

Forest Road - Standard Junction



Consultation Report September 2017



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1. Background

Forest Road is a busy route used by up to 17,000 vehicles daily, and is home to around 3,600 residents and 340 businesses. It's a key route in Waltham Forest connecting Woodford New Road to Ferry Lane, and is already an important walking and cycling route that helps people get to key places like the William Morris Gallery, Lloyd Park, Walthamstow Wetlands and other local facilities.

To make this road safer for all road users we're planning to make improvements including upgrading all major junctions, new pedestrian and cycle crossings, new bus facilities, blended crossings, segregated cycle lanes and new public spaces.

To help manage the consultation stage of the Forest Road scheme, we split the route into sections.

This report covers the Standard Junction (Blackhorse Road junction with Forest Road).

Section of Forest Road	Consultation dates
Ferry Lane to Forest Road (Walthamstow Wetlands)	29 February to 20 March 2016 (Complete)
Blackhorse Road junction	5 July to 28 July 2017 (Complete)
Blackhorse Road junction to Palmerston Road	29 February to 20 March 2016 (Complete)
Palmerston Road to Hoe Street	8 July to 31 July 2016 (Complete)
Hoe Street junction	5 July to 28 July 2017 (Complete)
Hoe Street to Wood Street	TBC

2. Proposals

The key elements of the proposals are:

A. Road improvements

- Change the road layout at the junction to make more space available for pedestrians and cyclists, whilst also maintaining the current flow of traffic and bus journey times
- To make space for the changes to the junction and reduce congestion, a right turn ban will be introduced for vehicles traveling westbound from Forest Road onto Blackhorse Lane. Our traffic studies have shown that in peak travel times approximately 20 vehicles per hour turn right onto Blackhorse Lane from Forest Road.

B. Pedestrian and cycle improvements

- Widen the pavements around the junction, particularly outside the station and on the north-west corner by the Standard development to cater for the large number of pedestrians using the station and travelling to and from the new developments
- By widening the pavements we can shorten the crossing distance of pedestrian crossings on all arms of the junction – making crossing the road safer, quicker and more convenient
- Introduce new segregated cycle lanes which create separate, designated space for cycling and new cycle crossing points on all arms of the junction to improve cycle safety and make crossing the junction by bike easier
- Link the current and planned cycle lanes on Forest Road, Blackhorse Lane and Blackhorse Road to provide continuous segregated cycling infrastructure.

C. Bus stop changes

- Work with TfL to investigate repositioning some of the bus stops around the junction to improve interchange for passengers and reduce congestion
- Introduce a new eastbound bus stop (towards Blackhorse Road junction) on Forest Road by Green Ferry Way.

2. Proposals cont.

D. Public space improvements

- Resurface the footways using materials that create a high quality look and feel, and that complement the material used elsewhere in the area
- Plant new trees and a variety of plants to complement the existing species in the area, increase biodiversity and improve air quality.

E. Blackhorse Road junction to Wickford Way improvements

Create a new highway layout on Forest Road between the Blackhorse Road junction and Wickford Way (reservoirs). The changes include wider pavements, segregated cycle tracks and a new signalised junction at Green Ferry Way to provide access to the new developments and additional pedestrian crossing facilities in the area.

3. Early engagement

Early engagement on the Forest Road scheme was carried out in May 2015. This helped raised awareness with local people and road users that changes were happening to the road and provided initial feedback on the plans. The engagement involved finding out what local residents, businesses and users of the road thought about the area and the types of improvements they would like to see to help improve cycling and walking.

All of the results were used to inform the outline design for the scheme and this was fed back to participants. Please see the following links for more details.

