

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCILTRANSPORT COMMITTEE – 2ND NOVEMBER 2023EXECUTIVE – 20TH NOVEMBER 2023Report by the Director of Environment and Community Services on Chestnut Grove School Safety SchemeSUMMARY

This report presents the result of a traffic study on Chestnut Grove and Boundaries Road, SW12 (Balham Ward). The investigation responded to a petition received in October 2022 from school parents, asking the Council to review the Chestnut Grove route to the two local schools.

The need for traffic management considerations on Chestnut Grove and Boundaries Road is reviewed in accordance with the Council's Traffic Management Policy detailed in Paper No. 17-298.

The removal of the two mini-roundabouts on Chestnut Grove and proposed zebra crossings would provide safer crossing points for pedestrians, in particular school children walking and cycling to the two local schools.

To safely facilitate the operation of the proposed crossings, a time restricted banned right turn from Chestnut Grove onto Boundaries Road and a short section one-way street with contraflow cycling on Boundaries Road from east to west between Balham Park Road and Rowfant Road are also proposed.

The estimated cost for the proposed works is £150,000 and will be funded from the zebra crossing capital programme.

The proposals address the key points of the petition which is to provide a safe environment for children crossing Boundaries Road and walking down Chestnut Grove to their local schools.

The Director of Finance comments that Paper no. 22-70 approved £600,000 for the installation of pedestrian crossings within the Borough funded by Strategic CIL receipts. There is currently £302,000 remaining with the Council's approved General Fund capital programme and therefore the proposals outlined within this paper will be met from within this existing approved budget.

GLOSSARY

TM Policy	Traffic Management Policy (CSOSC Paper No. 17-298)
VPH	Vehicles per Hour
WESS	Wandsworth Environment and Sustainability Strategy

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Transport Committee is recommended to support the recommendations in paragraph 2. If they approve any views, comments or recommendations on the report, these will be submitted to the Executive or the appropriate regulatory and other committees for their consideration.
2. The Executive is recommended to:
 - a) Note the outcome of the traffic management investigation on Chestnut Grove and Boundaries Road;
 - b) Approve the removal of the two mini roundabout and any kerb remedial works on Chestnut Grove at the junctions of Boundaries Road and Endlesham Road;
 - c) Approve the installation of a raised zebra crossing on Boundaries Road that would provide a safer crossing point on the pedestrian desire line;
 - d) Approve a raised table at the junction of Chestnut Grove and Boundaries Road and a time restricted banned right turn onto Boundaries Road;
 - e) Approve the installation of a short section one-way street with contraflow cycling on Boundaries Road from east to west between Balham Park Road and Rowfant Road to safely facilitate the operation of the proposed crossing on Boundaries Road;
 - f) Approve the installation of a zebra crossing on an existing raised table on Chestnut Grove outside Chestnut Grove Academy, and
 - g) Authorise the Assistant Director (Traffic & Engineering) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport to amend the plans as necessary prior to implementation and monitor local traffic movements post implementation and sign off making the Traffic Management Orders subject to satisfactory demonstration of benefits and resolution of any issues raised.

INTRODUCTION

3. A petition was received on 19th October 2022 via Councillor Rigby requesting the provision of a safe environment for children crossing Boundaries Road and walking down Chestnut Grove to their schools. The terms of the petition are:

“We the undersigned petition the council to review the current level of road safety for children on Chestnut Grove and Boundaries Road as they walk and cycle to school.

Consider a zebra crossing on Boundaries Road, removal of the mini roundabout systems to be replaced with modern traffic management design as well as consider a School Street that would provide safety for Chestnut Grove and Hornsby House pupils.

This has been a long-standing issue and has the support of both school's leadership team."

4. A total of 213 signatories supported the petition from the local area, indicating a good level of support for intervention.
5. The TM Policy focuses on a three-stage assessment process. Stage 1 involves personal injury accidents in the last three years, Stage 2 relates to traffic volume and speed, and Stage 3 relates to wider influencing priorities. The TM policy also allows for a secondary set of factors to be considered, and schools within 200 metre radius is one of them.

