

# Healthy School Streets – Opening Streets to Children

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*Feedback on first pilot school – St Joseph’s, Macklin Street, Holborn*

## **1 Background:**

- 1.1 Streets around schools often suffer from a common thread of issues at the start and end of the school day. These revolve around traffic putting the large concentration of school children at risk, and inconvenience and nuisance caused to local residents by inconsiderate parking, honking horns and distracted driving.
- 1.2 The resulting intimidating street environment for those wishing to walk, cycle or scoot, results in some parents feeling that they are forced to drive where they would not if they had free choice, with implications for children’s activity levels (and therefore health), the pleasantness of the street for local residents and air quality across the area and in particular on streets around schools.
- 1.3 Transport planners in the Netherlands report, and one case study in Reading (Waingel’s Copse School) demonstrate, that timed street closures at the start and end of the school day removed this danger and appeared to encourage more walking and cycling. It seems likely that replicating these changes in Camden will have a similar impact.
- 1.4 East Lothian and Edinburgh Councils have implemented restrictions on streets around schools – although these include exemptions for local residents and disabled badge holders. These restrictions have broad support but unfortunately there has not been any release of data on the effect on changes to travel to school.
- 1.5 Camden’s Healthy School Streets project aims to create a safe and pleasant environment which encourages walking, cycling and scooting to school by closing roads to traffic at the start and end of the school day. The closures use DfT compliant signage enforced by folding bollards erected by school staff.
- 1.6 The closure is run in conjunction with an intensive behaviour change programme within the school in order to reduce motor trips to school as far as possible before the closure is implemented and minimise displacement of school run traffic to the end of the street or onto nearby streets.
- 1.7 In November 2014, Camden successfully secured funding from Transport for London’s (TfL) “Future Streets Incubator Fund” to trial these measures, supplemented by funding from Camden’s Public Health team to support the monitoring of this program.

## 2 School Selection

- 2.1 Camden asked for expressions of interest from Councillors, schools and members of the public in having their local streets made into a 'Healthy School Street'. Officers then investigated these schools as options, rejecting schools that had unsuitable roads for a first trial (e.g. those where excessive traffic displacement was likely) or those where permanent planned measures (i.e. full filtering/pedestrianisation) superceded the need for this change. Three schools were then selected using a matrix system which took into account the following criteria (see appendix 1 for selection matrix):
- a) Area around the school locale that would benefit from a closure in terms of walkability and cycle-ability from a road closure, i.e. expected effect on congestion/air pollution
  - b) STATS 19 Collisions on the road outside school in last 36 months
  - c) A wider network in the area that supports walking and cycling
  - d) A school that is engaged in the school travel planning system or shows willingness to promote modal shift to walking or cycling
- 2.2 Prerequisites to taking part in the project included signing a Memorandum of Understanding which set out that the school was to:
- a) Promote active travel to their school
  - b) Administer the raising and lowering of bollards, and take down the signs closing the road outside of term time.
- 2.3 Of the three schools selected, one school decided at the eleventh hour that the proposed scheme was likely to be too controversial with local residents due to restrictions to access, and they no longer supported it. At another school we experienced determined resistance from a small number of residents who felt that restriction of access to parking spaces outside their homes for the time period proposed was too much of an imposition. It was decided that it was too controversial to take forward as an initial trial here. It should be noted, however, that as we did not take this as far as consultation we do not know the overall feeling of the wider community.
- 2.4 The third school, St Josephs' school in Macklin Street, Covent Garden was taken forward to trial the project. With the help of an extremely supportive school staff and parents, officers were successful in convincing those who were against the scheme of the benefit overall, despite there being some disadvantages to those who wished to be able to drive to their homes at times that conflicted with the start and end of the school day.

