

March 2023

## **The closure of Little Church Road at its junction with Mandeville Road**

### **Background**

The closure was initially proposed as part of the Better Streets for Northolt scheme in 2016 and was part of a wider ambition to improve pedestrian and cyclist routes, better link local green spaces and address issues of safety and connectivity along Church Road/Mandeville Road. An experimental closure was first introduced in June 2020, with planters and formal signs added in May 2021. This was primarily in response to Government and Transport for London directives to allocate road space to pedestrians and cyclists for social distancing and offset a potential increase in car travel due to reduced public transport capacity. However, this was also in line with the plans that had been consulted on previously.

Traffic surveys were carried out between April and July 2021 to measure any change in traffic behaviour before and after the installation of the planters and signs. While data showed a reduction in motor vehicles using Little Church Road after the closure was formalised, the lack of enforcement meant that many vehicles continued to pass through. As a result, it was difficult to accurately determine the impact the closure was having on traffic.

It was therefore proposed that the closure be enforced via camera and a new series of surveys be carried out. The purpose of these new surveys was to improve the accuracy of the data being collected by better replicating the conditions of a permanent closure.

Residents have expressed concerns that the closure would have wider effects on traffic flow in Northolt village and particularly on the alternative routes via Eskdale Avenue and Ealing Road. To gain a better understanding of these potential effects, the new traffic surveys were carried out from November 2022 to January 2023, to capture the period both before and after camera enforcement, which was introduced in December 2022.

The council wrote to residents in November 2022, advising that the closure will remain in place until March 2023 to allow for these new traffic surveys to be carried out and community engagement to take place.

## Feedback from residents

Letters were sent to over 500 addresses in the local area inviting general feedback and comments on the traffic surveys. Notices were also placed on posts in the immediate area and at Northolt Village Community Centre. 11 written responses were received and 3 telephone calls. A summary of the main comments received are outlined below, along with the council's response to each of these points.

Resident comment	Council response																												
<p>Since the closure, cars have used Eskdale Avenue, Rectory Gardens and Ealing Road as a cut through instead. It would be good to see further speed reduction measures put in along this route as impatient drivers regularly drive at excessive speeds.</p>	<p>The Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) located on Ealing Road was used to measure traffic flow and speed. The data collected, showed a marginal increase in the 7-day average speed after camera enforcement at Little Church Road commenced, most notably south-bound. However, this later returned to a pre-enforcement level. Generally, the data showed that most drivers kept within the 20mph speed-limit</p> <p><b>Table: 7-day Average Speed (mph)</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Northbound</th> <th>Southbound</th> <th>Combined</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>28/11/2022</td> <td>18.5</td> <td>19.6</td> <td>19.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>05/12/2022</td> <td>18.5</td> <td>19.6</td> <td>19.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12/12/2022</td> <td>16.9</td> <td>18.2</td> <td>17.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>19/12/2022</td> <td>18.9</td> <td>20.2</td> <td>19.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>02/01/2023</td> <td>18.6</td> <td>20.3</td> <td>19.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>09/01/2023</td> <td>18.5</td> <td>19.7</td> <td>19.2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Changes proposed by the shopping parade as part of Visions for Northolt, will help discourage speeding. However, should the closure at Little Church Road be retained, further traffic studies will be undertaken in future to monitor any changes and to determine whether further speed reduction measures are required.</p> <p>In terms of Eskdale Avenue and Rectory Gardens, the existing speed humps and parked vehicles would usually be adequate deterrents for speeding. However, as mentioned above, further traffic studies will establish whether additional measures are required.</p>	Date	Northbound	Southbound	Combined	28/11/2022	18.5	19.6	19.1	05/12/2022	18.5	19.6	19.1	12/12/2022	16.9	18.2	17.6	19/12/2022	18.9	20.2	19.6	02/01/2023	18.6	20.3	19.5	09/01/2023	18.5	19.7	19.2
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<p>It would be good to improve the cycle route that links the two sections of Ealing Road at the Rowdell Road junction. Scooters and Motorcycles frequently use the existing cycle gap as road and ride straight through and over the pavement at speeds of 20mph or more. Placing an offset railing style restriction along the section would be low cost and prevent this dangerous behaviour.</p>	<p>Further cycling improvements are planned as part of the wider Vision for Northolt (VfN) proposals. These comments have been passed to the VfN design team.</p>
<p>The closure has led to an increase in travel time and fuel</p>	<p>Increases in the distances to be travelled to access the main road are small. Any impacts on journey time are only likely to be evident during peak hours and with the expected reduction in through traffic these may be no worse than at present.</p>
<p>I use this road to go towards the shops and it's easier to use this road instead of Ealing Road which is already congested.</p>	<p>With fewer vehicles routing through the village, there should be a reduction in congestion on Ealing Road.</p>
<p>Only local people use Little Church Road. There are no commuters since the planters and signage were installed.</p>	<p>Camera enforcement has enabled the council to identify the registered location of those vehicles ignoring the closure.</p> <p>Between 19/12/22 and 25/02/23, 525 vehicles illegally passed through the closure. 258 (49%) of these were vehicles registered outside of the borough, compared to 45 (9%) registered locally. This demonstrates that a significant proportion of traffic is not local and is driving through the village to reach their destination.</p> <p>Further details are provided in the <b>Camera Enforcement</b> section below.</p>
<p>If this road is only for walking and cycling then road should make one way system from Ealing so no commuters will use this road from Mandeville road and this would not impact local residents.</p>	<p>The proposed closure contributes to a wider objective to improve pedestrian and cycle links in the area and is tied into other proposals on Mandeville Road, including a relocated pedestrians crossing and improved bus facilities.</p>