BACKGROUND

6. Chestnut Grove is a signalised link road off the A24 Balham High Road and Boundaries Road is a busy link road that connects to Chestnut Grove. Both are important local connectors with a 20mph speed limit and restricted on-street parking.
7. There are two mini roundabouts on Chestnut Grove, one at the junction with Boundaries Road and another with Endlesham Grove.
8. Chestnut Grove Academy on Chestnut Grove and Hornsby House School on Hearnville Road are the immediate local schools.
9. The Stage 1 Assessment of the Council's TM policy reviewed reported injury collisions data and found 2 serious and 2 slight accidents on Boundaries Road and 2 slight accidents on Chestnut Grove in the last 3 years up to December 2022. A small cluster of collisions occurred in the vicinity of the Boundaries Road and Balham Park Road junction, which may be attributed to the crossroads layout, failure to properly observe movements before proceeding or both.

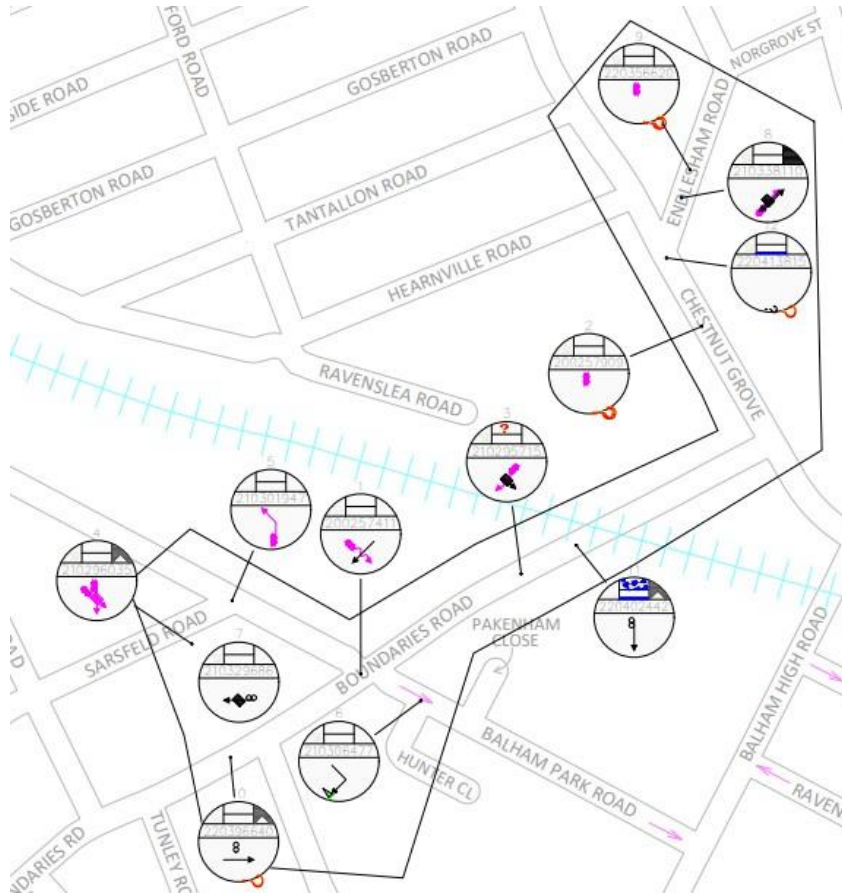


Fig 1 Accident data between Jan 20 and Dec 22 inclusive

- 10. The Stage 2 Assessment involved a traffic survey on Chestnut Grove, Boundaries Road and Endlesham Road. The mean speed recorded on Chestnut Grove, south Boundaries Road was 15.1 mph, and the recorded peak traffic volume was found to be 380VPH. The mean speed recorded on Boundaries Road, west of Chestnut Grove was 17.1 mph and the recorded peak traffic volume was found to be 520VPH. The mean speed recorded on Endlesham Road, south of Oldridge Road was 20.4 mph and the recorded peak traffic volume was found to be 166VPH.
- 11. Requests for formal pedestrian crossings are investigated in accordance with Traffic Signs Manual Chapter 6 Traffic Control. The main objectives are safety, convenience, and accessibility, taking into consideration such factors as geometry, layout, pedestrian and traffic flows, costs, and accident data. As a guide, the degree of conflict between pedestrians and vehicles are also measured to help determine if a controlled crossing should be prioritised. This would also include looking at crossing difficulty, crossing times and speeds.

