

Markhouse Road

Consultation Report

April 2016



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1. Background

The Mini-Holland Programme is made up of a network of walking and cycling routes, one of which is Markhouse Road. These routes aim to better connect areas within the borough such as our town centres and residential areas, making it easier for people to walk and cycle for local journeys. The routes also help connect Waltham Forest to our neighbouring boroughs, attracting visitors to the borough and boosting business for our local economy.

Markhouse Road forms part of the Leyton to Blackhorse Road walking and cycling route, which connects Forest Road and Leyton High Road. Running from St James Street to Lea Bridge Road, this part of the route is heavily used with over 19,000 vehicles and around 600 cyclists using it every day. We're now looking to modernise this part of the route to make travelling in the borough by bike and on foot easier and safer.

2. Proposals

We're proposing the following improvements:

Blended 'Copenhagen' crossings

We're proposing to install blended 'Copenhagen' crossings at all side road junctions on Markhouse Road between Boundary Road and South Grove Road.

New crossings

Create a new zebra crossing on the eastern side of the Markhouse Road/South Grove roundabout to improve connections to St James Street, Selbourne Road and The Mall

Raise the existing zebra crossing on the Markhouse Road/South Grove roundabout to pavement level, to encourage vehicles to slow down when approaching the roundabout

Create new signalised crossing points on Markhouse Road next to Ashford Close, Queens Road, Verulam Avenue, and on Ashford Close next to Theydon Street. This will improve access in the area for pedestrians and make it easier and safer to cross the road.

Bus stop upgrades

New bus stops and shelters will be introduced at the following locations, to make bus journeys more convenient and accessible:

South Grove

- To the west of Arkley Crescent (Westbound)
- To the east of the Markhouse Road (Eastbound).

Markhouse Road

- To the north of Markhouse Avenue (North/ Southbound)
- To the north of Downsfield Road (Northbound)
- To the south of Queens Road (Southbound)
- To the north and south of Samantha Close (North/ Southbound).

Parking and loading improvements

We have revised the current parking and loading arrangements and are proposing to remove 10 short term parking bays north of Downsfield Road, and relocate eight parking bays onto the following side streets:

- Three bays in Queens Road
- Two bays in Downsfield Road
- Three bays in Low Hall Lane. and on foot easier and safer.

Cycle improvements

We want to create protected cycle lanes on each side of the road to provide a safe space for people to cycle, separated from motorised traffic.

Theydon Street

To provide a safe route for cycles we are proposing to make Theydon Street one way entry from Markhouse Road (west bound).

Public space improvements

As part of the Markhouse Road scheme, we want to improve the look and feel of the road between Boundary Road and 247 Markhouse Centre by transforming the long grass area into a new park space that people can walk and cycle through.

3. Consultation process

Consultation aims

The consultation was designed to:

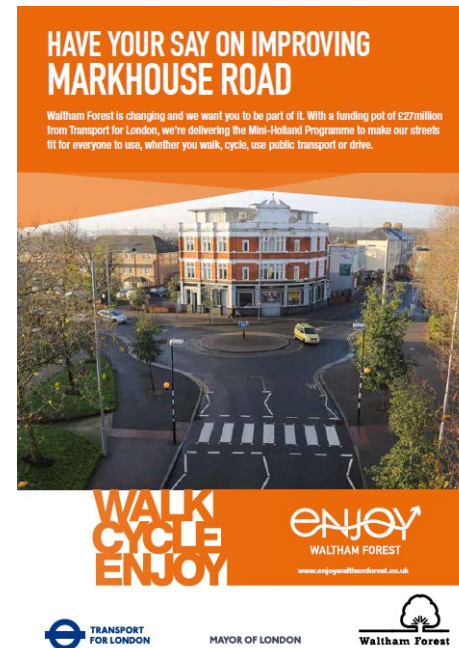
- Give everyone who lives, works and uses the road an opportunity to have their say on the scheme proposals.
- Ensure that people understand the improvements, the reasons for them as well as the potential benefits that they may bring.
- Provide results we could use to help shape and develop a scheme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

Consultation dates

The public consultation took place between 29 February to 20 March 2016.

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 over 3000 properties in the local area shown opposite.



Consultation flyer

HAVE YOUR SAY BY 21 MARCH 2016.

Markhouse Road forms part of the Leyton to Blackhorse Road walking and cycling route, which is being transformed to provide direct and safe links to residential areas and town centres across the borough.

We're planning to make improvements to Markhouse Road so that if you choose to walk and cycle it's easier for you to get about. We know that Markhouse Road is popular for people cycling from Leyton to Walthamstow, so we're planning to improve the road by creating segregated areas where possible, making it safer and easier for everyone to share the road.