### **3 The Process:**

- 3.1 Local authorities in Greater London have powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (s6-9) to regulate traffic and restrict access to: a) avoid danger to persons or other traffic using the road, b) for facilitating the passage on the road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians) and c) preventing the use of a road by vehicular traffic where such use is inappropriate given the street context.
- 3.2 The scheme at St Joseph's was introduced as a trial, using an experimental Traffic Order. An experimental Traffic Order only requires statutory consultation, with full consultation starting as part of the trial once it is in place, allowing people to experience the changes before responding. However, in the case of St Joseph's, Camden decided to consult the public on whether to implement an experimental scheme ahead of the trial. Extensive engagement was carried out with local businesses (there are some 40 businesses on Macklin Street); and public meetings held for residents to attend ahead of the consultation.
- 3.3 The consultation responses demonstrated that there was broad support for the proposal, with some 80% of resident responses being positive. Many businesses were supportive when asked verbally, but only three businesses responded to the formal consultation – two against and one for. It should be noted that Macklin Street is a relatively unusual context, having very high levels of car-free households ; more resistance might be expected in more car dependent neighbourhoods.
- 3.4 Following from the consultation, the decision was taken to implement the scheme as a trial, with a follow up consultation as to whether the scheme should be made permanent.
- 3.5 It should be noted that the schools are not closing the road – the signage closes the road, but the bollards ensure compliance. At the start of the trial we noted many motor vehicles trying to get around the bollards by driving on the pavement before we made changes to the layout to prevent this happening. In the first instance however, we so consider the bollards necessary.

### **4 The Design:**

- 4.1 We used folding bollards for this scheme, with the bollards able to fold flat into the road and be covered over such that there is a flush surface. One disadvantage to this is that high volumes of traffic and heavy vehicles using the road outside of closure times might cause the casing for the bollard to deform, rendering them unusable. We are aware that other local authorities are considering using camera enforcement as an alternative and watch these developments with interest, although this method is likely to be considerably more expensive. Thought was also given to electronic automatic bollards, but again this would have considerably increased the cost of the scheme and there have been considerable issues where these have been installed in Camden previously with cars becoming stuck on top of them as well as vandalism. A specification sheet of the item we purchased is available in the Appendix at the end of this document.

- 4.2 Macklin Street, outside St Joseph's School, is already a one-way street, and therefore did not need to be made one-way.
- 4.3 Where streets were not already one-way, we intended to make them act as one-ways with one entrance and one exit. This meant that residents could exit the area at all times by motor vehicle and school staff were not faced with having to raise two sets of bollards with the potential for drivers to end up stuck in the middle.
- 4.4 It should be possible to use any changes in one-ways to enhance filtering in the area, reducing through-traffic movements outside of school run times to benefit local residents.



## 5 Data and preliminary findings:

- 5.1 Feedback collected locally from residents and businesses is broadly positive. One business continues to raise concerns about access for deliveries and the potential loss of business; however we have not been made aware of any specific cases of business being lost so far.
- 5.2 Data collected from hands- up surveys and via 'Travel Tracker' – a system whereby children record their travel daily – indicate that driving to school has fallen dramatically, despite the closure only covering some 200m of the street.
- 5.3 We do not have complete comparable before and after data as we are awaiting hands up surveys to be submitted in June 2017. We also have concerns about the small volume of data we have to date through Travel Tracker and therefore the chance of it being skewed by changes in weather, roadworks or other factors.
- 5.4 Caveats aside, indications are that driven trips to school have fallen by 43% between Jan –July 2016, before the trial started and July-Dec 2016 (after implementation, captured using the same method). This may be as much as 66% since initial engagement in June 2015, however this data was collected by a different methodology and we will not have the post data from this method until June 2017.
- 5.5 The apparent degree of change is surprising in some ways as it is still possible to drive to within 50m of the school, on Newton Street. This may be because many driven journeys were likely to be 'marginal' where parents did not necessarily benefit from driving. So the marginal increase in inconvenience from the closure, combined with an improvement in the street environment outside the school was enough to nudge parents into walking, scooting or cycling instead.
- 5.6 Air quality data collected on the street outside the school indicates that air quality has improved, with a 3.8% reduction in NO<sub>2</sub> levels overall on school days. We would expect this to mean a significantly greater reduction at times when children are arriving and departing the school as this is when the closure is in place, but our monitoring methods are not sensitive enough to reliably report this.

## 6 Indicative Costs:

- 6.1 Indicative costs of the scheme itself are laid out below, but exclude officer time.

Item	Indicative Cost
Traffic Counts	£200*
Purchase coffin bollards, install additional bollards to prevent circumvention of bollards using pavement, signage, lighting and install	£5,500
TMO costs	£2,800
Consultation printing, postage etc	£300
<b>Total indicative cost per school:</b>	<b>£8,800</b>

\*This assumes a quiet street and a need for or ATC data only, rather than full turning counts.

