



# **THE BECKENHAM SOCIETY**

**Your Local Civic Society**

[www.thebeckenhamsociety.com](http://www.thebeckenhamsociety.com)

**25 August 2016**

**London Borough of Bromley,  
Stockwell Close,  
BROMLEY  
BR1 3UH**

## **Review of Beckenham High Street Improvement Proposals Based on the Contractor's (Conway) Drawings.**

### **1. Preamble**

In principle the Society approves of the environmental traffic calming objective of the proposals that provides for a better balance of highway space (carriage and footways), between vehicles and pedestrians. Also the intention to divert as many vehicles as possible away from the High Street and into Rectory Road should eventually be beneficial. There is however a large number of detail issues that need to be reassessed.

Three members of the Society's Executive Committee recently visited improvement schemes in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. These schemes have features that might be beneficial to Beckenham High Street (examples are contained herewith). Members of the Working Group, and the Council's contractors, might benefit from a similar visit.

## **2. Carriageways and traffic flows**

(a) The loss of filter lanes at key junctions is of particular concern. Perhaps some of the footway widening at these locations can be reduced. Unless vehicles can filter they may cause congestion and traffic queues, when running engines could cause an increase in environmental pollution. This would harm pedestrians, shopping and restaurant conditions, (including al fresco facilities) and the living conditions of frontage residents.

(b) Would these traffic flows benefit if Church Avenue was re-opened to two-way traffic?

(c) The future of traffic refuges (islands) is very unclear, although they are still shown near current locations. The islands at the Beckenham Junction and War Memorial intersections are clearly shown paved and in colour, whereas at all other locations they are in pale grey, and often “floating away” from the crossing point. Refuges have safety benefits even at minor crossing points.

## **3. Footways**

(a) Is there some clear functional, aesthetic or urban design purpose for changing footway paving to granite paving at three of the junctions ( Albemarle Road /Rectory Road /High Street; Thornton’s Corner; and War Memorial). Are the changes clearly related to the façade details of the adjoining frontage building?

(b) There seems to be an excessive amount of new footway on the western side of Thornton’s Corner. Perhaps some of it could be used for a left traffic filter lane.

(c) At the War Memorial junction why does new paving (albeit in a different material) not continue along both of the Croydon Road frontages up to Shaftsbury and Westfield Roads?

#### **4. Pedestrian Safety**

- (a) On road safety grounds the side road junctions of Village Way and The Drive with the High Street have very excessive throats (radii of curvature) making it easy for vehicles to turn at high speed thus making it difficult for pedestrians to judge when to cross. Can all such side road junctions have tighter radii?
- (b) Is a fourth pedestrian crossing feasible at the Bromley Road /High Street junction (Lloyds Bank /NatWest Bank)? One often sees younger pedestrians dashing to cross here (including diagonally), a real safety hazard.
- (c ) In the spirit of pedestrian improvements why are there not some more formal pedestrian crossing points provided on the natural lines of pedestrian movement, at such locations as:
  - i) Between Christ Church /Fairfield Road and Lions Alley.
  - (ii) Between Sainsbury's and Halifax Building Society
  - (iii) The existing light controlled crossing near HSBC and Burnhill Road needs to remain.
- (d) Pedestrians might benefit if all side road junctions with the High Street, had slightly raised pedestrian priority crossings. The visit mentioned to Kensington High Street and Sloane Square by members of the Society demonstrated these crossings in action, (See illustrations).

There were earlier plans for overhead catenary lighting in the walkway between High Street and Sainsbury's store.

#### **5. Highway Lighting**

Will highways have white LED illumination? The benefit of double lighting units should be considered, i.e. a high level bracket over the carriageway and a lower bracket over the footway (See illustration of example from Kensington High Street). Perhaps these might emphasise the spirit of the scheme?

## **6. On - Street Parking**

- (a) Are sufficient loading bays shown in the street parking areas? Might an unloading bay outside W H Smith's be needed for Royal Mail collections and deliveries now the Post Office has been relocated there?
- (b) Perhaps the nearby footway Post Box may also need re-siting to outside Smith's (possibly a double unit will be needed).
- (c) Are sufficient disabled parking bays indicated?
- (d) Parking provision in the Pavilion Parade area of the High Street needs to take better note of the bus stop outside Wimpy. Frequent jams occur in this location which needs addressing due to parking opposite and in front of the bus stop causing problems for the buses and holding up other traffic.

## **7. Tree Planting etc.**

- (a) The only new tree planting and benches shown are in the Odeon's disabled parking area. Are there not several other places that would benefit, especially where footways have been widened? For example at: Beckenham Junction Station forecourt; outside Lloyds Bank at Church Avenue; Thornton's Corner and possibly Kelsey Square.?

- (b) Can more seating be provided? If lower pedestrian footway lighting brackets are provided (para. 5) on lighting columns these could be designed to incorporate flower brackets. Councillor Tickner is very keen on this.
- (c) Why is there no design proposal indicated for incorporating the former public toilets garden into the street scene? This opportunity might be missed.
- (d) Are there any landscape improvements proposed for the War Memorial garden? Perhaps the “palm tree” might be replaced by a group of slender elegant trees. (The LBB Tree Officer’s advice could be beneficial).

## **8. Kelsey Square**

- (a) This is an important heritage location of statutorily listed buildings that need some renovation at least at street level. Currently the no entry sign to Burnhill Road eastbound has been turned round whilst the proposed exit into the High Street seems much over done with a variety of surfaces. Has there been provision for the HGVs leaving the Lidl store?
- (b ) Does the footway crossing to Cooper’s Mews need to be delineated? Is there to be a Bowie memorial feature included in the footway outside Zizzi’s

## **9. Key Symbols**

Some of the symbols shown and their correlation to the drawings are inconsistent and confusing and need to be clarified.

- (a) For example, several items that are shown in the key do not seem to be indicated on the drawings, e.g. cycle stands and any planned remaining guardrails.

(b) What are the blue oblong boxes shown on the kerb sides indicating?

A symbol is not shown on the key? Do they indicate highway drains?

## **10. Other Thoughts**

Will there be signs at the two junctions, on the approaches to Rectory Road, advising vehicles (especially heavy goods) to by-pass the High Street and proceed via Rectory Road?

- 11.** We are pleased to hear that TfL has approved the latest proposals thus allowing the purchase of the necessary materials needed for the overall scheme to begin in the relatively short term.

Cc: Councillors Tickner, Mellor and Wells.  
Stephen Oliver,