from Whalebone Lane into Green Lane to reduce the time between green lights and reduce delays.	Yes – 82 (24%) No – 229 (67%)	<p>As the majority of respondents disagreed with this proposal it is not recommended to take it forward. However this will require a review of proposed signal phasings/timings.</p> <p>This is the least performed manoeuvre at the Merry Fiddlers Junction however it was not supported by respondents. Cars wanting to travel from Whalebone Lane into Green Lane would have needed to turn left into Wood Lane and then return via the Civic Centre roundabout to reach Green Lane. Concerns were expressed about potential rat running via Morris Road or Homestead Avenue. However the more likely consequence would have been an increase in traffic on Selina's Lane as cars turn right at this point if they are travelling to Valence Avenue and beyond.</p>
3. Re-open The Broadway to allow traffic to turn left into Wood Lane from Whalebone Lane.	Yes – 248 (73%) No – 61 (18%)	<p>This proposal has a number of implications including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces journey times for cars proceeding from Whalebone Lane towards the Civic Centre • Presents another road for school children to cross on their way to school • Since left hand turning traffic proceeds at same time as straight ahead and right turning traffic it does not have any impact on signal timings • Would require CPO (Compulsory Purchase Order) of land from Ship and Anchor pub • Would require relocation of bus stop on Wood Lane • Broadway is currently two way as it provides access to 519-551 Wood Lane, making it a through road would necessitate a new junction midway along the Broadway which could present a road safety risk • Strong objection received from the Becontree Heath Methodist Church <p>Since this proposal can be implemented independently of all the other measures it is recommended that it is reconsidered when proposals are received for the redevelopment of the Ship and Anchor Pub site and adjoining Council land.</p>

*NB: For each proposal there were a number of replies which did not offer a view and this explains why the percentages do not total 100.