We're also planning to install a number of pedestrian crossings, as well as blended 'Copenhagen' crossings on side streets which extend the pavement across the road, meaning vehicles need to give way to pedestrians and people on cycles. We understand that there is a place for cars on our roads, but want to make our roads safer by making changes that encourage drivers to slow down and take extra care at key points.

Over the past few months we have been developing proposals to improve the layout of Markhouse Road. These proposals are now ready and we want you to tell us what you think so that we can be sure the scheme meets the needs of the local community.

We want everyone who lives and works in the area to have their say on the scheme design and continue shaping the proposals. To help manage the consultation and feedback we receive, we are asking you to rate the proposals and tell us what else you would like to see. We expect the questionnaire to take no more than 10 minutes to complete – so please get involved.

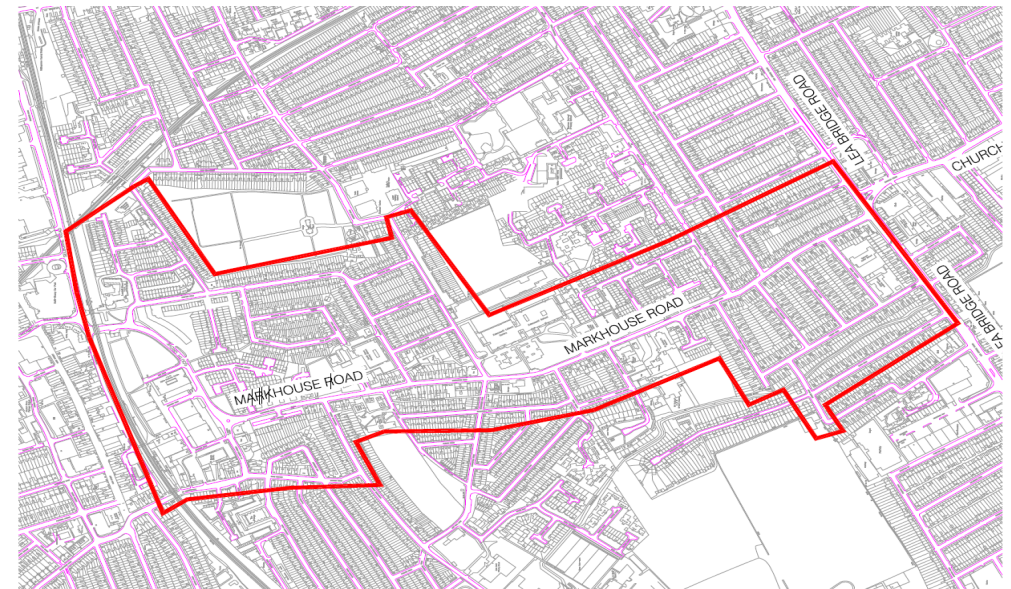
After the consultation, we'll shape these designs using your suggestions and will tell you how and where we've used your ideas.

HOW TO HAVE YOUR SAY?

- View the improvements and complete the consultation questionnaire online at <https://mrproposals.commonplace.is>
- Request a hardcopy of the consultation document and questionnaire by emailing miniholland@walthamforest.gov.uk or calling 020 8496 3000
- Come along to a drop-in to view the plans and ask us questions: **Monday 14 March between 6pm and 9pm at Kelmscott School, 245 Markhouse Road, E17 8DN.**

For more information on the Mini-Holland Programme and the Markhouse Road scheme visit www.enjoywalthamforest.co.uk

Consultation area



On-line consultation

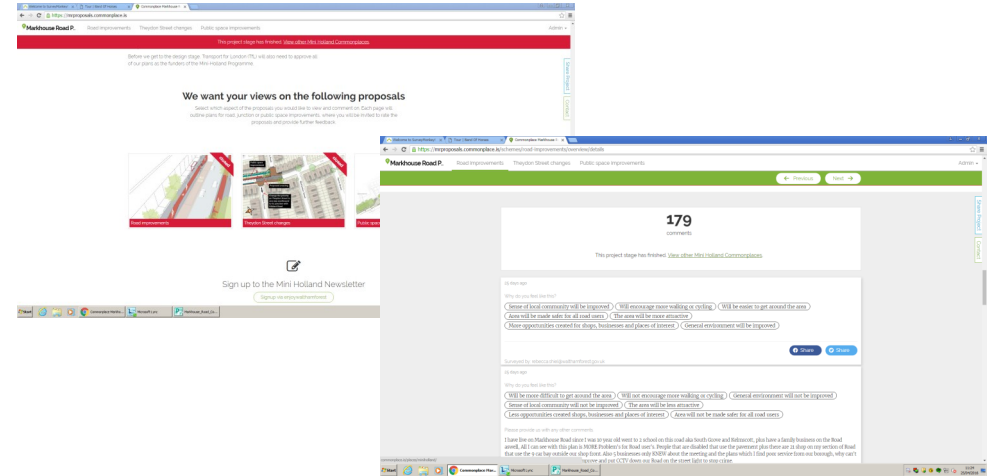
The consultation primarily ran through an independent on-line engagement platform called Common Place but there were other ways for people to give their views as outlined further on. The plans and proposals were available to view and people could feedback on the proposals overall:

