

## Proposals for a Liveable Neighbourhood on the Camden side of Kilburn High Road

### Introduction

The map below shows the designated area for the Liveable Neighbourhood and its road network with our suggested 'village' areas overlaid thus: .



The main roads are in red:

- Kilburn High Road (A5)
- Belsize Road (east of Abbey Road), Abbey Road (north of Belsize Road) and Quex Road

Roads in the context of Camden's Road hierarchy<sup>1</sup>

Local Distributor Roads are shown in orange:

- Belsize Road (west of Abbey Road)
- Hemstal Road
- West End Lane
- Iverson Road
- Broadhurst Gardens and Cleve Road

<sup>1</sup> Network Management Duty Report 2008, Camden. Table 2.2, Figure 2.3

Three railway lines form barriers across the area:

- Thameslink line across the north of the area
- The Overground Stratford to Richmond line between Iverson and Sheriff Roads
- The Overground Watford to Euston line across the south of the area

Existing and planned cycling routes through the area:

- Q3 quietway
- Q12 quietway
- Sheriff Road - Kingsgate Road
- Belsize Rd

## What is a 'Village Area' in this context?

We suggest that a successful Liveable Neighbourhood will be composed of several areas, each having a distinct character defined by the activity centres it contains. These activity centres may be schools, parks, places of worship, sports facilities, shops, community centres, pubs, cafes, stations, etc. Their usefulness and attractiveness depends on the quality of the air and the calmness and safety of the environment in the streets that link them but also on the ease with which people can reach them and move between them on foot or by cycling, without any need for motorised transport.

Below we suggest and describe in detail three such village areas for the Camden side of the Liveable Neighbourhood:

### [1. Priory Village](#)

### [2. Kingsgate Village](#)

### [3. Maygrove Village](#)



After



Before

Walthamstow Village was the first UK example of a neighbourhood transformed in the manner proposed here. These two images illustrate the changes to a short section of Orford Road that forms its 'healthy high street'.

Finally we have some [proposals for measures at the minor road junctions with Kilburn High Road](#) that will enhance the integration of the neighbourhood, achieve some limited improvements for pedestrians on Kilburn High Road and offer some safe cycle crossings of the High Road.

## Through traffic reduction and elimination

In each of the proposed village areas we detail places where through traffic will need to be controlled or eliminated to achieve calmness and safety. Available methods to achieve that include the use of opposing one-way flows in the same road, turn restrictions, no-entry signs with or without vehicle type and time restrictions (as shown in Orford Road above), ANPR camera-enforcement and 'point closures' achieved with bollards or gates. An advantage of point closures is that they enable a little adjacent road space to be reclaimed for the public domain, but they can only be used where all vehicles entering a road are also able to exit it. All of these traffic restriction methods would allow cycle access at all times.

## Proposed village areas

### 1. Priory Village



Priory Village is indicated by the light green area on the map enclosed by Kilburn High Road on the west, Quex Road–Abbey Road on the north-east and by the Euston–Watford overground line on the south side. The intended TfL Q12 Quietway cycle route runs along Priory Road and Kilburn Priory.

Many of the interior roads have low motor traffic flows but to create this healthy village, we propose eliminating all through motor traffic while maintaining vehicular access throughout the area. This could be achieved, for example by placing point closures or banned turns as follows:

- Point closure on West End Lane and on Birchington Road at Kilburn High Road<sup>2</sup>
- Point closure on Abbott’s Place at its junction with West End Lane
- No left turn into Priory Terrace from Belsize Road

We suggest the creation of a ‘Healthy High Street’ on Belsize Road between Priory Road and Kilburn Vale with a ‘pocket square’ at the junction of Kilburn Vale outside the Priory Tavern. This high street includes the shops and cafes opposite the Priory Tavern on Belsize Road. It could be radically enhanced by greening, surface changes and the addition of seating and bike parking and wider footways etc.

This section of Belsize Road is classified as a ‘minor local distributor’ road and is served by the #31 bus route (8-11 mins). There is no obvious alternative route for this bus. Ideally, all through

<sup>2</sup> These point closures would also be beneficial to pedestrians, cyclists and buses on KHR because they prevent motor vehicles from interrupting their flows.

motor traffic (apart from buses) should be prohibited for a large part of the day. To achieve this, we suggest that a sign similar to that shown in the Orford Road photo could be placed at each end of the healthy high street (i.e. to the west of Priory Road and to the east of Kilburn Vale). (5 Pay and Display parking places would be unavailable during the hours of operation) .