<http://http://www.enjoywalthamforest.co.uk/work-in-your-area/forest-road/what-you-told-us-about-forest-road/>



4. Consultation process

Consultation aims

The consultation was designed to:

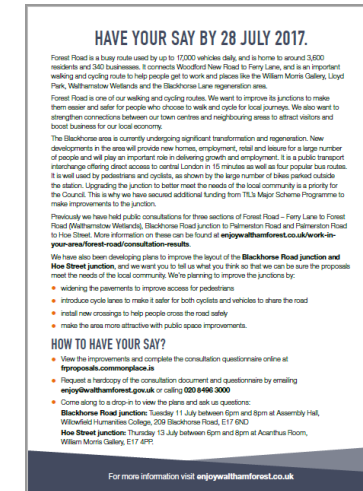
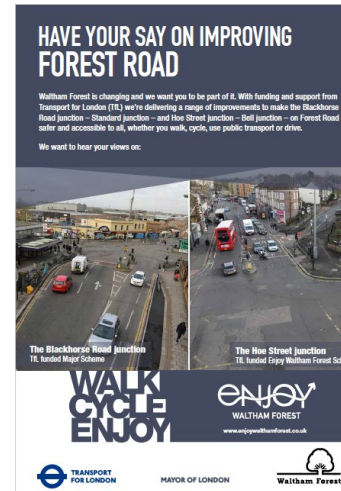
- Give everyone who lives, works and uses the road an opportunity to have their say on the scheme proposals.
- Ensure that people understand the improvements, the reasons for them as well as the potential benefits that they may bring.
- Provide results we could use to help shape and develop a scheme that best suits the local community.

Consultation dates

The public consultation took place between 5 July to 28 July 2017.

Consultation flyer

To notify the local community a flyer was produced to promote the consultation and improvements. These were hand delivered by an independent company to just under 6000 properties in the local area shown below.



Consultation flyer



Consultation area

On-line consultation

The consultation ran through an independent on-line engagement platform called Common Place but there were other ways for people to give their views as outlined further on pages 5 and 6. The plans and proposals were available to view and people could feedback on the proposals overall.

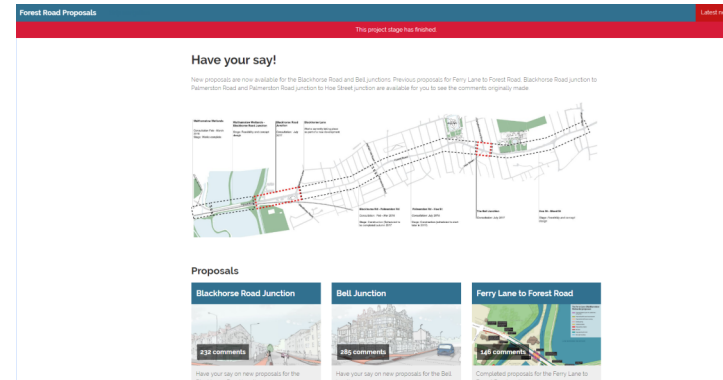
Respondents were asked to rate how they felt about each of these elements using a 'negative to positive' slider scale. Once completed they were asked why they felt like this and were provided with a series of 'tags' for them to tick.

The consultation tags people could choose were:

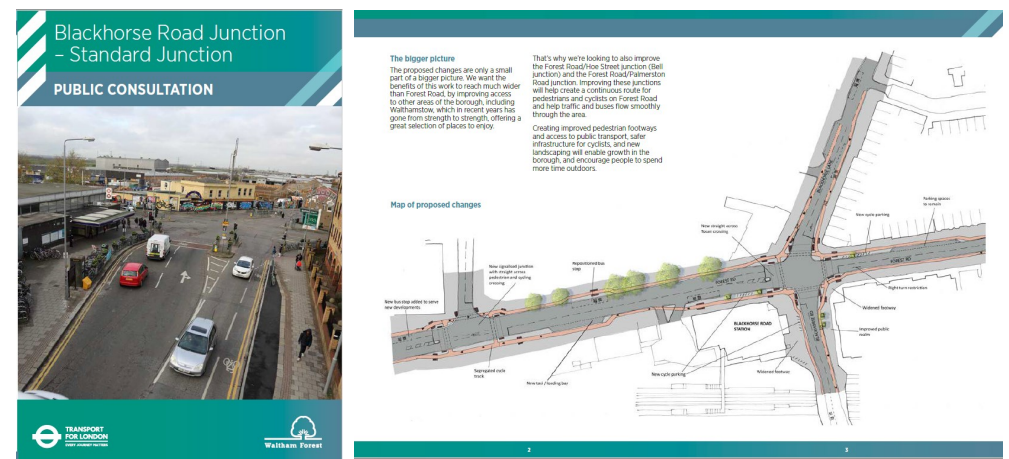
Area will be made safer for all road users	Area will not be made safer for all road users
General environment will be improved	General environment will not be improved
Will encourage more walking or cycling	Will not encourage more walking or cycling
Sense of local community will be improved	Sense of local community will not be improved
More opportunities created for shops, businesses and places of interest	Less opportunities created shops, businesses and places of interest will not flourish in the area
Will be easier to get around the area	Will be more difficult to get around the area
The area will be more attractive	The area will be less attractive