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:

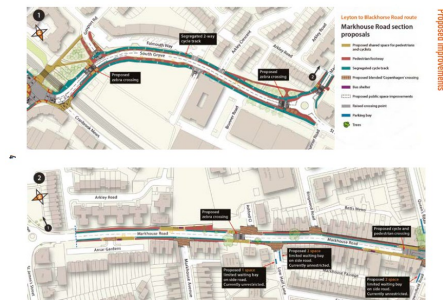
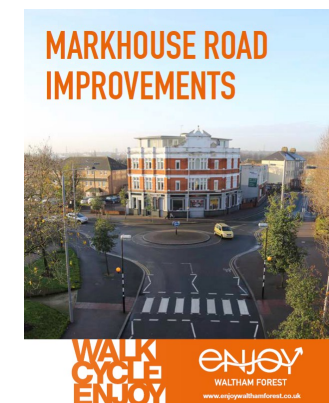
Area will be made safer for all road users	Area will not be made safer for all road users
General environment will be improved	General environment will not be improved
Will encourage more walking or cycling	Will not encourage more walking or cycling
Sense of local community will be improved	Sense of 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 Common-place 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 free of postage. In total over 50 copies were sent out.



Street signs

Eight street signs were put up along this part of the road advertising the consultation.



Public drop-in sessions

One drop-in sessions was held on Monday, 14 March between 6pm and 9pm at Kelmscott School, Markhouse Road E17. 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. The drop-in event details were:

In total around 70 people attended the sessions.

Wider stakeholder engagement

The proposals were discussed with a number of key stakeholders including the Transport for London, London Buses, local developers in the area . The plans were also raised with the police and emergency services through the regular Transport Liaison Group.

Transport for London

Transport for London promoted the consultation on their consultation hub website.

Social media and on-line promotion

Social media was also used to promote and advertise the consultation. A total of 4 tweets were sent out, with 5 likes, 14 retweets, 3,872 impressions and 47 link clicks. The consultation was posted on Facebook with a reach of 401, 3 likes and 2 shares.

4. Results

Responses received

In total 162 people responded to the consultation for this section. Of this 366 comments were noted and acknowledged.

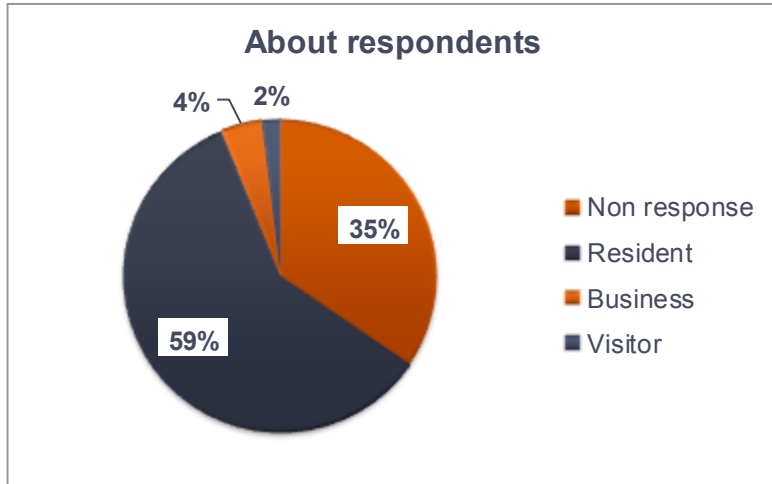
The on-line engagement site Commonplace which hosted the consultation received 6,231 individual page views. 12 hard copy versions of the questionnaire were received and these were inputted into the Commonplace site and included in the analysis.

Source	Views
Facebook	943
Twitter	188
enjoywalthamforest.co.uk	163
commonplace.is	156
Instagram.com	28
Google	25
Email	21
Yahoo	9
Cyclescape.org	5
lbwf.createssend.com	4