This closure may induce rat running in Kilburn Priory unless a further measure is taken to prevent it, e.g. a compulsory left turn from Kilburn Priory to Greville Road for southbound traffic. Kilburn Priory requires such protection because it is part of the Q12 cycle route and because the road is unsuitable for substantial traffic flows.

The healthy high street would be enhanced by regaining some pedestrian space in a short section, for example by narrowing the carriageway to a single lane with alternating traffic flow (for the 31 bus and other vehicles that might be permitted in the street for access only).

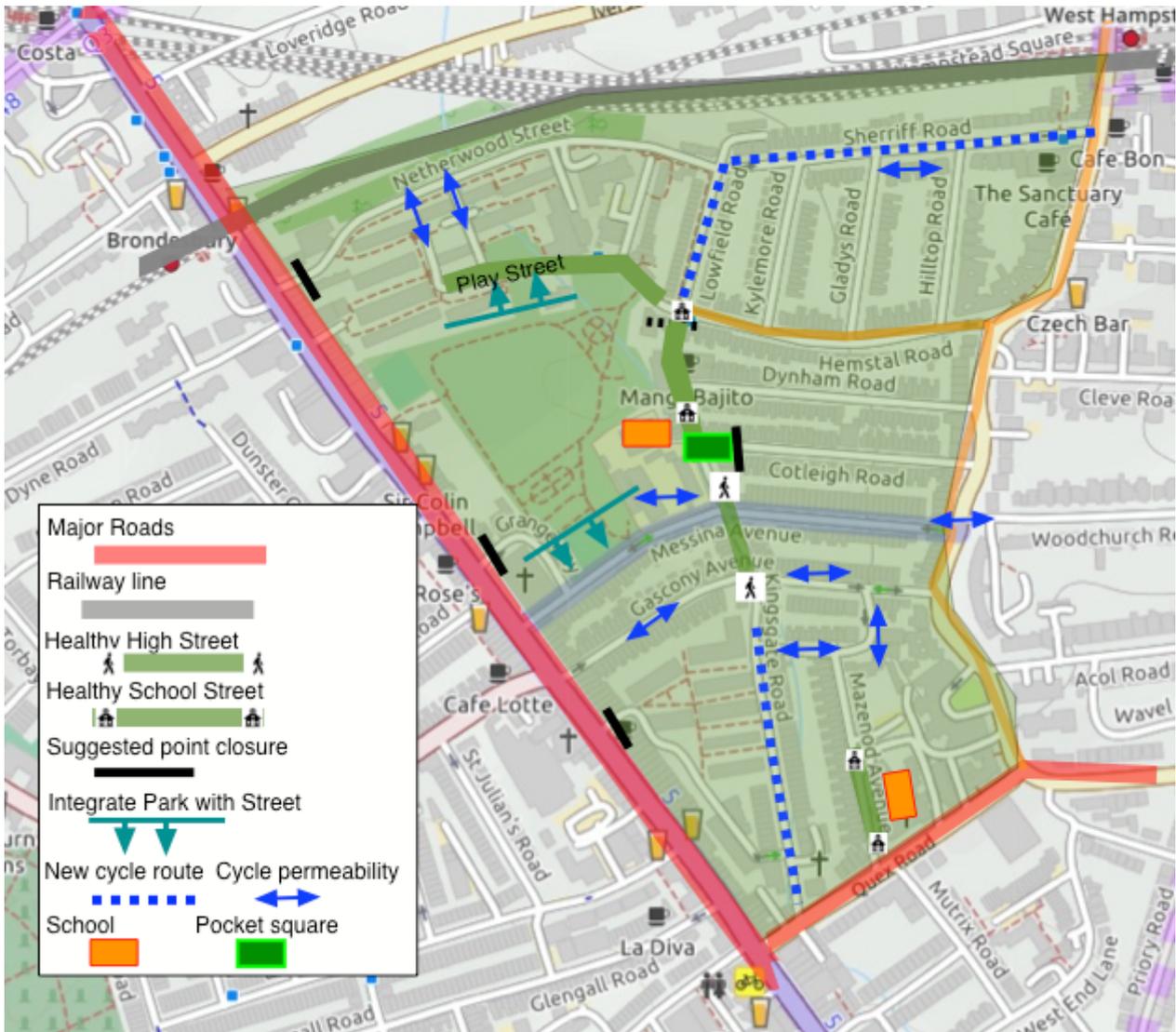
The resulting traffic reduction should substantially improve the air quality in the area, benefiting the health of residents in this high-density residential area and of children attending the St Mary's C of E Primary School.

