

Highbury Corner: traffic impacts on local streets (February 2016)

TfL and Islington Council are consulting on proposals to transform Highbury Corner by changing the one-way roundabout into a two-way traffic system and pedestrianise the western side of the roundabout.

Observed traffic displacement

Traffic counts on borough roads surrounding Highbury Corner were undertaken in 2014. Traffic counts measure the number of vehicles on a particular road and are often broken down by vehicle type. These counts were repeated in 2015 following the closure of Highbury Station Road/Hampton Court during the bridge replacement works. Highbury Station Road and Hampton Court would remain closed with the proposed changes to Highbury Corner.

The information in the tables shows the observed change in traffic flow between these two sets of counts; before and after the closure of Highbury Station Road and Hampton Court. The table shows the observed flow in number of vehicles per hour (during the busiest hour of the three-hour AM and PM peak period) as well as the percentage change during the morning and evening peak periods (average of three-hour peak periods) compared to 2014. The information in the table only includes motorised vehicles, excluding cyclists (and pedestrians). The traffic counts were undertaken on a single weekday outside school holidays. It is worth noting, traffic flows fluctuate on a daily basis (generally up to 10%).

Potential impacts of proposed changes to Highbury Corner

As a result of the proposed changes it is anticipated that some traffic movement through the areas may change. Reason for these changes could be:

Banned turns

To ensure that the new road layout operates as effectively as possible and to create crossings separately for pedestrians and cyclists, vehicles would no longer be able to turn right from Upper Street into Canonbury Road and turn left from Canonbury Road into Upper Street.

In the busiest AM and PM peak hour, approximately 10 vehicles per hour currently turn right from Upper Street into Canonbury Road. In the busiest AM and PM peak hour, approximately 15 vehicles per hour currently turn left from Canonbury Road into Upper Street. This traffic may have to seek other routes through the area, change mode of transport, or choose not to travel through the area altogether.

Closure of Corsica Street

To allow cyclists to move through the junction safely and to remove any potential conflict between cyclists and other traffic turning into Corsica Street, Corsica Street would have to be closed to traffic. The closure would also create a safer route for pedestrians crossing at the junction, in particular for the many people interchanging between the station and the busy bus stops on St Paul's Road, but also for pedestrians crossing St Paul's Road to Canonbury Road (and children to Canonbury Primary School). It may also be possible for Corsica Street to become a two-way cycle route.

In the busiest AM peak hour approximately 60 vehicles currently enter Corsica Street whilst in the busiest PM peak hour 90 vehicles make the movement. Previous traffic counts have identified that some traffic currently uses Corsica Street as a short cut between Highbury Corner and Highbury Grove, by passing St Paul's Road.

Access to the Highbury Fields area by car would be restricted to Baalbec Road and Fieldway Crescent.

Delays on the main roads

The closure of the western side of the roundabout to create a new public space, together with the implementation of segregated cycling facilities would reduce the capacity for motorised vehicles around Highbury Corner. This could potentially lead to re-routing of some traffic onto other roads.

Whilst some traffic may seek other routes through the area or change their time of travel, others may choose not to travel through the area altogether or change their mode of transport.

Monitoring and mitigating measures

As set out above, the Council undertook traffic counts on the potentially affected side streets in 2014 to understand what the current volume of traffic on these streets is. These counts were repeated in 2015 following the closure of Highbury Station Road/Hampton Court to understand the impact of these closures (summarised in the tables).

The level of traffic change that any road might see is dependent on whether drivers continue to use Highbury Corner area, or choose an alternative route, time or method of transport so we are not able to provide this level of detail.

The Council and TfL are committed to monitoring the traffic levels following construction by repeating the traffic counts after the construction has been completed. Mitigating measures will be considered if the monitoring shows significant increases in traffic on local streets.

Note: Transport for London's (TfL) traffic modelling analysis, including predicted journey time changes for different road users, is available on the TfL Highbury Corner consultation page: tfl.gov.uk/highbury-corner-roundabout.

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