

Environment and Enterprise Directorate  
Corporate Director - Caroline Bruce

Mr John Taylor  
Assistant Coroner  
North London's Coroners' Court  
29 Wood Street  
Barnet  
EN5 4BE

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> August 2013

Dear Mr Taylor

**Inquest touching the death of Joseph Burrell - Rule 43 Report**

I refer to your letter of 5<sup>th</sup> August 2013 regarding the above and note the contents therein.

In response to the points raised under rule 43 may I take this opportunity to explain what actions the council has already undertaken with regard to the junction of Stanmore Hill / The Broadway, Stanmore.

The council is aware that this junction does not have a pedestrian phase built in to the signals and therefore we can appreciate that it can be difficult for pedestrians to cross at this location. From previous correspondence we are also aware that there is a perception from some local residents that the junction is dangerous.

In fact until recently the accident record at this junction was extremely good with no personal injury accidents being recorded in the three years prior to 2012. There were, however, four accidents involving personal injury in 2012. Two of these accidents involved pedestrians. Three of the accidents were classed as slight and one was a fatal accident regrettably involving Mr Burrell.

In our experience it is not practical to have a controlled crossing at all signalised junctions and the council in partnership with Transport for London (TfL) (who has responsibility for the maintenance and control of all traffic lights in London) works closely to strike a balance between the demands of pedestrians and motorists.

In 2009 the signals unit at TfL modernised the traffic signals at the junction which included the removal of a secondary traffic signal pole which faced traffic approaching along Stanmore Broadway. As there was no dedicated pedestrian phase at the junction the TfL signal engineers considered the secondary pole was potentially dangerous because it could mislead pedestrians to think that it was safe to cross when traffic was still on green.

Following representations and complaints about the removal of the secondary traffic signal pole, Harrow Council commissioned a study to look at the feasibility of incorporating a dedicated pedestrian phase into the signal timings.

The report concluded that the introduction of a dedicated pedestrian phase would significantly increase traffic delays and congestion with a consequent risk to safety, including surrounding residential roads being used as short cuts which already carried a significant volume of traffic. This view was supported by TfL's signals unit who confirmed that significant delays on all arms would occur at the junction if a dedicated all-red phase was introduced. TfL would not support the introduction of a scheme which would cause more delays to this part of the strategic route network and consequently a scheme could not be taken forward.

In order to pursue this issue further the council met with TfL to discuss other options for improving pedestrian facilities at the junction. TfL suggested linking the existing traffic signals at Church Road, Stanmore Hill junction, The Broadway (pelican crossing) and Marsh Lane junction so that they were synchronised in order to improve their performance. This approach would smooth traffic flows and give us the opportunity to see whether any improvements in traffic flow and capacity would make it possible to consider an all red pedestrian phase at the Stanmore Hill junction without the previously mentioned drawbacks.

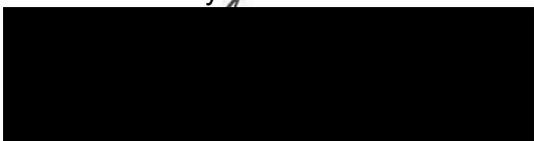
TfL agreed to fund the project as part of the council's Local Implementation Plan and the installation of new the signal equipment and linking of the signals via SCOOT (Split Cycle Offset Optimisation Technique) was completed by the end of March 2013. SCOOT is a tool for managing and controlling traffic signals in urban areas. It is an adaptive system that responds automatically to fluctuations in traffic flow through the use of on-street detectors which are embedded in the road.

Now that these works have been completed we are monitoring the performance of the signals and the impact on congestion and journey times. We will shortly be reviewing the Stanmore Hill junction again to see if introducing a dedicated pedestrian phase at the Stanmore Hill junction is feasible and acceptable to TfL.

Since the receipt of your letter we have also opened up dialogue with TfL regarding the decision to remove the secondary signal and asked that a review of this decision is undertaken. However, the installation of a pedestrian phase is still the Council's preferred method of resolving this matter.

I trust you can appreciate that the council has been taking all necessary actions available to pursue the installation of a pedestrian phase at these signals over recent years and that we are continuing to pursue this matter with TfL to achieve a satisfactory resolution for the local community.

Yours sincerely



Corporate Director of  
Environment and Enterprise



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