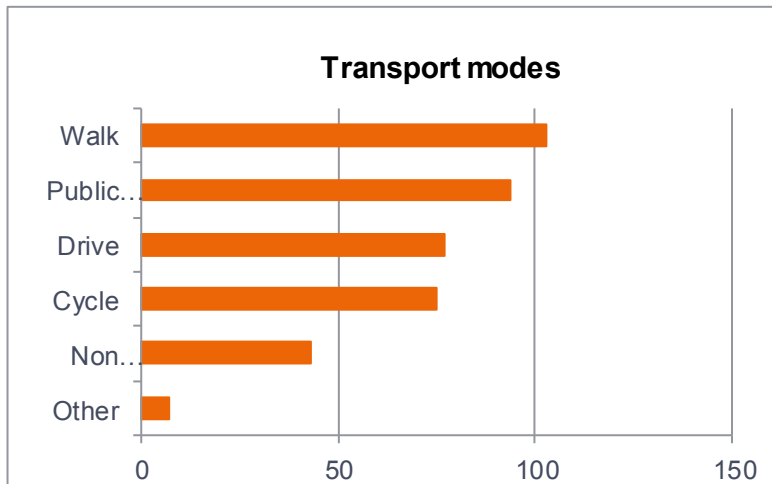
The table shows where people viewing the proposals on-line were directed from. Note this does not include people who have gone to the website directly.

About the respondents

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

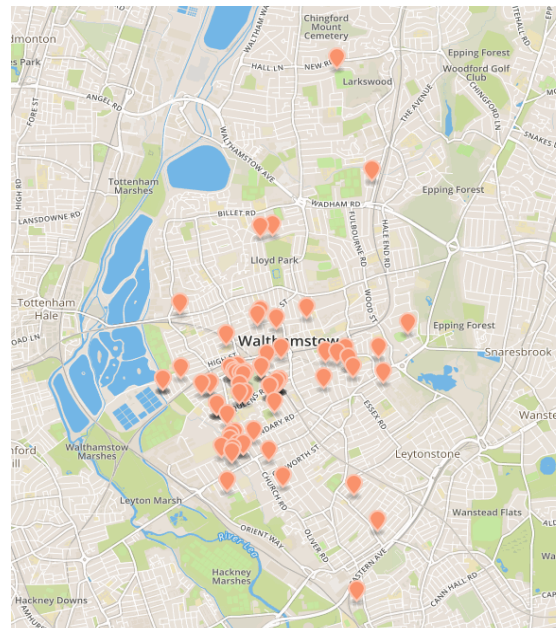
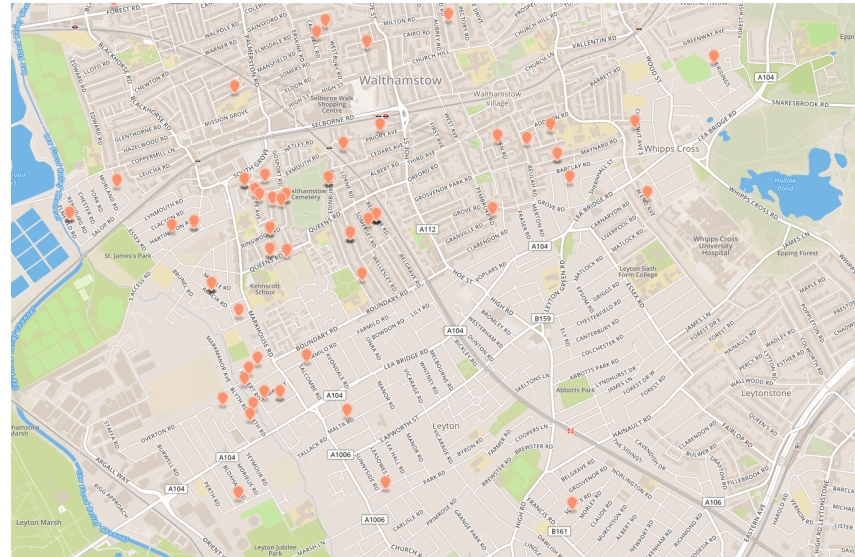


Respondents were then asked how they travel in the area. People could tick multiple options and of those who answered the most popular travel mode was walking followed by public transport and driving.