INVESTIGATION

- 12. A review of the Chestnut Grove and Boundaries Road corridor did not identify any immediate road safety concerns; however, it is recognised pedestrians may find it extremely difficult to cross the road and the current mini roundabouts may deter cyclists from using this route as they are perceived to be less safe. As per the Council’s Walking and Cycling Strategy, one of the objectives is to make it safe for children to walk and cycle to school.

13. There were two recorded collisions on Chestnut Grove, one near the junction with Boundaries Road and the other was north of Hearnville Road. There is no indication to suggest the current mini roundabouts on Chestnut Grove are unsafe. However, it is fair to say the removal of mini roundabouts would better support cyclists as drivers approaching a mini roundabout may misjudge the gap or have a limited view of approaching cyclists due to vehicles obscuring.
14. Based on the current traffic volume and movements on Chestnut Grove and Boundaries Road, it is evident a mini roundabout (priority to the right arrangement) works well to facilitate traffic movements at this junction. The suggestion to remove the mini roundabout in the petition in favour of a give way arrangement where traffic on Chestnut Grove have priority would likely lead to tailbacks on both roads unless modal filters were also introduced to restrict traffic volume.
15. With high pedestrian demands and the difficulty in crossing Boundaries Road, it is considered appropriate to install a zebra crossing to facilitate school children crossing the road.
16. Through traffic surveys and site observations, it is apparent a zebra crossing needs to be on the pedestrian desire line along Chestnut Grove as pedestrians are unlikely to walk further into Boundaries Road to access a new crossing facility away from the junction. It is therefore considered absolutely necessary to reduce the volume of traffic along Boundaries Road to allow the safe construction of a new controlled crossing and removal of the mini roundabout at this junction.
17. The data shows Boundaries Road carries in excess of 300 vehicles per an hour, every hour between 7am and 8pm, and numbers are highest during the AM (7 - 10am) and PM (4-7pm) peak time.
18. The data shows Chestnut Grove south of Boundaries Road (between Boundaries Road and the A24) also carried in excess of 300 vehicles at peak hour, but this was limited to between 8am – 9am and 5pm - 6pm. However, if a traffic survey was conducted north of Boundaries Road, it is likely traffic volume would be higher still as it will need to factor in traffic coming off Boundaries Road onto Chestnut Grove.
19. The high traffic volume is attributed to Boundaries Road and Chestnut Grove connectivity between the A214 Trinity Road and A24 Balham High Road via the signalised junction at Upper Tooting Park at the Trinity Road end. It is also used by drivers heading towards the A205 who wants to avoid congestion on the A24.
20. It is proposed to combine two modal filters to reduce the volume of traffic on Boundaries Road to enable the safe installation of the zebra crossing on the Boundaries Road and Chestnut Grove junction.
21. The first is a short one-way street with contraflow cycling on Boundaries Road from east to west between Balham Park Road and Rowfant Road to reduce the volume of eastbound traffic along Boundaries Road. The second is a time restricted banned right turn from Chestnut Grove onto Boundaries Road to reduce the volume of westbound traffic along Boundaries Road.