Having ticked the tags, respondents were asked to provide comments as a free text box. Respondents were finally asked to submit these comments along with the tags and rating. The Commonplace system automatically allowed respondents to view their own comments along with other respondents.

Hard copy versions



Hard copy versions of proposals were also produced as part of a consultation document, for residents without internet access. A hard copy version of the questions and feedback form was also produced, which residents could request and return. In total over 50 copies were distributed at the drop-in sessions (see page 6), or delivered to nearby businesses.



Street signs

Ten street signs were displayed around the Standard Junction in key locations advertising the consultation.

Public drop-in sessions

One drop-in session was held at a local venue for residents and businesses to view the plans in more detail. Council staff attended to answer specific questions and address concerns and hard copy versions of the consultation document and questionnaire were available. Two drop in sessions were held, displaying both the Bell Junction consultation and the Blackhorse Road Station junction consultation. The below outlines details of the drop-in events:

- Tuesday 11 July between 6pm and 8pm at Assembly Hall, Wil- lowfield Humanities College, 209 Blackhorse Road E17 6ND.
- Thursday 13 July between 6pm and 8pm at William Morris Gal- lery, Forest Road E17 4PP.

In total over 50 people attended the sessions.

Wider stakeholder engagement

The proposals were discussed with a number of key stakeholders including the Transport for London, London Buses and emergency services.

Social media and on-line promotion

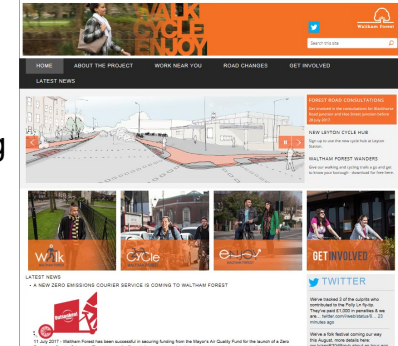
Social media was also used to promote and advertise the consulta- tion. Post were made every second day, alternating between the Bell Junction consultation and the Standard Junction consultation.

Ward Councillor briefings

A briefing session was offered for local ward Councillors, including High Street ward and William Morris ward

Web

The consultation was displayed on the Enjoy Waltham Forest webpage, directing views to the online consultation portal.



Business engagement

Businesses adjacent to the proposed junction improvements were con- tacted face to face by Council staff to remind them to complete the con- sultation and to discuss any questions or queries they had. Several businesses were closed, and several attempts were main to engage with those businesses. A hardcopy of the consultation and the feed- back questionnaire was left with each business.

Waltham Forest News

The consultations were advertised in Wal- tham Forest News, issue 186 with details of the proposals, and where to submit feedback.



5. Results

In total 236 comments were noted and acknowledged.

The on-line engagement site Commonplace which hosted the consultation received 2,380 individual page views. 4 hard copy versions of the questionnaire were received and these were inputted into the Commonplace site and included in the analysis.

Source	Views
Facebook	1326
Twitter	487
enjoywalthamforest.co.uk	120
Google	73
Email	21

