

## **Lea Road Update from DCC 31/12/21**

A quick update on the Lea Road closure, covering:

- Progress on the design and scheduling of the works
- A response to queries about possible traffic safety measures on Robin Hood/Leashaw
- Arrangements for a public meeting.

### **Progress on design and scheduling of works**

The detailed designs for the remediation of the Lea Road landslip have been completed by specialist contractors (Jacobs) working for Eurovia (our prime contractors). As you will recall, the works have had to be extensively redesigned, given continued slippage meant that previous solutions would no longer provide a sustainable solution. These new designs have been submitted for comments/approval to the Environment Agency and DCC Planning/Heritage teams. You will understand the importance of this step given the location of the proposed works within the World Heritage Site boundaries.

We are anticipating responses to these submissions by the beginning of February at the latest – although for the Environment Agency submission, we are in their hands. Once these responses are received and any design changes agreed, we will be able to finalise a schedule for the works with Eurovia. At that point (I hope in February) we will be able to confirm a date for completion and the re-opening of Lea Road.

### **Response to queries about possible traffic safety measures on Robin Hood**

At our last meeting, the question was raised as to whether it was possible to increase traffic safety measures on Robin Hood/Bracken Lane/Leashaw – which is the principal alternative route to access Lea and Holloway from the A6. I have consulted with our traffic safety experts and I set out their thinking below. We are fortunate that although Robin Hood is well used by cars, it has almost no pedestrian or cycle traffic.

To summarise, there is little we can practically do to improve traffic safety, as set out below:

- Lea Road is classed as a 'C' Road. Robin Hood and Leashaw are also C roads. The diverted traffic is using the same classification of Road within the road hierarchy
- We have received no explicit traffic related enquiries/complaints from the public relating to Robin Hood/Leashaw Road/Bracken Lane over the past 9 months. In fact there have only been a few enquiries received recently as a whole (potentially because of recent re-surfacing works)
- Although it may not feel like it, the closure of Lea Road is a temporary closure, and thus we wouldn't ordinarily implement permanent safety measures in a situation like this. In part this is because any permanent Traffic Regulation Order (such as a change in the speed limit) at this stage would take longer to process and implement than the time it takes to build a scheme
- Lea Road is not street lit so the rationale for lighting alternative routes is not clear. A permanent intervention such as this would not be considered to address a temporary situation. The costs would need to be considered (both implementation and ongoing maintenance/energy costs) and agreed as part of the Council's capital programme before being delivered – again taking longer than the actual works to Lea Road
- Carriageway centre lines can only be used where a road exceeds 5.5m in width which is not the case on parts of the road in question. However, when used, they do have a tendency to make a road look like a main road which can accommodate two-way free flow traffic. Therefore, if anything, this urbanising effect could actually encourage more use of the road (as would be the case with street lighting). Edge of carriageway white lines can be

considered to help to guide traffic along routes where the edge of the carriageway may be difficult to determine during the hours of darkness or during inclement weather conditions. This is something that could be considered, but, it has to be borne in mind that the majority of Robin Hood Rd/Leashaw Rd is within a designated conservation area which is why the route is maintained in its natural state.

We will of course keep the situation monitored – and if this changes then it may be appropriate to consider measures at specific locations on Robin Hood.

### **Date for a public meeting**

When we met, I committed to a public meeting early in the new year. The uncertainty over the Omicron variant has meant that I have not yet put dates in diaries. However, I would like to suggest either 21 or 22 February as a time when the DCC and contractor team can attend a 7pm meeting in Lea and Holloway. By this time we should have confirmation of a detailed schedule of works.