- 6.2 There may be cases where traffic modelling will be required, but in this was felt not to be necessary for this pilot due to low traffic volumes on the street. .
- 6.3 There were also additional costs associated with this being an initial pilot, including extra monitoring for air quality, extra support for behaviour change provided by Living Streets, 'Travel Tracker', awards associated with 'Walk Once a Week' and a video to explain the scheme. However, many of those costs need not be incurred in future schemes, and behaviour change work could often make use of existing Local Authority School Transport Planning offers.
- 6.4 For comparison, Wiltshire County Council quote a speed control table as costing £12,500; a raised junction at £30,000.

## **7 Conclusions and Lessons Learnt**

- 7.1 The pilot demonstrates that a combined program of smarter travel changes and street closures in a school with motivated staff can bring about dramatic reductions in driven trips to school and increases in sustainable travel. In fact Officers do not know of any other single scheme bringing about such large decreases in driven trips. However, there is the caveat that this is an experiment with a single subject, and a wider set of data is needed to confirm our findings. We hope that other boroughs and academic institutions will work with us to expand our understanding of the impact of these and similar changes.
- 7.2 These changes can also be popular with local residents, although a small number of residents felt very strongly that the timed closures were an intolerable imposition. The pilot school is in an area of car ownership, and it is likely that there will be more resistance in areas of higher car ownership, although the impact would be greater impact in terms of reduced absolute numbers of driven trips and consequent benefits
- 7.3 A supportive school and Council are also necessary given the likely opposition from a minority of residents. Some of the resistance we encountered was likely associated with this being a new measure and it will become easier to implement as more precedents are set.
- 7.4 We therefore recommend that careful thought should be given to the engagement process to give any changes the best possible chance of success. That said, given the strength of support apparent from reactions from parents, local businesses and residents, there does seem to be strong support for this kind of change. Our initial consultation in this location drew 80% positive responses from local residents.
- 7.5 The costs of this measure are considerably cheaper than traffic calming alternatives, and seem likely to have a much greater road safety as well as behaviour change impact.

- 7.6 Although Healthy School Streets currently exists as a separate project at Camden, it may work better as a range of options for Schools reporting road safety concerns, with this being the default where the school is supportive as it likely delivers the best possible road safety improvements and behaviour change impact.

## Appendix A – School selection matrix

School	Area around the school locale that would benefit in terms of walkability and cycle-ability from a road closure (i.e. expected effect on congestion/air pollution) /10	STATS 19 Accidents on road outside school in last 36 months? /10	A wider network in the area that supports walking and cycling /5	A school that is engaged in the school travel planning system or shows willingness to promote modal shift to walking or cycling /10
School A				
School B				
School C				
School D				
	0 = quiet road <20vph in morning peak, <20mph, no reported concerns	0 = none reported	0 = major roads only, no quiet roads	No interest, no previous engagement = critical fail
	+1 for concerns reported	+5 for minor injury reported	Plus one for generally wide pavements on surrounding roads	Up to 5 points for recent engagement
	+3 for incident reported (not on STATS 19)	+10 for any KSI incidents	Plus one for multiple crossing points on each main road in area	Up to 5 points for enthusiasm for scheme from staff and governors
	+1 for 20-60vph		Plus one for <500m grid of modally filtered/CSNA L2 streets/walking/cycling routes in surrounding 1k	
	+2 for 50+ vph		Plus two for <250m grid of modally filtered/CSNA L2 streets	
	+ 1-3 for wider reaching impacts on traffic volumes due to filtering effects		Plus three for <150m grid of modally filtered/CSNA L2 streets	

## Appendix B – consultation letter



Date: 17 December 2018  
Officer: Joel Mimbo-Hontang  
Position: Design Engineer  
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Email: Joel.mimbo-hontang@camden.gov.uk

**Transport Strategy**  
London Borough of Camden  
5 Pancras Square

London N1C 4AG

Tel 020 7974 6624

Dear Sir or Madam,

Reference: **TS/BK/HSS3/StJosephs**

### ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL: -- PROPOSED TRIAL ROAD CLOSURES OUTSIDE AND NEAR SCHOOL DURING SCHOOL OPENING AND CLOSING TIMES

We are writing to seek your views on the Council's proposal to create a safer and more pleasant environment outside St Joseph's Primary School at the start and end of the school day.

We have received complaints regarding inconsiderate parking and safety at school opening and closing times from both parents and residents, and the school have asked for the road outside the school to be closed to motor traffic.

