



A recent history of plans for Highbury Corner

A synthesis of public sources
by Larp London, September 2012.

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This synthesis focuses on published plans and policy statements relating to Highbury and Islington Station, the potential for pedestrianising parts of Highbury Corner; the creation of a new square in the station forecourt; and the potential reopening of the old station entrance to provide additional capacity.

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The 2004 Planning Framework

Highbury & Islington Station and Highbury Corner: Planning Framework, Islington Council, July 2004

Source: [http://www.islington.gov.uk/publicrecords/library/Environmental-protection/Information/Guidance/2011-2012/\(2012-03-03\)-Highbury-Corner-Framework-2004.pdf](http://www.islington.gov.uk/publicrecords/library/Environmental-protection/Information/Guidance/2011-2012/(2012-03-03)-Highbury-Corner-Framework-2004.pdf)

Introduction

The 2004 Planning Framework states:

“Highbury Corner is a strategic gateway within the London Borough of Islington. It is a major junction on the A1 corridor and links the Borough’s main town centres of the Angel and Nag’s Head. Since the early 19th century it has been a hub for public transportation.

“Currently the Highbury Corner area and Highbury & Islington Station do not reflect the area’s importance as a gateway within the borough and a major transportation node. There are issues that need to be tackled such as improving the transport interchange, traffic-pedestrian conflict, traffic-cyclist conflict, traffic congestion, unlocking the economic potential of the area, improving the quality of retail and other commercial uses, and improving the pedestrian environment.”

Highbury and Islington Station

(Pages 10-11)

“The station has a poor external appearance and is tucked away from Holloway Road and Highbury Corner. Internally the station gets very crowded during peak times in the ticket hall, the circulation areas and on the platforms. In recognition of these problems a planning brief for the station was adopted in July 2001.

“Any significant improvements to the station are likely to be achieved through redevelopment rather than refurbishment of the existing buildings. The buildings on the station site (station buildings, crown post office, public house and 2-4 Highbury Station Road) do not make a positive contribution to the area and could be



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demolished. The existing Crown Post Office must be relocated within any redevelopment unless it has already been relocated within the area.

“There is potential to deck over the existing railway lines and build above the tracks. This would increase the development potential of the site and maximise the advantages of the exceptional public transport access of the site (See, Map 7, 8, 9 and the vision plan). Any new development is expected to be between 5-7 storeys (20-25 metres), with some elements up to 7-10 storeys (30 Metres). Any development fronting Highbury Station Road is expected to be 3-4 storeys.

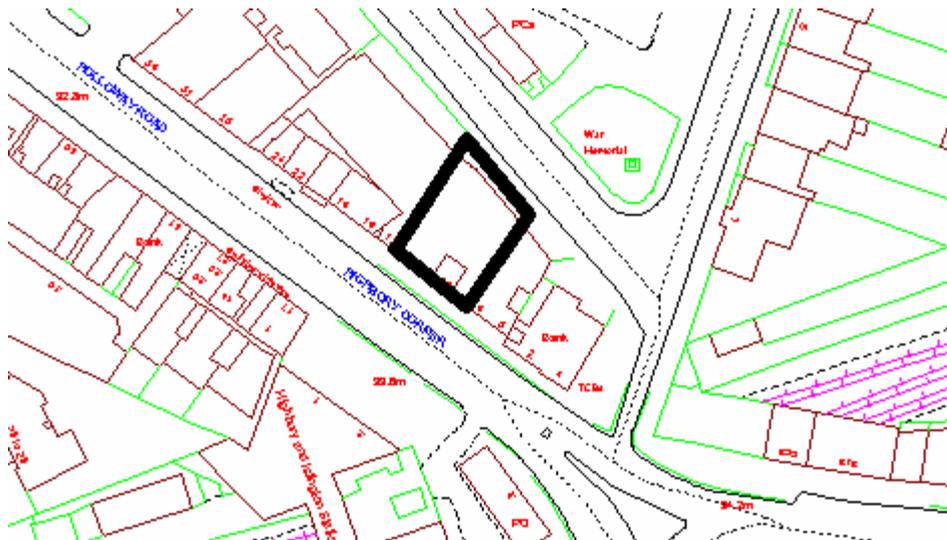
“Decking could extend from Liverpool Road to Highbury Corner, although the actual buildings would not cover this entire area, but would be in a ‘U’ shape, focused on Liverpool Road, Highbury Crescent Road and Highbury Corner.”

Old Highbury and Islington station entrance

The old station entrance faces onto the north side of Holloway Road at 10 Highbury Corner, and onto Highbury Fields. It was the main entrance to the underground station during the period when Highbury and Islington was part of the Underground’s Northern City Line, and was originally constructed by the Great Northern and City Railway, opening in 1904. Platforms were served by lift only, and there was no provision for escalators, the site being quite compact. It closed with the opening of the Victoria Line and the new combined station entrance for the Victoria and North London lines in 1968.

Page 11: “The Council considers that the old station entrance on Holloway Road should be reopened in conjunction with the station redevelopment if possible. The old station building is quite small, therefore it is likely that the ground floors of 12, 16 and 18 Holloway Road would be needed for a ticket hall and provision of escalators, lifts and stairs.”





Pages 17-18: “This has not been used as a public station entrance for many years. It is currently used for storage by London Underground. The Council considers that the old station entrance should be reopened in conjunction with the station redevelopment if possible. The old station building is quite small, therefore it is likely that the ground floor of 12, 16 and 18 Holloway Road would be needed for a ticket hall and provision of escalators, lifts and stairs.