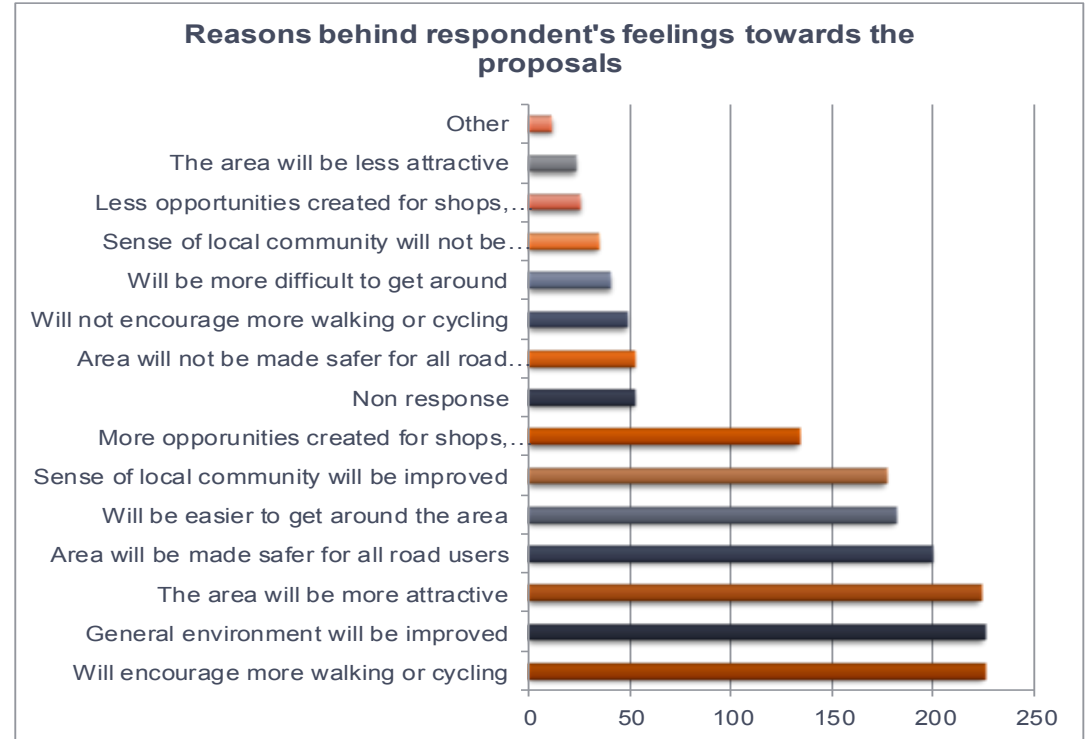
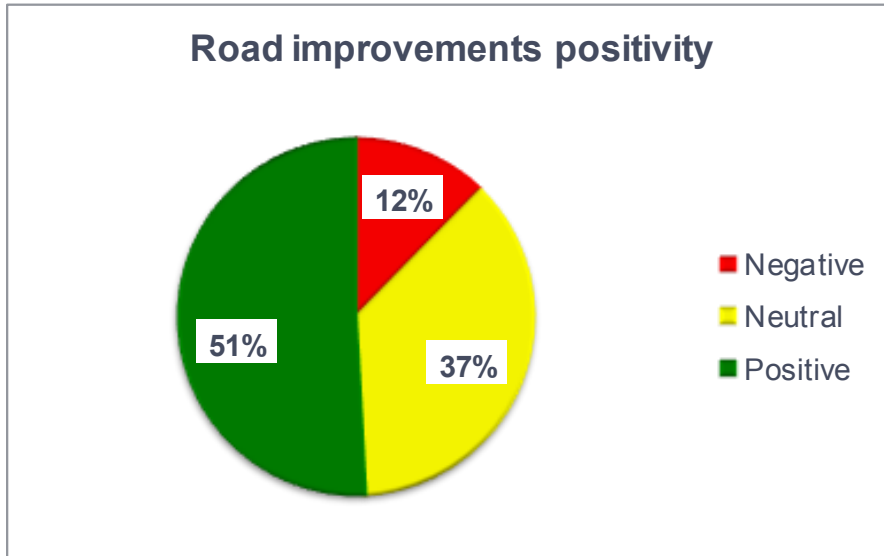
Where the respondents were from

The map below shows the postcodes of where respondents are from. In total 106 people left their postcode. The most popular were E17 (87%) and E10 (5%).



Road improvements

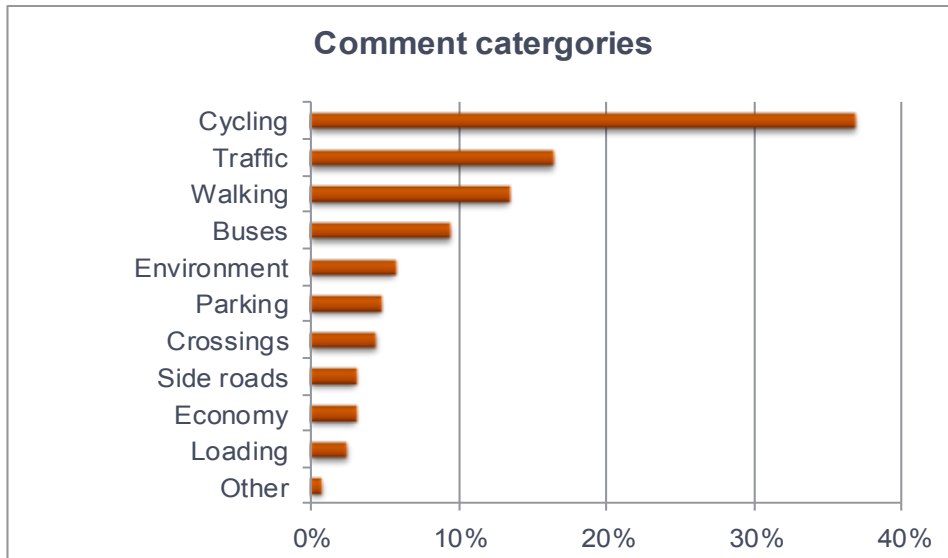
Respondents were asked to rate how they felt about the road improvement proposals overall using a sliding scale. The results showed that 51% of respondents indicated they were positive towards them. 37% were neutral and 12% were negative.