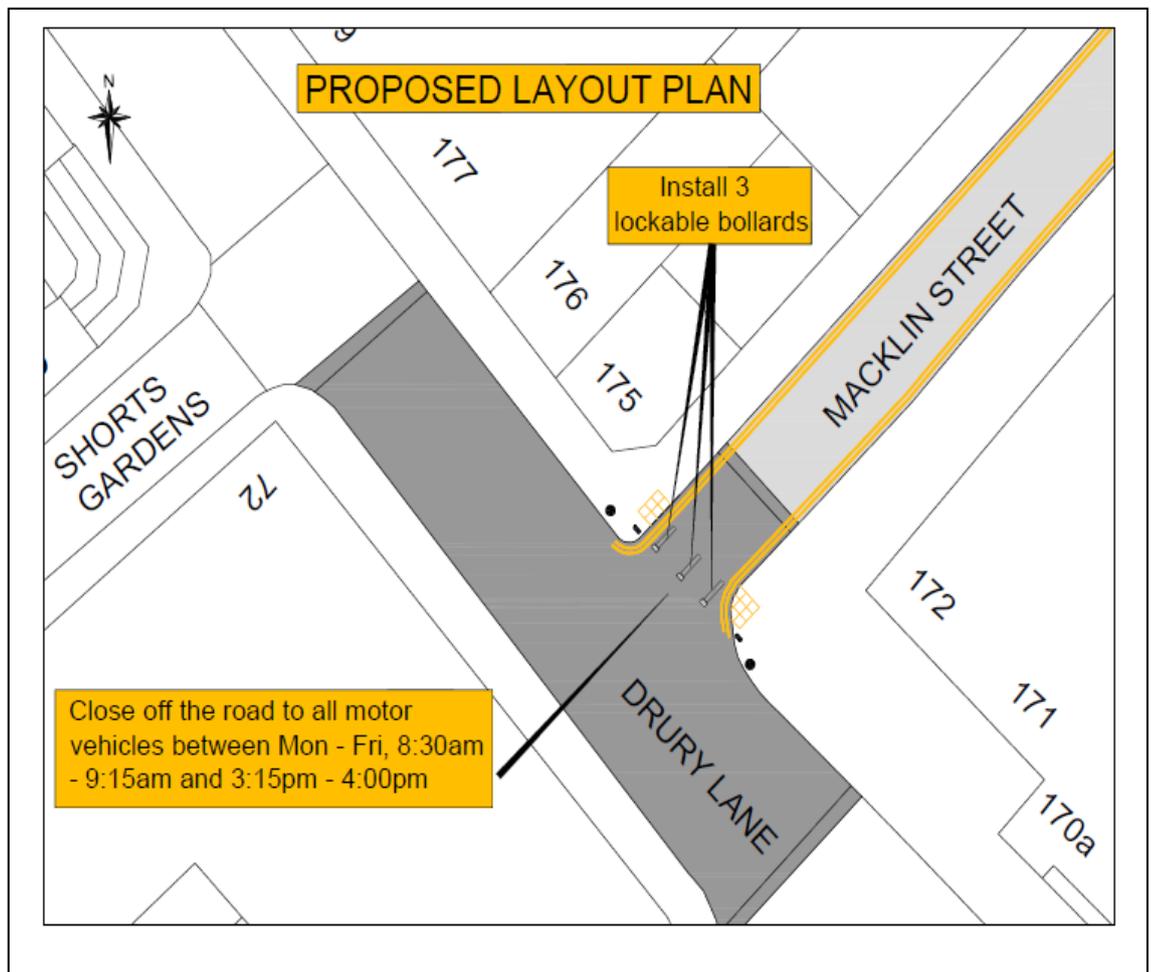
We are therefore proposing the following change (shown on the plan overleaf) to address the concerns raised; we also hope that this change will help encourage more children and families to walk and cycle to school:

- At school opening and closing times (proposed times: 8:30 – 9:15 and 3:15– 4:00pm), Macklin Street will be closed where Macklin Street meets Drury Lane. The road will be closed through the use of signage, and reinforced by removable bollards in the centre of the road. The bollards will be put up and taken down by school staff.

In addition to these changes we will also be supporting the school in running events, cycle training and incentives and rewards to boost levels of walking and cycling to school. The aim is to reduce the amount of school run motor traffic in the area as much as possible to avoid moving parking issues onto other streets in the area.