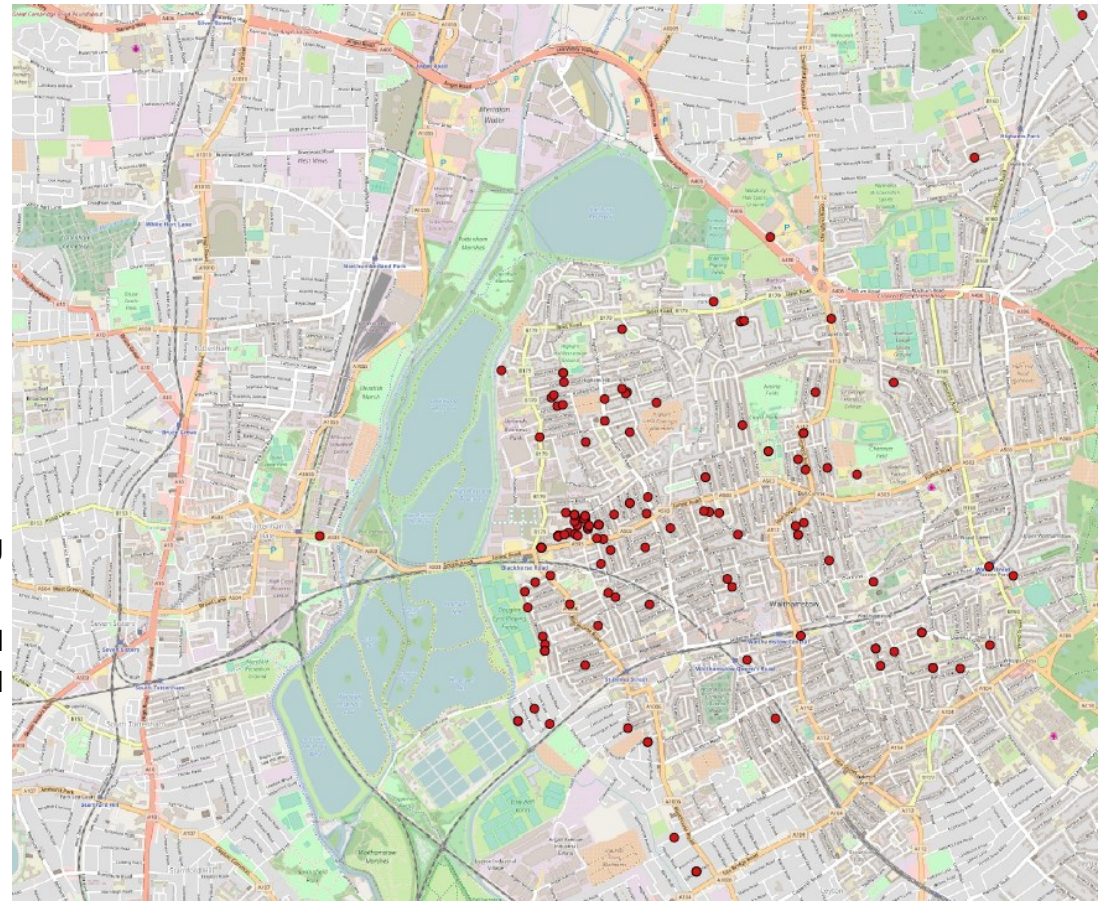
About the respondents

Respondents were asked to detail in what capacity they were responding to the consultation.

Respondents were then asked how they travel in the area. People could tick multiple options and of those who answered the most popular travel mode was cycling followed by walking and public transport.

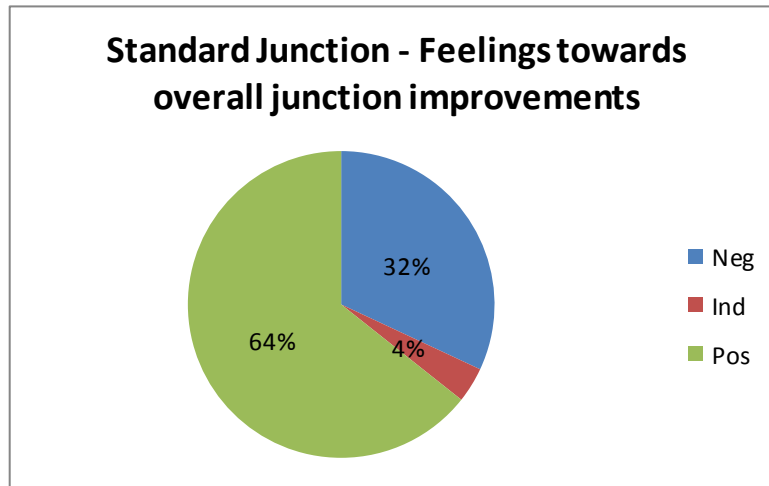
Where the respondents were from

Where respondents left their postcode, the map below shows where the cluster of respondents are from.