Having rated each proposal, respondents were then asked why they felt like this and were asked to tick an option relating to the Mini-Holland objectives. The most popular option chosen was the 'will encourage more walking or cycling', while 'the area will be less attractive' was the least selected option. Please note that respondents could tick multiple options.

Comments Analysis

In total we received 366 comments. These were grouped together and categorised as shown in the table below:



Cycling

- Plans are too focussed on cycles and not other road users.
- Requests to ensure that the cycle lanes link up to one another.
- Requests for clear and legible wayfinding at Boundary Road and Theydon Street.
- Request for traffic lights to have specific signals for cyclists to let them go earlier than motor vehicles.
- Suggestions to have the cycle way a different colour to the footway and road.
- General concerns that shared space will cause conflict between cyclists and pedestrians

Traffic

- Concerns that narrowing the road will increase congestion.
- Requests for speed cameras.
- Requests to introduce speed humps.
- Concerns raised over emergency services access due to potential delays from narrowing the road.

Walking

- Requests to widen the footway outside St. Saviours Church.
- Concerns over shared pedestrian and cycle space outside St. Saviours Church.
- Requests to keep the central reservation island to make crossing the road safer for pedestrians and slow down traffic.

Buses

- Concern that the new bus stop design will cause conflict between bus passengers and cyclists
- Requests for more frequent bus service along Markhouse Road

Environment

- Concerns that the plans will create more pollution due to increased congestion.
- Requests for more trees.
- Requests for benches.

Parking and loading

- Concerns raised over relocation of parking to Queens Road as residents already struggle to park on this road.
- Some concern over general loss of loading and unloading for businesses.

Crossings

- Concerns raised over the safety of the blended crossings.
- Requests for clear signage at the blended crossings on how to use them.

Side Roads

- Request to make Wetherden Road one way West to East.
- Request to make Harris Street one-way West to East
- Concerns raised over rat-running from St James Street to Markhouse Road via Station Road, Markhouse Avenue, Downsfield Road, Myrtle/Springfield Road and Verulam Avenue.
- Suggestion for a one-way system for Blythe and Hitcham Roads as there is currently no space for two cars to pass each other.

Economy

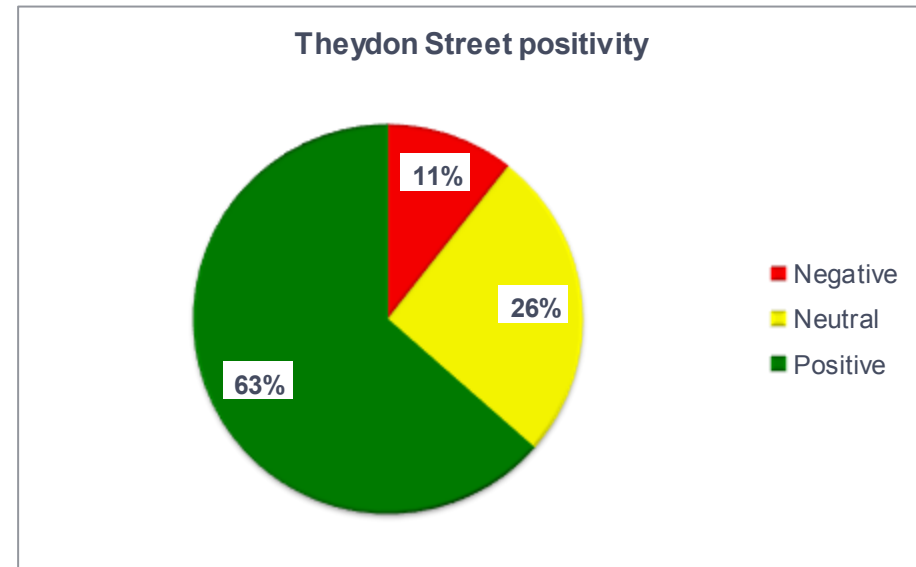
- Concerns that the on street loss of parking loading will affect businesses negatively
- Request for shop front make over scheme

Neutral comments

As there were a relatively high number of neutral comments overall (37%), we also looked at this feedback separately to understand any reason for this. Once analysed this showed that there was no real difference and these comments reflected the summary highlighted above.