For any vehicles already parked in the streets before the closure comes in place, they will be able to exit through Stukeley Road. However, those who arrive by vehicles during the closure times will not be able to enter the road and will need to park elsewhere – permit holders of CA-C controlled parking zone will be able to park on other streets within the same CPZ zone which includes many local roads.

We appreciate that this will cause inconvenience to some residents and businesses, but consider that the measures will improve safety for those walking and cycling in the area including school children by reducing traffic movement in the area surrounding the school.



We want to hear your views on the proposals described in this letter and shown on the drawing. Please send all responses to: The London Borough of Camden, Culture and Environment Directorate, Transport Strategy Service, FREEPOST RLZH-UEYC-ACZZ, London, WC1H 8EQ. Please note no stamp is required and only ONE reply per household, business or organisation will be accepted. Alternatively you can send your response by email to [joel.mimbo-hontang@camden.gov.uk](mailto:joel.mimbo-hontang@camden.gov.uk). Alternatively you can send your response online directly via <https://consultations.wearecamden.org/culture-environment/macklin-street-road-closure>. You **must** give your full postal address when responding to this letter if you want us to consider your views. Please respond to this consultation letter by **21/12/2015**.

While it will not be possible to reply to you individually, all comments will be taken into account. Officers will consider all responses received and submit a report with recommendations to the Assistant Director of Environment and Transport who will make a decision on whether or not to proceed with the scheme.

You will be notified of the decision in February 2016, and if approved, the changes will be undertaken in April 2016 under an experimental order. After the changes have been implemented for approximately six months, officers will consider the impact of the scheme on safety and any shift in travel mode by pupils. In addition, we will write back to you to seek your views on how you consider the changes have been working.

We will then take a decision on whether further changes are needed, whether to make them permanent, or to remove the changes.

Yours sincerely,

Joel Mimbo-Hontang

Design Engineer

## Memorandum of Understanding

Between

London Borough of Camden

and

St Joseph's RC Primary School

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets for the terms and understanding between the London Borough of Camden (LB Camden) and St Joseph's School to remove traffic outside the school gates at the start and end of the school day.

### **Background**

St Joseph's School, located on Macklin Street, WC2B, has previously asked LB Camden to look into closing the street outside the school. This is in response to concerns about road safety due to a small amount of relatively fast moving through traffic. Occasional illegal parking by parents has also been observed.

LB Camden recently acquired funding from Transport for London (TfL) to put in place time-limited street closures to allow children to arrive and leave school in a safe and pleasant environment.

### **Purpose**

This MOU will bring together LB Camden and St Joseph's School to remove traffic from outside the school gates at the start and end of the school day, creating an environment which encourages children to walk, scooter or cycle to school and remove road danger in and around surrounding roads near the school. This intervention will be monitored to ascertain its effectiveness.

The above goals will be accomplished by undertaking the following activities:

- A series of events to encourage children to walk, cycle or scooter; supported by Living Streets and offers from LB Camden, from Spring 2015 onwards and ongoing to include:
  - o Incentive schemes
  - o Events to support cycling
  - o Events to support walking and scooting
  
- Monitoring activities, including all or some of the below, depending on the schools preferences:
  - o Use of “travel tracker” and/or hands up surveys to capture how children travel to school before and after the street closure has been implemented
  - o Air quality monitors outside the school (supplied by LB Camden)
  - o Traffic counts in conjunction with Living Streets, possibly using children to carry these out
  - o Work on a before and after video to capture the change in the environment on the street outside the school, to be co-ordinated by Living Streets
  - o Monitor road safety statistics via Stats19 police reporting (LB Camden)
  
- Implementation of a time-limited street closure outside the school such that motor vehicles will not be able to enter the area surrounding the school – although residents will still be able to exit the area

#### **LB Camden will....**

- Develop plans for Healthy School Streets intervention, resulting in time-limited closure of school streets at start and end of the school day under Section 6 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
  
- Fund the street changes to allow this to be implemented including signage, bollards and any other interventions needed to support the scheme
  
- Provide funding and staff time for cycle parking and for Living Streets to support the school in promoting sustainable travel by assisting with running events (this will run from March 2015 – December 2015)
  
- Provide other offers to support sustainable travel to school including free Bikeability cycle training to all pupils in years 5 and 6

#### **The school will....**

- Provide staff or volunteer time to raise and lower bollards to enforce time-limited street closure, and report any issues back to LB Camden. *Note: signage and the Traffic Management Order put in place by LB Camden will close the road; the bollards are simply to enforce the order and therefore no legal authority need be delegated to the school. Vehicles moving through the closure, even if the bollards are not in place, will be breaking the law and will be subject to enforcement action by LB Camden. This includes deliveries and access.*