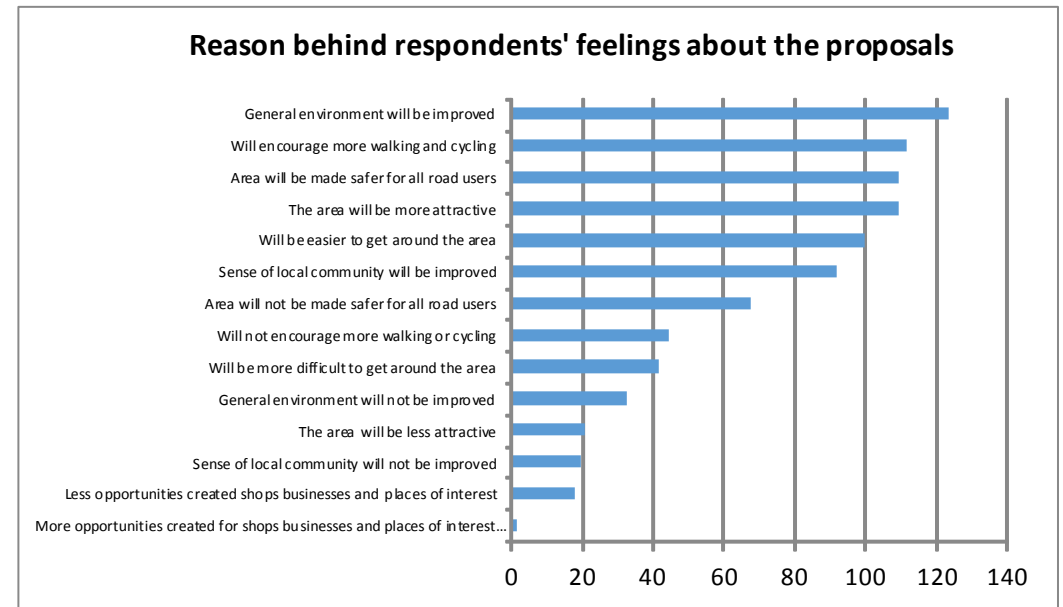


About the results

Respondents were asked to rate how they feel about each proposal, using a sliding scale. The results showed that there was support for the proposals overall. 64% of respondents indicating they were positive towards them 4% were neutral and 32% were negative.

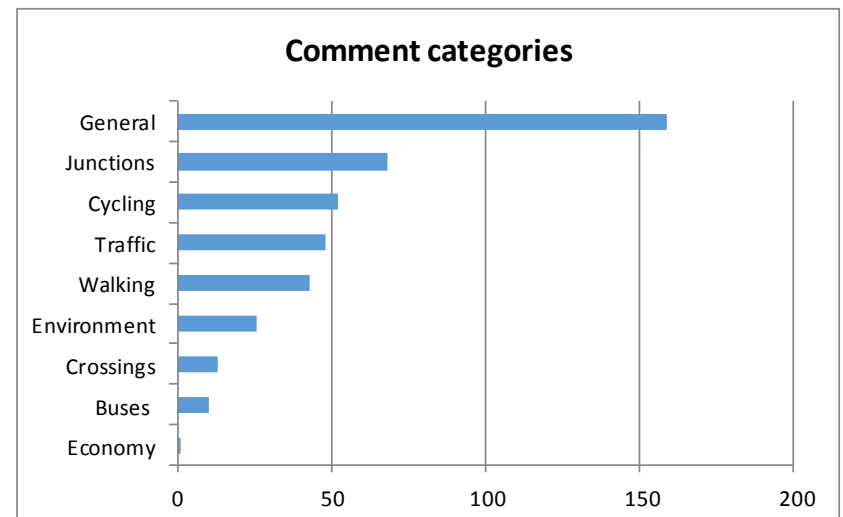


Having rated each proposal, respondents were then asked why they felt like this and were asked to tick an option relating to the Enjoy Waltham Forest objectives. The most popular option chosen was 'general environment will be improved', while 'more opportunities created for shops, businesses and places of interest to flourish in the area' was the least selected option. Please note that respondents could tick multiple options.



