

Dartmouth Park Options for potential future scheme

23 July 2018

Dear Hannah, Adam and Simi,

Thank you for inviting us to consider your three options and to provide feedback. We have studied the options thoroughly and also discussed Option 1 at our members meeting on 16th June.

We ruled out Options 2 and 3 for three main reasons:

1. We believe that making Chetwynd Road one way will encourage speeding and provide a poor environment for living, walking and cycling.
2. During the peak hours an eastbound Chetwynd Road (Option 2) and a westbound Chetwynd Road (Option 3) will still have very heavy traffic in the PM and AM peaks respectively: over 250 and over 300 mv/h (motor vehicles per hour).
3. Their potential effect of diverting motor traffic onto nearby residential low-traffic roads.
 - In Option 2 westbound traffic is likely to divert via Churchill Road, York Rise, Croftdown Road; or alternatively via Dartmouth Park Road instead of Churchill Road.
 - In Option 3 eastbound traffic is likely to divert via Woodsome Road, Boscastle Road and Laurier Road; or alternatively via Dartmouth Park Road or York Rise and Churchill Road.

Option 1

Following our discussion, we agreed that we support the closures proposed in Camden's Option 1 but believe that the one-way streets are not needed and may in fact be harmful. However, although the proposals are effective in filtering motor traffic from the streets close to Chetwynd Road they do not go far enough.

Our reasoning

We used a cell bounded by Highgate Road, West Hill, Highgate Hill, Junction Road and Fortess Road to study this option and made the assumption that all diverted motor traffic that doesn't evaporate should move onto those boundary roads.

We noted that at peak periods, Chetwynd Road has high levels of motor traffic (>400 mv/h and >300 mv/h west and east of York Rise respectively). We also noted that at the PM peak the motor traffic levels in Chester Road are similar.

The overall effect of the main measures proposed by Camden

The proposed point closures:

- on Chetwynd Road at York Rise;
- on Dartmouth Park Road at York Rise;
- diagonal closure on York Rise at Laurier Road;
- on Croftdown Road at York Rise

Together with the proposed No entry to Croftdown Road at Chester Road and No Right Turn into St Albans Road from Highgate Road;

Have the overall effect of:

- preventing any eastbound traffic on Highgate Road from cutting through to Dartmouth Park Hill without going up to Swain's Lane or down to Lady Somerset Road;
- preventing any westbound traffic from Dartmouth Park Hill from cutting through to Highgate Road without going up to Chester Road.

The proposals don't go far enough

These northern and southern cut throughs will allow the motor traffic to be displaced via roads not on the boundary of our cell. They therefore need to be filtered. Here are our suggestions:

Chester Road and Swain's Lane require filtering by a Bus Gate

You provided traffic counts for Chester Road and as noted above, these are >400 mv/h at the PM peak. With the above proposed measures, most of the motor vehicles still wanting to make a journey in either direction between Dartmouth Park Hill and Highgate Road will use Swain's Lane and Chester Road, potentially bringing their motor-traffic levels higher than the current levels on Chetwynd Road.

The C11 bus route follows Swain's Lane and Chester Road eastbound (using St Alban's Road and Raydon Street westbound).

We therefore propose that a Bus Gate (which also allows cycles and emergency vehicles to pass) be placed on Chester Road to the west of the junction with Raydon Street.

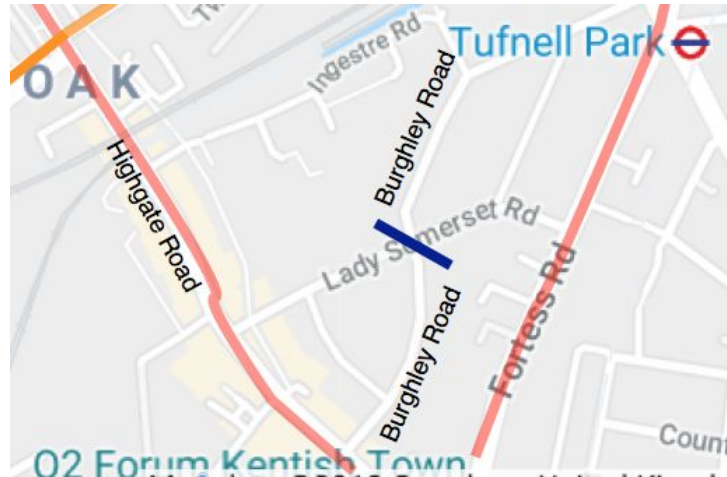
Swain's Lane

Even with the above bus gate, Swain's Lane provides a rat-run between Highgate Road and Highgate Village which could be cut by means of a road closure on Swain's Lane below Bisham Gardens.



Lady Somerset Road

Option 1 proposes a no right turn on Fortess Road at the junction with Lady Somerset Road but this doesn't deal with the eastbound displaced traffic. We suggest instead a diagonal road closure at the junction with Burghley Road, set so as to form one loop that returns to Highgate Road and another loop that returns to Fortess Road as shown on the adjacent map.



A note on Dartmouth Park Hill

The proposals in Option 1 will reduce the motor traffic load on Dartmouth Park Hill but it still offers a rat run between Highgate Hill and the Tufnell Park junction. We consider that Dartmouth Park Hill should be classified as a local road and not subject to through traffic.

Greening could make residents feel positive about the proposals

We suggest that each of the point closures is an opportunity to really improve the liveability of the road by using trees, planters and so forth, not forgetting to leave space for people to cycle through.

Proposed one-way streets

Option 1 proposes a multitude of one way streets, not one of which is required as a part of the filtering.¹

One way streets generally encourage speeding and provide a poor environment for living, walking and cycling. In particular, it is much more difficult for cyclists to face oncoming vehicles in a one-way street than in a two-way street.

In addition, the multitude of one way streets makes the scheme look unnecessarily complex and may look to residents like unnecessary interference.

Therefore, we suggest that no one-way streets should be used in this scheme.

Where a No Entry is used e.g. on Croftdown Road the remaining street should remain two-way.

In the case that a road is very narrow (e.g. parts of Churchill Road where parking is allowed on both sides), we suggest that there should be regular gaps in the parking.

¹ These include Croftdown Road, Woodsome Road, Laurier Road, York Rise, part of Dartmouth Park Road and Chetwynd Road, Spencer Rise and Churchill Road.

A note on cycle exceptions

Even without the one-way streets, Option 1 includes a No Entry and some banned turns.

It is essential that all the proposed point closures as well as any new No Entry or banned turn should provide a cycle exception.

Summary

We cannot accept either Option 2 or Option 3 mainly because the displaced motor traffic will use roads in the area around Chetwynd Road.

We believe that the closures proposed in Camden's Option 1 are a good start but that:

- the proposed one-way streets should be eliminated from the scheme;
- additional filtering needs to be applied to prevent displaced motor traffic from using other roads in the cell bounded by Highgate Road, West Hill, Highgate Hill, Junction Road and Fortess Road.

John Chamberlain, George Coulouris, Jean Dollimore

On behalf of Camden Cycling Campaign