### *Cycling provision*

The following cycle permeability measures are required:

- A route from behind Priory Tavern, through Kilburn Vale and the housing estate to West End Lane.
- A cycle link from Mutrix Road through the road closure gate on Bransdale Close.

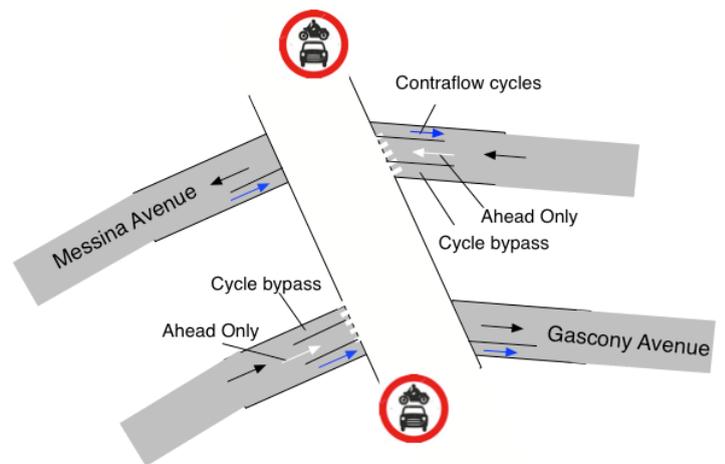
## 2. Kingsgate Village



Kingsgate village is indicated by the light green area on the map enclosed by Kilburn High Road on the west, the Overground Stratford to Richmond line on the north, West End Lane on the west and Quex Road on the south side.

The village centre includes the shops on Kingsgate Road between Gascony Avenue and Messina Avenue, Kingsgate Primary School (junior section) and Kilburn Grange Park. We suggest the creation of a ‘Healthy High Street’ in Kingsgate Road with a ‘pocket square’ at the junction of Cotleigh Road outside Kingsgate School. Other assets in this village area include workshops, a community centre, shops and restaurants.

The diagram on the right illustrates the ‘Healthy High Street’: no motor vehicles will be able to enter at either end (with some exceptions for deliveries at defined times). Gascony Avenue and Messina Avenue are one-way streets, so closing them would be problematic; changing to two-way is probably not practical. Motor vehicles will be allowed to cross the high street on Kingsgate Road (with ahead only



movements). We suggest narrowing the carriageway to a narrow single lane at the junctions, with a cycle bypass alongside, to encourage drivers to creep across. Other opportunities for urban realm improvements exist here: greening, bike parking, seats.

### *Healthy school streets*

We suggest the introduction of two healthy school streets in Kingsgate Village, one on Kingsgate Road outside Kingsgate Junior School and another on Mazenod Road outside St Eugene De Mazenod school. Healthy school street schemes are currently being introduced near several schools in Camden<sup>3</sup> and in other London boroughs. They prohibit all motor traffic in the road outside the school during the hours of school entry and exit only.

### *Reduction of motor traffic*

Many of the interior roads have low motor traffic flows but we propose eliminating through motor traffic while maintaining vehicular access throughout the area. This could be achieved, for example by placing point closures as follows:

- On Netherwood Avenue, Kingsgate Place and Grangeway at Kilburn High Road<sup>4</sup> – while making Kingsgate Place and Grangeway two-way
- On Cotleigh Road at Kingsgate Road

### *Kilburn Grange Park*

This park is a vital centre of this neighbourhood, with many important activities directly linked or adjacent to the park: schools, nursery school, community centre, church, restaurants. Yet, the high fencing of the park and the limited views in from the streets makes the park feel separated from the neighbourhood.

A set of small interventions could integrate the park with the neighbourhood to alleviate the apparent separation by improving the public space around it, increasing green space and reducing speed of local traffic. Closure of Grangeway either at KHR or at the bend near its midpoint would enable it to be 'greened', to integrate it visually with the park while still allowing motor access to its adjacent properties.

**There is an opportunity for a new community park** in a currently disused extensive green space (approx 30 m x 200 m) located between Netherwood Street and the Overground rail line. This could become into a Camden community-managed park or allotments.