Comments Analysis

In total we received 236 comments. These were grouped and were categorised as shown below. Many comments included numerous categories.



6. Council response

Category	Comment	Council response
Junctions	Concerns were raised over the right turn ban from Forest Road onto Blackhorse Lane and the potential for increased traffic and short cuts on neighbouring residential streets.	In response to raised concerns we proposed to maintain the existing right turn traffic movement. The right turn ban was proposed based on the initial traffic modelling undertaken as part of the scheme design and development process, in order to maintain network capacity and minimise the impact on bus services. Further detailed modelling work has now been undertaken and through a combination of signal timing adjustments and junction geometry changes the modelling demonstrates that the right turn can be retained without detrimentally affecting traffic flow or safety.
Cycling	Concerns raised regarding the shared space for pedestrians and cyclists.	To mitigate the issues raised these areas will be treated using different materials and signage to better delineate the use of the space and that consideration between people walking and cycling is required.
	General support for improved cycle access within the junction	Noted.
Walking	Concerns the removal of the median for pedestrians on will make it even harder for pedestrians to cross the busy road.	The proposal to narrow the carriageway will result in pedestrians being able to cross the road in one signal phase, rather than wait in the middle of the road. Some pedestrians feel vulnerable having to wait in the centre of the road, and feel safer waiting on the outside, away from fast moving traffic.
	General support received for improved access for pedestrians to the station	Noted.
Environment	People generally welcomed the proposals to plant more trees and create new public spaces	There is an aspiration to incorporate as many trees as appropriate into the scheme. However we need to consider constraints to planting such as space and underground statutory services.
	Concern over increase in pollution resulting from increased congestion.	These proposals are not expected to increase congestion or pollution.
Traffic	Concerns over reduced carriageway width and potential congestion for motorists	<p>The reduced lane widths will improve the safety of all road users, by discouraging vehicles from travelling too quickly, which can often be a problem when traffic lanes are wider; and therefore help to fit in with and enforce the borough's new 20mph speed limit. This should help reduce the number of accidents on Forest Road, particularly where they involve pedestrians by encouraging drivers to go slower and pay more attention to the road.</p> <p>By reducing traffic lanes, more space is available for pedestrians and cyclists, providing more opportunities for tree planting, and helping Forest Road to feel more like a place that people will enjoy spending time in. Improved access to public transport, walking and cycling will assist future growth in the borough, and reduce dominance on private motor vehicle transport.</p>

Category	Comment	Council response
Buses	Concerns over increased walking distance due to proposed relocation of Bus stop BA	In response to raised concerns regarding the potential for an increase in walking distance between the bus stop and the station due to the relocation of the BA bus stop on Blackhorse Road, we are currently investigating a number of different stop arrangements to best suit the needs of the area and manage the highway
Crossing	Suggestion for diagonal crossings	Diagonal crossings often result in longer waiting times for pedestrians and drivers as motorists are completely halted, and the sequencing of phases therefore extends before pedestrians can cross again. Diagonal crossings can sometime be seen to reduce safety as the average waiting times for pedestrians and car
	Concerns raised regarding potential confusion at the junction between pedestrians and cyclists.	The proposed parallel crossings at all arms of the junction will improve safety for both users, will enable cyclists to cross road without sharing the space with pedestrians and without dismounting. These crossings will provide vital links to cycle tracks being implemented or already implemented. The different crossing road markings will make clear to both users which side of the crossing they are supposed to use.
Economy	Concerns raised regarding the banned right turn, and the impact to businesses.	We do not intend to incorporate the right turn ban as initially proposed. The improved accessibility around the junction, including transport modes by The proposed cycle tracks and improved footways is not expected to significantly impact businesses. The parking and loading assessments that we have carried out has shown there is sufficient space at an acceptable distance (no more than 50 metres) for businesses who require loading. - Where businesses are unduly effected by the proposed removal of parking bays consideration for off peak parking will be given during the detailed design process to allow for essential servicing and deliveries to take place.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

All of these suggestions have been reviewed and considered as part of the scheme development. Based on our response to this feedback, the Council proposes to take forward the plans and measures as outlined in the PLM Report.