<p>Few people use Little Church Road to walk or cycle.</p>	<p>In its current form, Little Church Road is not a safe or easily accessible route for cyclists to use. The closure is part of wider proposals, that would allow for the relocation of the signal-controlled crossing, providing a direct link for pedestrians and cyclists between Islip Manor Park and Belvue Park. Improvements to connectivity between both sides of Church Road/Mandeville Road, will make the route more desirable and practical to use for pedestrians and cyclists.</p>
<p>Traffic has redirected to Eskdale Avenue, cars taking twice as long to get up and down the road dodging parked cars.</p>	<p>Some traffic increase on the alternative routes out of the village is expected, however recent surveys have shown that there has been a net reduction in traffic routing through the village since the closure was introduced.</p> <p>The issue of parked cars impacting capacity in Eskdale Avenue is long standing. The recent proposals for controlled parking in the area, which would have provided an opportunity to improve traffic flow, were not supported by residents. It is also worth noting that conversely, some residents have raised the issue of speeding on Eskdale Avenue, and parked vehicles discourage this.</p>

## Traffic Survey Data

Junction turning counts were carried out on Church Road/Mandeville Road at Ealing Road, little Church Road and Eskdale Avenue. Turning counts were also carried out at the junctions of Ealing Road with Belvue Road and with Court Farm Road. Traffic volumes and speed data was collected on Ealing Road south of the junction with little Church Road.

Analysis has focussed on weekday peak periods, 07.00 -10.00 and 16.00 - 19.00, as these are when the effects of the closure would be most evident. Earlier data from April 2021, prior to the installation of planters and signs, has been used as a baseline for comparison.

Table 1 compares traffic flows on the main Church Road/Mandeville Road (A312) corridor across the survey period. This provides an overall context for the analysis that follows and shows that flows across the survey period, including the baseline, are reasonably consistent post pandemic. The exceptions being the weeks around the Christmas and New Year holidays when flows inevitably reduce. Note that total flows on the A312 are in the region of 10,000 vehicle per day.

**Table 1 Peak hour flows – Church Road/Mandeville Road (A312)**

<b>AM 07.00-10.00</b>	<b>20/04/21</b>	<b>30/11/22</b>	<b>7/12/22</b>	<b>14/12/22</b>	<b>21/12/22</b>	<b>04/01/23</b>	<b>11/01/23</b>
<b>Target roundabout</b>							
northbound	3473	3653	3481	3941	2951	3400	3736
southbound	2859	2932	2905	2677	2779	2582	2944
<b>Northolt Station</b>							
northbound	3251	3485	3334	3731	2756	3238	3549
southbound	2759	2765	2775	2522	2645	2563	2772
<b>PM 16.00-19.00</b>							
<b>Target roundabout</b>							
northbound	4757	4743	4657	4872	4388	4455	4895
southbound	2578	2633	2540	2675	2625	2411	2542
<b>Northolt Station</b>							
northbound	4333	4366	4408	4409	3759	4040	4544
southbound	2615	2677	2510	2639	2668	2395	2604

Table 2 shows peak hour flows through the junction of the A312 with little Church Road and the change following the introduction of enforcement in early December 2022. It should be noted that only warning notices were issued in the first two weeks of enforcement. Details of the Penalty Charge Notices (PCN) for contraventions since then are detailed further into this report.

