

Oral Questions from the Public

1) Question from Dr Jan Davison

Agenda Item 13b - BECKENHAM: SOUTHEND ROAD, PARK ROAD, FOXGROVE ROAD SAFETY SCHEME (Report No: ES20241)

To the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety.

The UK design manual for roundabouts states a 4-arm mini-roundabout should not be used where the peak traffic flows at the junction exceed 500 vehicles an hour. The Southend/Foxgrove/Park Road junction has more than three times this flow.

How can the Council bring forward a scheme that breaches this guidance?

Response to Question 1:

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety:

The junction of Southend Road with Park Road, Foxgrove Road and Beckenham Place Park has been the location of a high number of injury collisions for many years. Not only did the high number of casualties trigger an investigation by Bromley, but a cost-effective solution has also been identified.

During the design of this proposed solution, all national guidance was taken into consideration. There are many locations across the UK where four-arm mini-roundabouts have been successfully used where traffic flow is not balanced. If we were to introduce a three-arm mini-roundabout there is more chance of displacing traffic to other routes and thereby inadvertently causing what is known as "collision migration". A five-arm mini-roundabout was considered, but was not a recommended approach due to the limited benefits and because the existing geometry and restricted space would not enable a safe layout to be achieved.

Residents and visitors will be able to enter and exit Beckenham Place Park in a similar fashion to now, but in a safer and controlled way than is currently possible. The introduction of the roundabout will reduce speeds and present more opportunities for side road traffic, including from Beckenham Place Park, to enter the main junction.

In regard to the previous consultation in early 2022, that was based on the premise that Park Road would be closed to allow the possibility of a three-arm mini-roundabout to be installed, which could have had a major impact on traffic flows in this area. That consultation led to a significant number of concerns being raised with the Council, which were difficult to disregard. Due process was therefore followed. Although the current proposal may have a small impact on the routes drivers choose to take, it would not have the same potential impact on residents as the closure of Park Road might have done.

The recommended design represents good value in terms of collisions prevented per pound spent and is thought to be far more effective as a casualty reduction scheme than would be a 20 mph speed limit. The siting of speed cameras is not a matter for the Council but for the Police and TfL. Fundamentally the Council cannot ignore the serious problem at this junction and the fact that a solution has been identified. If there was not a high probability of further, preventable casualties at the junction we would not be proposing these changes.

Over the years, Bromley Council has developed an effective policy of implementing junction safety improvements. This has resulted in serious and fatal road casualties falling by 54% from the 2005-2009 baseline. Our team of highly trained officers identify locations where a safety intervention is required based on data collected over a substantial period, in many cases collected over several years and this has subsequently led to Bromley's road network being one of the safest in London.

Supplementary Question from Dr Jan Davidson:

How do you substantiate the claim that the current proposal would have a small impact on the routes that drivers wish to take when there is no evidence to support this assertion? Should not the amenity value of Park Road be considered?

Response to Supplementary Question:

The closing of Park Road would result in the transfer of traffic onto Brackley Road and Copers Cope Road. So it would result in an increased pressure on other roads. We would not wish just to simply transfer the problem somewhere else.

2) Question from Steven Ramm

Agenda Item: 13b

Title: BECKENHAM: SOUTHEND ROAD, PARK ROAD, FOXGROVE ROAD SAFETY SCHEME

To the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety:

RE: 3.2

The 'consultation' figures which led to scrapping the trial closure of Park Road, are misleading. Park Road residents, many in favour of the scheme, were led to understand formal consultation would take place **after** 12 months, they did not see the need to submit comments beforehand.

Since this promised consultation has been revoked, how can Cllr Bennett assure the committee due process was followed?

Response to Question 2:

I refer to the answer I gave a few moments ago to Dr Davison.

Supplementary Question from Steven Ramm:

It is incredible arrogance on behalf of the Portfolio Holder that he should dismiss national guidelines. How can the committee sanction this?

Response to Supplementary Question:

The engineering officers of the Council have followed all national guidelines.

3) Question from Anandha Ponnampalam

Agenda Item: 13b

Title: BECKENHAM: SOUTHEND ROAD, PARK ROAD, FOXGROVE ROAD SAFETY SCHEME

To the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety

The proposed scheme is not fit for purpose. With very high traffic flows, pedestrians and cyclists, a three-arm mini-roundabout is the only safe option at this junction. This requires closure of Park Road, mistakenly scrapped for ideological reasons over residents safety.

Should the committee not be presented with both schemes, with relevant data, in order to make a properly informed decision?

Response to Question 3

[I refer you to the answer I gave some moments ago to Dr Davison.](#)

Supplementary Question:

I can't see how this solves the problem.

Response to Supplementary Question:

[From Beckenham Place Park Road, traffic can go into Foxgrove Road and then into the roundabout. The roundabout will be a four arm roundabout not five.](#)

4) Question from Dr Jan Davison

Agenda Item 13b - BECKENHAM: SOUTHEND ROAD, PARK ROAD, FOXGROVE ROAD SAFETY SCHEME (Report No: ES20241)

To the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and Road Safety.

RE: 3.4

The data is misleading – it lumps together statistics for *all* mini-roundabouts. The mean accident rate at four arm mini-roundabouts (22.8) is almost **double that** of three arms (12.5) (Transport Research Laboratory). These rates are for roundabouts operating at the correct capacity - not three times that. The projected reductions in collisions are therefore erroneous. Can you explain why the report glosses over the facts?

Response to Question 4:

[I refer you to the answer I gave you a few moments ago](#)

Supplementary Question from Dr Jan Davidson:

As Park Road is an important road for many commuters in Beckenham and Penge to get to Beckenham Park Place should not the view of Park Road residents and its amenity value be taken into account?

Response to Supplementary Question:

My job as Portfolio Holder is to look at the whole situation in terms of how all roads in the area may be affected. Transferring traffic issues to other people's roads would be very unfair on them.

5) Question from Steven Ramm

Agenda Item: 13b

Title: BECKENHAM: SOUTHEND ROAD, PARK ROAD, FOXGROVE ROAD SAFETY SCHEME

To the Chair of the ECS PDS Committee

Government highways experts state four-arm mini-roundabouts should not be used where traffic exceeds 500 vehicles/hour. At this junction, traffic exceeds 1500 vehicles/hour, plus pedestrians and cyclists. The council has a preferred option which they are pushing through ignoring expert advice and risking lives.

Is the committee happy to approve a flawed scheme that knowingly disregards national safety standards used by every council in the UK?

Response to Question 5

I refer you to the answer I gave to Dr Davison some moments ago

Supplementary Question from Steven Ramm:

The residents of Park Road are still under the idea that there is going to be a road closure. They were not informed before the scheme was scrapped. Therefore no genuine consultation with the people in Park Road has been undertaken and due process has not been followed. Why is this scheme being scrapped on the quiet and my question is has due process been followed?

Response to the Supplementary Question

Yes, due process has been followed. The original proposal was dropped. The information regarding the new scheme will be public information if it is approved by the committee and myself.