- Work towards achieving bronze level STARs accreditation by June 2015, this will require:
  - 30 minutes of one member of staff's time per week to:
    - Complete online travel planning and organize events to promote sustainable travel
    - Promote sustainable travel events in school newsletter, in assemblies and at any other opportunities
    - Liaise with LB Camden and Living Streets to co-ordinate events
- Assist LB Camden with data collection for evaluation of scheme, including capture of how children are travelling
- Report any major issues to LB Camden that may affect the running of the scheme

### **Funding**

Funding has been acquired from TfL to put in place physical changes to the street that support a temporary road closure (bollards and implementation), and additional funding to cover soft measures that will facilitate long term behaviour change including a limited period of support from Living Streets, and ongoing support from LB Camden's behaviour change team.

### **Duration**

This MOU is at-will and may be modified by mutual consent of authorized officials from (list partners).

This MOU shall become effective upon signature by the authorized officials from the (list partners) and will remain in effect until modified or terminated by mutual consent.

### **Support**

St Joseph's School has the opportunity to contact or meet with officers at LB Camden, 3 weeks after implementation of the road closure and any time after that at the schools' request to discuss any issues or concerns that arise once the scheme is in operation.

### **Contact Information**

School Contact Name 1  
(Position in School)  
St Joseph's RC Primary School

Macklin Street

London

WC2B 5NA

(Contact phone number)

(Contact e-mail)

School Contact Name  
(Position in School)  
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\_\_\_\_\_ Date:  
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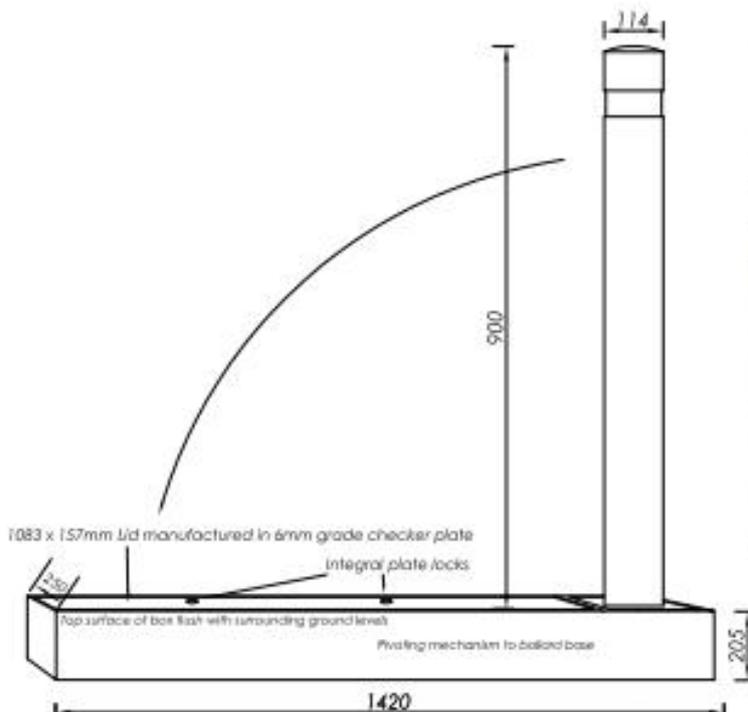
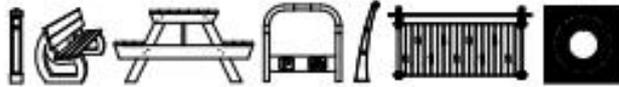
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(Partner signature)  
(Ben Knowles, LB Camden, Cycle to School Officer / Project Manager)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date:  
(Partner signature)  
(Lorraine Hinds, LB Camden, School Travel Office)

## ANGLESEY BOLLARD LTD

Manufacturers & Suppliers of Street, Urban and Park Furniture



Various bollard designs available for this arrangement  
Free drainage of the box must be considered during installation



Product Code :  
ABT-BOLINB(BB)-105

Date :  
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Bollard Materials :  
Galvanised steel / Powder Coated  
Stainless Steel

Scale :  
Not drawn to scale  
All dimensions in millimetres

### THE BOLLARD IN A BOX



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Company Reg. No : 5982140 ● VAT Reg. No : 113 4676 29