**Table 2 Peak hour flows - A312 junction with little Church Road**

	20/04/21	30/11/22	7/12/22	14/12/22	21/12/22	04/01/23	11/01/23
am	135	19	3	2	1	4	1
pm	187	20	9	11	7	9	5

**Tables 3A and 3B Peak hour flows - Eskdale Road and Ealing Road**

Tables 3A and 3B show the changes in flows on Ealing Road and Eskdale Avenue resulting from the closure of little Church Road. Note that flows for Ealing Road relate to the section south of the junction with Belvue Road and so omit traffic accessing the industrial estate.

The data show that, as expected there are increases in traffic on the alternative routes (Eskdale and Ealing Road), however these are much smaller than might be expected given the volume of traffic that can no longer use little Church Road to exit the village. Additionally, the data show that there has been an overall reduction in traffic flows through the village.

It would appear from the data that the closure of little Church Road has made the village a less attractive route for drivers and they are choosing alternatives. One option would be to route through Belvue Road and the industrial estate, connecting with the A40 at Kensington Road. Analysis of the flows on Belvue Road however, shows little variation and does not accommodate the level of traffic reduction seen. (Table 4).

This may be a case of disappearing traffic, a phenomenon that is sometimes observed when there is a reduction in capacity or a road closure. Drivers respond to the increases in journey times or loss of convenience that results from the changes and either re-route or switch to other modes of travel. Some proportion of the traffic disappears, resulting in fewer problems of congestion than had been expected. This could be due to an increase in journey times for example that influence drivers route choices or improved facilities for walking and cycling that make these options more attractive.

**Table 3A Peak hour flows AM - Eskdale and Ealing Roads**

AM peak	Eskdale Avenue		Little Church Road		Ealing Road (s)	Net change in vehicle numbers
<b>BASELINE 20/04/21</b>						
Total Vehicles	225		135		301	
<b>30/11/22</b>						
Total vehicles	282		19		320	
change from Baseline	+57		-116		+19	- 40
<b>07/12/22</b>						
Total vehicles	299		3		278	
change from Baseline	+74		-132		-23	-81
<b>14/12/22</b>						
Total vehicles	240		2		301	
change from Baseline	+15		-133		0	-118
<b>21/12/22</b>						
Total vehicles	201		1		0	
change from Baseline	-24		-134		-87	-245
<b>04/01/23</b>						
Total vehicles	224		4		330	
change from Baseline	-1		-131		+29	-103
<b>11/01/23</b>						
Total vehicles	276		1		332	
change from Baseline	+51		-134		+31	-52

**Table 3B Peak hour flows PM - Eskdale and Ealing Roads**

PM peak	Eskdale Avenue		Little Church Road		Ealing Road (s)	Net change in vehicle numbers
<b>BASELINE 20/04/21</b>						
Total vehicles	333		187		420	
<b>30/11/22</b>						
Total vehicles	421		20		427	
change from Baseline	+88		-167		+7	-72
<b>07/12/22</b>						
Total vehicles	401		9		455	
change from Baseline	+68		-178		+35	-75
<b>14/12/22</b>						
Total vehicles	399		11		432	
change from Baseline	+66		-176		+12	-98
<b>21/12/22</b>						
Total vehicles	341		7		404	
change from Baseline	+8		-180		-16	-188
<b>04/01/23</b>						
Total vehicles	374		9		408	
change from Baseline	+41		-178		-12	-149
<b>11/01/23</b>						
Total vehicles	360		5		404	
change from Baseline	+27		-182		-16	-171