### *Cycling provision*

The proposed new cycle route on Sheriff Road–Kingsgate Road is taken from Camden's proposal but extended right through Kingsgate Road. In order to reduce the through motor traffic on this route through Sheriff Road also on Hemstal Road, we suggest a point closure of Netherwood Road on Kilburn High Road.

The following cycle permeability measures are required:

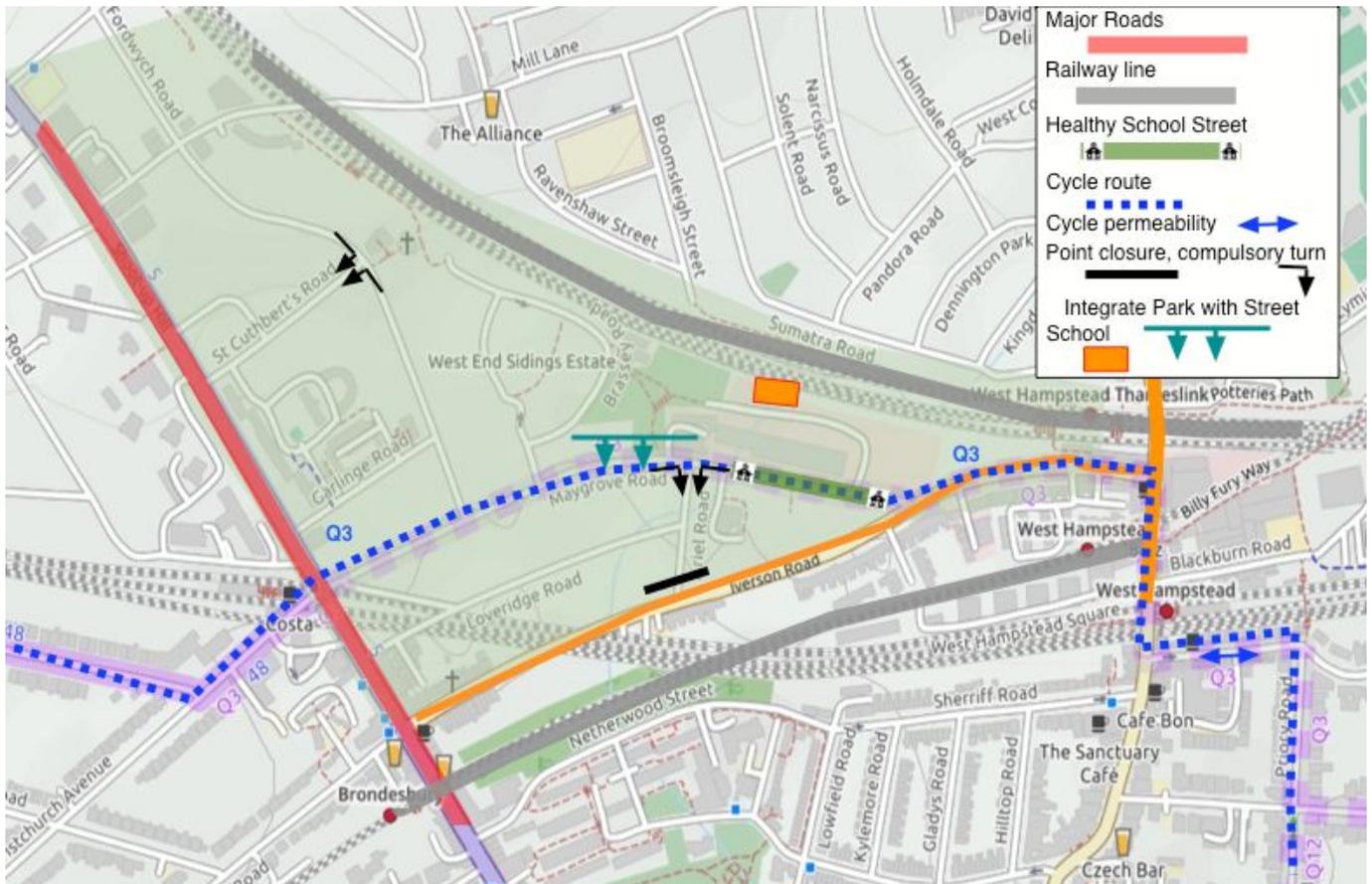
- Cycle access where Palmerston Road and Linstead Street meet Netherwood Street
- Provide two-way cycling in Smyrna Road, in Sheriff Road and all of Gascony Avenue
- Provide a cycle crossing over West End Lane between Messina Avenue and Woodchurch Avenue by re-siting the signalled pedestrian crossing closer to the junction.