22. It is recommended to implement a time restricted banned right turn from Chestnut Grove onto Boundaries Road from 7am – 9am and 3pm – 6pm Monday to Friday to cover school opening and closing times initially, and further review of this junction will be carried out post implementation.
23. To ensure compliance of the modal filters, the use of enforcement cameras and CCTV cars will be prioritised.
24. Based on the current traffic volume and movements on Chestnut Grove and Endlesham Road, it would be possible to remove the existing mini roundabout and introduce a give way arrangement with minimal traffic disruption. This is due to the relatively low traffic volume on Endlesham Road.
25. A further zebra crossing on this corridor near Endlesham Road to facilitate school children crossing the road is also considered appropriate. The ideal location being on an existing raised table between the main school entrance and the pupils' gate.
26. In November 2022, the Committee considered school streets (Paper 22-329). A school street is where the road/s around a school are closed to through motor traffic at school starting and finishing times. School streets assist road safety near schools, as well as helping to reduce pollution and encourage greater walking and cycling. Officers are currently considering possible options for a school street benefitting Chestnut Grove and Hornsby House schools and will take forward discussions with the schools. If it considered a school street could be appropriate, wider public engagement would be required. Progress would be reported to future meetings of the Committee as require.

RECOMMENDATION

27. It is proposed to remove the existing mini roundabout on Chestnut Grove at the junction with Boundaries Road and introduce a raised table junction with a zebra crossing on Boundaries Road to facilitate pedestrian movements and in particular the safety of children traveling to school, as per the drawing shown in Appendix 1. Due to the need to position the zebra crossing on the pedestrian desire line, a time restricted banned right turn from Chestnut Grove into Boundaries Road and a short section one-way street with contraflow cycling on Boundaries Road from east to west between Balham Park Road and Rowfant Road are also proposed to enable safe removal of the mini roundabout and installation of the zebra crossing and to safeguard pedestrian movements.
28. It is proposed to remove the existing mini roundabout at the junction with Endlesham Road and introduce a zebra crossing on an existing raised table on Chestnut Grove to facilitate pedestrian movements and in particular the safety of children travelling to school, as per the drawing shown in Appendix 1. Kerbs along Chestnut Grove will be realigned and the bellmouth junction on Endlesham Grove will also be tighten. This will improve the existing footway provisions and reduce the crossing distance for people walking.

COST ESTIMATES OF PROPOSALS

29. The estimated cost is £150,000 and will be funded from the zebra crossing capital programme.

SUPPORTING THE WANDSWORTH ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY (WESS)

30. The proposals support the objectives of the Wandsworth Environment and Sustainability Strategy as improved pedestrian facilities on Chestnut Grove and Boundaries Road. This is also consistent with the Council's Walking and Cycling Strategy and the School Streets Initiative as it would encourage a modal shift towards sustainable travel.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

31. Paper No. 22-70 approved £600,000 for the installation of pedestrian crossings within the Borough funded by Strategic CIL receipts. There is currently £302,000 remaining with the Council's approved General Fund capital programme and therefore the proposals outlined within this paper will be met from within this existing approved budget.

CONSULTATION

32. Informal engagement has taken place with Hornsby House School and Chestnut Grove Academy, and both schools are supportive of the proposed changes to encourage active travel and help ensure safety of students.
33. Subject to Transport Committee support and Executive approval to proceed with the Chestnut Grove and Boundaries Road walking and cycling corridor improvements, a letter drop will be undertaken in the local area informing residents and businesses on the commencement of a statutory consultation process for the various highway improvements as set out in this paper. An online consultation page for comments will be available as part of this process, and feedback from the consultation will then be carefully reviewed and changes to the scheme will be made where necessary in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport.

CONCLUSION

34. It is anticipated that the provision of two new raised zebra crossings accompanied by the necessary accompanying modal filters to reduce traffic volume at the suggested locations would have a beneficial effect in enhancing road safety and assisting pedestrians and cyclists. In particular, the safety of school children walking to and from school as well as, crossing the road to access local amenities will be greatly enhanced.

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Wandsworth,
Services
SW18 2PU.

PAUL CHADWICK
Director of Environment and Community

25th October 2023

Background papers

There are no background papers to this report.

All reports to Committees, the Executive and the full Council can be viewed on the Council's website (www.wandsworth.gov.uk/the-council/council-decision-making/) unless the report was published before May 2001, in which case the Democratic Services Officer can supply it if required.