Theydon Street

Respondents were asked to rate how they felt about making Theydon Street one way. The results showed that 63% of respondents indicated they were positive towards it. 26% were neutral and 11% were negative.

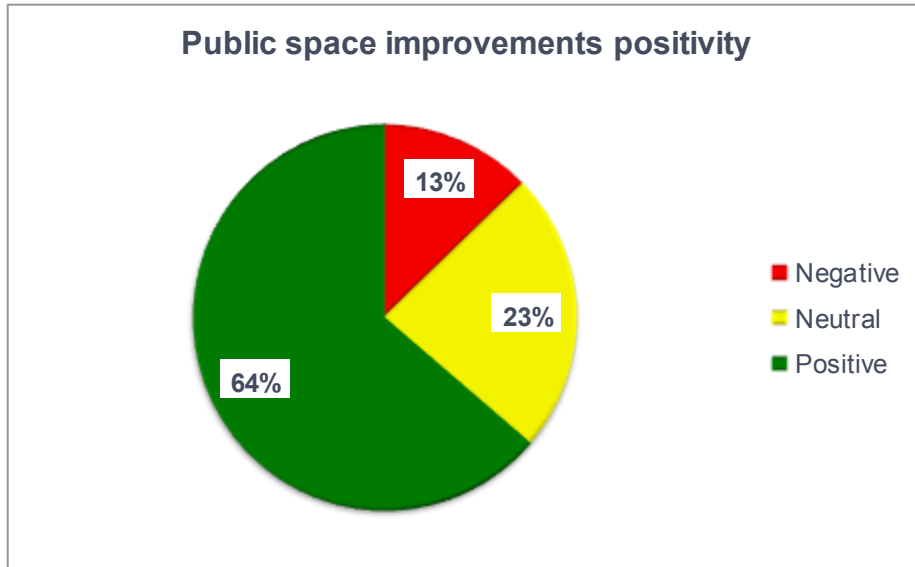


When analysing the comments to this question, the key points were:

- Positive towards the change.
- Concerns about speeding if this is made one-way.
- Requests to make the road two-way for cycling.

Public space improvements

Respondents were asked to rate how they felt about the public space improvements. The results showed that 64% of respondents indicated they were positive towards them. 23% were neutral and 13% were negative.



When analysing the comments to this question, key feedback included:

- General positivity about the transformation of the space and anticipation that this will bring huge benefits for the local area, shops, businesses and community overall.
- People welcome a new social and public space, though some questioned whether it would be used by people.
- Particularly good for children and young people.

- The community planting and growing scheme is a good idea although a few concerns about this being near a busy road and if this would be taken up by the community.
- Welcomed the wall mural idea although suggestions for this to be high quality.
- More trees and planted are welcomed, particularly where this could help manage pollution levels. Some voiced concerns regarding whether existing trees would be lost.
- Suggestions for the space to be continued to Queens Road and similar improvements to be made to Bridge Street (existing road closure crossing Dagenham Brook).
- Ensure the space is properly maintained including fixing any vandalism and proper cleaning.
- The proposals may encourage anti-social behaviour.
- Proposals would make walking and cycling safer and more pleasant, though some were concerned about pedestrians and cyclists sharing space
- Suggestions to involve the local community in the design of the space

5. Council response

Category	Comment	Council response
Road Improvements		
Cycling	Plans are too focussed on cycles and not other road users.	The proposals include benefits for all road users. The improvements will help pedestrians by providing wider footways, new raised crossing points, helping disabled people and improving safety. The traffic flow along the road will not be affected by the proposals and it may be likely that there are some improvements due to parking being relocated and ad-hoc parking being removed. Side road junctions will also be upgraded improving safety for everyone.
	Requests to ensure that the cycle lanes link up to one another.	As part of the Mini-Holland programme a network of local cycle routes will be delivered. This will be linked together by a wayfinding strategy that will provide information, mapping, signs etc to help local people who are cycling and walking to get around.
	Requests for clear and legible wayfinding at Boundary Road and Theydon Street.	A wayfinding strategy is being developed as part of the Mini-Holland programme that will provide information, mapping, signage etc to help local people who are cycling and walking to get around.
	Request for traffic lights to have specific signals for cyclists to let them go earlier than motor vehicles.	As cycles will have their own track and segregated from general traffic there is no requirement for specific cycle signals. Cycles wishing to cross at designated crossing points will cross at the same time as pedestrians.
	Suggestions to have the cycle track a different colour to the footway and road.	This has been considered but due to budgetary constraints and long term maintenance requirements it is not possible for this scheme.
	General concerns that shared space will cause conflict between cyclists and pedestrians	Signage will be used to demarcate areas of shared space however they will require an element of consideration from both cycle and pedestrians. The width of both footway and cycle track will be maximised where possible to reduce any potential conflict points along these areas.
Traffic	Concerns that narrowing the road will increase congestion.	These proposals do not reduce the number of lanes for general traffic and as such do not have an impact on traffic flow or congestion. The traffic flow may be improved due to parking being relocated and ad-hoc parking being removed.
	Requests for speed cameras.	The proposals are to lower the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph. We will continue to monitor speeds and any collisions after the scheme has been implemented. Should speeds and any collisions begin to rise we may consider speed cameras in the future.
	Requests to introduce speed bumps.	All crossing points along the road will be raised which will lower vehicle speeds along the road. As the crossing points are spread throughout the road, there is no requirement to install more speed bumps.