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<sup>3</sup> See <http://camden.gov.uk/healthyschoolstreets>

<sup>4</sup> These point closures should also be beneficial to pedestrians, cyclists and buses on KHR because they prevent motor vehicles from interrupting their flows.

### 3. Maygrove Village



Maygrove village is enclosed by Kilburn High Road on the west, the Thameslink line on the north, West End Lane on the west and the Overground Stratford – Richmond line on the south side. Our proposed area extends a little beyond the one specified by Camden Council in order to include the area between the Thameslink railway line and Maygrove Road because that enables it to embrace the Maygrove Peace Park and the Sidings Community Centre which provides a wide variety of services for people in the area.

Other assets include the Kingsgate Infant School in Liddell Road (across Maygrove Peace Park from the Sidings Centre), St Cuthbert's Church and West Hampstead Thameslink station with its large public realm space that hosts a popular weekly Farmers Market.

#### *Reduction of motor traffic*

The roads in West End Sidings estate have very low motor traffic flows. But at least one of the interior roads (Maygrove Road) has high motor traffic flows and others (Lloveridge Road, Fordwych Road and Ariel Road) are too high for comfort. We suggest that the area would be improved by eliminating through motor traffic while maintaining vehicular access throughout the area. This could be achieved, for example by placing compulsory turns or point closures<sup>5</sup> as follows:

- On Maygrove Road at Ariel Road west and eastbound traffic must turn into Ariel Road
- Point closure on Ariel Road at the junction with Iverson Road
- On Fordwych Road at the junction of St Cuthbert's Road north and southbound traffic must turn into St Cuthbert's Road.

<sup>5</sup> With access for cycles

### *Healthy school street*

We suggest the creation of a 'Healthy School Street' for Kingsgate Infant School on Maygrove Road between Iverson Road and Ariel Road including its junction with Liddell Road to exclude all motor traffic at the usual school run times.

### *Maygrove Peace Park*

This park is a centre of this neighbourhood with a traditional playground, a natural play area for older children, an outdoor gym and a multi-use games area, whose activities are linked to the Sidings Community Centre and the Kingsgate Infant School. The planting adjacent to the road gives it a feeling of integration but this could be extended further by providing a green link to the park on Ariel Road.

### *Cycling provision*

The intended TfL route for Q3 Quietway cycle route runs along Maygrove Road and a short section of Iverson Road. This requires filtering on Maygrove Road (e.g. as suggested above and separated cycle infrastructure on the part of Iverson Road (east of Maygrove Road) that carries Q3.

The following cycle permeability measures is required:

- Two-way cycling on Broadhurst Gardens west of Priory Road

### *A pedestrian and cycle link between Maygrove and Kingsgate areas*

We are aware that the [Fortune Green & West Hampstead Neighbourhood Development Forum](#) are separately pursuing a proposal for a new pedestrian and cycle tunnel passing under the two rail lines that currently sever the neighbourhood. We strongly support this proposal, which would link Iverson Road and Netherwood Street near their midpoints. If achieved it would add cohesion to the whole Liveable Neighbourhood and in particular it would integrate the two sites of Kingsgate Primary School which currently suffers significant difficulties due to the severance.



### *Blended junctions*

Similar advantages can be the use of blended junctions at the non-signalised intersections on the boundary roads:

- West End Lane: at Blackburn Road, Sheriff Road, Compayne Gardens, Hemstal Road, Cotleigh Road, Dynham Road, Messina Avenue, Woodchurch Avenue and Acol Road.
- Quex Road: at Mazenod Avenue, Mutrix Road, Kingsgate Road
- Abbey Road: at Priory Terrace, Priory Road (both sides), West End Lane (south side).

### **Acknowledgments**

We are extremely grateful to Stefano Bertolotto, a resident in the the area, for his suggestions and time he spent with us surveying the area and to Stefano's brother Lorenzo Bertolotto, a former resident and a professional urban designer now based in The Netherlands, for his excellent insights and suggestions.

[The impressive and successful Waltham Forest mini-holland scheme](#) has provided an invaluable source of inspiration, design philosophy and examples.

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[George Coulouris](#) and [Jean Dollimore](#), Camden Cycling Campaign, 12th November 2018