**Table 4 Peak hour flows - Belvue Road**

<b>AM</b>	<b>20/04/21</b>	<b>30/11/22</b>	<b>7/12/22</b>	<b>14/12/22</b>	<b>21/12/22</b>	<b>04/01/23</b>	<b>11/01/23</b>
in	615	628	563	606	367	513	618
out	120	132	125	120	85	132	146
	<b>735</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>452</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>764</b>
<b>PM</b>	<b>20/04/21</b>	<b>30/11/22</b>	<b>7/12/22</b>	<b>14/12/22</b>	<b>21/12/22</b>	<b>04/01/23</b>	<b>11/01/23</b>
in	661	643	612	638	567	603	653
out	134	177	189	182	151	147	158
	<b>795</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>718</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>811</b>

## Camera Enforcement

Camera enforcement commenced from Monday 5 December 2022. For the first two weeks, only warning notices were issued, with formal Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) being issued from Monday 19 December 2022.

Table 5 below and overleaf, shows a breakdown of PCNs issued, and where the offending vehicles are registered. A significant proportion of PCNs were issued to vehicles registered outside the borough, which does provide some indication that Northolt Village is regularly used by non-local traffic. Some of this will be heading towards the Northolt Trading Estate (Belvue & Rowdell) but it's likely that the Village is also being used as a cut through by commuter traffic.

It is also notable that a large number of PCNs were issued to vehicles with no DVLA record. Some of these vehicles may be registered outside of the UK, but the council's Parking Services team are also aware that there many unregistered vehicles in the area, and have asked the Police to investigate.

**Table 5 – Number of PCNs issued**

Date	Vehicle registered within Northolt	Vehicle registered within LBE	Vehicle registered outside LBE	No DVLA Record	Daily Total
19/12/2022		1	6	1	8
20/12/2022	1		8		9
21/12/2022		3	6	1	10
22/12/2022	2	1	9		12
23/12/2022	1	2	4	3	10
24/12/2022		1	7	2	10
26/12/2022			4	1	5
27/12/2022			7		7
28/12/2022		1	4		5
29/12/2022		1	2		3
30/12/2022	2	1	3		6
31/12/2022	1		2	1	4
01/01/2023			2		2
02/01/2023		1	5	2	8
03/01/2023	1	1	5	2	9
04/01/2023	1		7		8
05/01/2023			5	2	7
06/01/2023	3		6		9
07/01/2023		1	7	1	9
08/01/2023	1		4	3	8
09/01/2023	1		4	4	9
10/01/2023	2		3	2	7
11/01/2023		1	4	2	7
12/01/2023	1		6		7
13/01/2023		1	7	5	13
14/01/2023	1		5	3	9
15/01/2023			4	2	6

Date	Vehicle registered within Northolt	Vehicle registered within LBE	Vehicle registered outside LBE	No DVLA Record	Daily Total
16/01/2023		1	3	1	5
17/01/2023			2	1	3
18/01/2023	1		9	2	12
19/01/2023	1		1	3	5
20/01/2023		3	3	1	7
21/01/2023	1		6	1	8
22/01/2023	2		4		6
23/01/2023		2	4		6
24/01/2023			2		2
25/01/2023	1	3	11	2	17
26/01/2023	1	1	2	1	5
27/01/2023	1		3	2	6
28/01/2023			6	5	11
29/01/2023			2	2	4
30/01/2023		1	4	2	7
31/01/2023			4	1	5
01/02/2023	1		1	3	5
02/02/2023			3		3
03/02/2023	1	2	3	4	10
04/02/2023		1	6		7
05/02/2023			5	1	6
06/02/2023	1		3		4
07/02/2023		2	4	5	11
08/02/2023	2		6	5	13
09/02/2023	1		2	1	4
10/02/2023	1		4		5
11/02/2023			3	5	8
12/02/2023		1	2	3	6
13/02/2023	2		3	3	8
14/02/2023		1		2	3
17/02/2023	1	1		5	7
18/02/2023	4	3	4	10	21
19/02/2023	1	2	1	8	12
20/02/2023	1	2	2	11	16
21/02/2023	1	1	4	11	17
22/02/2023		2		12	14
23/02/2023	1	3		7	11
24/02/2023	1			7	8
25/02/2023		1		9	10
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>525</b>