Category	Comment	Council response
Traffic (continued)	Concerns raised over emergency services access due to potential delays from narrowing the road.	These proposals do not reduce the number of lanes for general traffic and as such do not have an impact on traffic flow or congestion. The traffic flow may be improved due to parking being relocated and ad-hoc parking being removed. Throughout the Mini Holland programme we have engaged and worked in partnership with the emergency services. The scheme has been presented to and discussed with each of the emergency service and no major objections have been received.
Walking	Requests to widen the footway outside St. Saviours Church.	Based on this request we will investigate widen the footway outside St. Saviours Church.
	Concerns over shared pedestrian and cycle space outside St. Saviours Church.	As above we will investigate the possibility of widening the footway outside St. Saviours Church.
	Requests to keep the central reservation island to make crossing the road safer for pedestrians and slow down traffic.	Due to the width on the road it is not possible to keep the exiting traffic islands together with the cycle tracks. We will be improving all of the crossings points and lowering the speed limit to 20mph which will improve safety in the area and make it easier to cross the road.
Buses	Concern that the new bus stop design will cause conflict between bus passengers and cyclists	Signage will be used to demarcate areas of shared space around bus stops however they will require an element of consideration from both cycle and bus users. The width of both footway and cycle track will be maximised where possible to reduce any potential conflict points along these areas.
	Requests for more frequent bus service along Markhouse Road	Transport for London and London Buses are responsible for bus services in the area. These comments will be forwarded to them.
Environment	Concerns that the plans will create more pollution due to increased congestion.	These proposals do not reduce the number of lanes for general traffic and as such do not have an impact on traffic flow or congestion. The traffic flow may be improved due to parking being relocated and ad-hoc parking being removed.
	Requests for more trees.	Additional trees and planting are proposed as part of the public space improvements.
	Requests for benches.	This will be investigated as part of the public space improvements

Category	Comment	Council response
Parking and loading	Concerns raised over relocation of parking to Queens Road as residents already struggle to park on this road.	The parking assessments that we have carried out has shown that there is sufficient space to safely introduce new parking bays on Queens Road.
	Some concern over general loss of loading and unloading for businesses.	The parking and loading assessments that we have carried out has shown that there is sufficient space at an acceptable distance for businesses who require loading.
Crossings	Concerns raised over the safety of the blended crossings.	The new blended crossings are designed to slow down vehicles when entering or exiting side roads and encourage vehicles to give way to pedestrians crossing the road, reinforcing the rules of the Highway Code. For more information please visit our website here .
	Requests for clear signage at the blended crossings on how to use them.	We will install appropriate signs wherever Copenhagen crossings are being installed.
Side Roads	Request to make Wetherden Road one way west to east.	This currently falls outside the scope of this scheme but we will keep this feedback for future consideration.
	Request to make Harris Street one-way east to east	This currently falls outside the scope of this scheme but we will keep this feedback for future consideration.
	Concerns raised over rat-running from St James Street to Markhouse Road via Station Road, Markhouse Avenue, Downsfield Road, Myrtle/Springfield Road and Verulam Avenue.	This currently falls outside the scope of this scheme but we will keep this feedback for future consideration.
	Suggestion for a one-way system for Blythe and Hitcham Roads as there is currently no space for two cars to pass each other.	This currently falls outside the scope of the project but will be considered by the borough in the future.

Category	Comment	Council response
Economy	Concerns that the on street loss of parking loading will affect businesses negatively.	
	Request for shop front make over scheme.	This currently falls outside the scope of the project but will be considered by the borough in the future.

Theydon Street	
Comment	Council response
Positive towards the change.	Noted.
Concerns about speeding if this is made one-way.	As there is no natural rat-run or destination point for traffic this not expected to be an issue.
Requests to make the road two-way for cycling.	Theydon Street will be two-way for cycles.

Public space improvements	
Comment	Council response
All comments	All of these suggestions and feedback will be taken on-board and incorporated into our plans going forward. Further engagement will be taking place with the local community to develop the ideas and proposals going forward.

6. 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 'Mini-Holland' Appendix C, May 2016.