“The site is within the Highbury Fields Conservation Area, the general presumption is in favour of the retention of buildings within a Conservation Area that contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. The onus is on the owners of this site to prove whether or not these buildings make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.



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“If it can be shown that these buildings do not make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area there is the potential to demolish the building. Any new development must be of a high quality design that preserves or enhances the Conservation area. The local planning authority will need to have full information about what is proposed for the site after demolition. Consent for demolition will only be given if there are agreed acceptable and detailed plans for any redevelopment.

“Subject to the Conservation issues above, it may be possible to demolish the existing building, retain the Holloway Road façade and erect a new building on this site to facilitate the reopening of the old station entrance. In this instance the archways in the façade could be opened up to provide additional access into the new building or glazed in.

“Development up to a maximum of 5 storeys (16 metres) will be accepted. Particular attention will need to be paid with the relationship between this site and the adjacent sites.

“This site would primarily be used as an alternative station entrance. Therefore as much space as is required should be used for station ticket hall, stairs/ escalators/ lifts, ancillary offices etc. There may also be potential for offices and residential uses above the new station entrance.”



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Improving Highbury Corner: Public Consultation

Transport for London and Islington Council consulted on options for pedestrianising Highbury Corner and creating a new station square in the former forecourt of Highbury and Islington Station. There was overwhelming support for change, with a majority of respondents favouring the pedestrianisation of the western side of Highbury Corner, creating a pedestrian area from Highbury and Islington Station to the north end of Upper Street; connecting the wooded area at the centre of Highbury Corner roundabout to the pedestrian area; and establishing improved interchange between buses and the station.

The full consultation, and a report on the responses, are both on line:

Consultation brochure: <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/assets/downloads/corporate/highbury-islington-brochure-final.pdf>

Report on the consultation: <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/assets/downloads/corporate/highbury-corner-consultation-report-nov2008.pdf>:

The consultation was silent on the potential reopening of the old Underground station entrance, London Travelwatch commenting: “There is an historic commitment to open the old station entrance on the north side of Holloway Road. This would significantly alter pedestrian flows. Can you please ensure that this is taken into account whilst developing this scheme.”

London Travelwatch



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Islington Council's current plans

Highbury Corner Roundabout

“In December 2010 Transport for London (TfL) announced that they would fund the proposals to remove the Highbury Corner roundabout (i.e. closing the western arm to general traffic - the favoured option during public consultation in 2007-08).

“Since the announcement, the council has been working with TfL to further develop the proposals. Another round of public consultation on the design proposals will take place, although the timing of the consultation is not yet known. It is expected that, subject to the results of the public consultation, construction works would begin in 2013-14.

Highbury & Islington Station Square

“As part of its proposals to improve Highbury Corner, the Council was originally planning to relocate the Highbury Corner post office to a new two storey building on the corner of St Paul's Road and Highbury Place. However, in June 2010, Post Office Ltd informed the Council that it no longer wished to occupy a new building on the site, as the arrangement no longer fitted with their future plans. As such, there remains uncertainty around the relocation of the post office and the associated potential to create a new station square.

Upcoming consultations

- Highbury Corner roundabout – 2012



Transport for London's current plans

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/projectsandschemes/5324.aspx>

These plans from 2008 include upgrading the station as part of the London Overground, with the extension to the East London line and upgraded services on the North London line; as well as so far unfulfilled plans to improve the wider experience in and around the station, and in the context of the plans for Highbury Corner itself.

At the time of writing (September 2012) TfL's impressive Phases 1 and 2 are largely complete, while Phases 3 and 4 are delayed by uncertainties on the Post Office's part in the future location of the Crown Post Office 'portakabin' style building, which sits in the middle of the original station forecourt and is in the way of just about everything; and uncertainties on funding from the GLA and Islington Council.

Improving the station and surrounding area at Highbury Corner.

TfL state:

"Working with the London Borough of Islington, we are looking at ways to improve the station and surrounding area at Highbury Corner.

"The area is a busy transport hub and a landmark within the local community. We want to make changes because the current layout of nearby buildings and the roundabout make Highbury & Islington station difficult to access.

"Our proposed improvements include:

- Upgrade the London Overground platforms
- Build new platforms for the East London line extension
- Upgrade the Tube station ticket hall and façade
- Relocate the post office from the station forecourt to a site nearby
- Construct a new station forecourt and areas of open space
- Change the Highbury Corner roundabout to improve traffic flow



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“The rail platform improvements will be in place by 2011. The programme for Tube ticket hall improvements, post office relocation and Highbury Corner roundabout are dependent on planning permission and funding.

“We aim to carry out works at Highbury & Islington in four phases. Phase one is funded and will be delivered by 2011. Phases two, three and four are not currently funded, but we will continue with our designs and work with the London Borough of Islington to identify and secure funding to begin the projects. The programme for these phases will depend on planning permission and funding.

Phase one

- Upgrade the existing North London line platforms
- Provide new platforms for the East London line
- Install new lifts to the East London line and London Overground platforms
- Create a new concourse at the rear of the existing ticket hall

Phase two

- Upgrade the station ticket hall and passenger information systems

Phase three

- Create a new station forecourt by moving the post office to a vacant site on Holloway Road
- Improve the station façade
- Improve pedestrian access to the station and create a new public space

Phase four

This phase will be focused on changing the Highbury Corner roundabout to:

- Smooth traffic flows without having a negative impact on local roads
- Integrate rail, bus and taxi facilities
- Create better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists
- Increase safety and security for road users and pedestrians
- Improve the area as a public space”



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