

Response to John Russell's Technical Note 02: E38 Battlesbridge

Amendments to Vehicle Restraint Systems (VRS)

1. It is considered that the intention to provide gaps with appropriate overlaps in the VRS was clearly set out at Page 57 of core document NR 12.

Pedestrian Route on A1245

2. *TA90/05 The Geometric Design of Pedestrian, Cycle and Equestrian Routes* provides specific guidance for non-motorised users (NMU) off carriageway routes associated with trunk road or motorway improvement schemes, and therefore is not specifically relevant for the introduction of a pedestrian route on a local 'A' road.
3. However, it should be noted that TA90/05, which deals with pedestrian facilities on high speed roads that carry large volumes of traffic does not require a physical barrier between pedestrians and live traffic.
4. Mr Russell draws attention to Paragraph 7.22 of TA90/05, which states that it is desirable to provide physical separation between NMU routes and carriageways. The guidance states "For pedestrians and cyclists the preferred separation between the NMU route and the carriageway is 1.5m, with an acceptable separation of 0.5m.". TA90/05 is an Advice Note rather than a Standard, which recognises that with all highway design, there is a need to balance issues of safety and practicality. The advice note "provides 'preferred' and 'acceptable' minimum values based on best available evidence, but in exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate to apply some flexibility in using these figures over short distances.".
5. The preliminary design work carried out by Mott MacDonald to confirm the viability of the proposed VRS amendments at E38 Battlesbridge shows that the minimum clearance between the carriageway and front face of the VRS will be 2.25m, which provides a minimum pedestrian route width of 1.75m and 0.5m separation over a short distance of less than 20m. The VRS and footway arrangement, including any necessary separation will be progressed further at detailed design and will be subject to agreement and certification by the highway authority. The scheme will also be subject to a Stage 2 Road Safety Audit which will be undertaken at the completion of the detailed design stage.
6. The width of the verge for the remaining 140m of route along the A1245 will be in excess of the 3.5m referred to by Mr Russell in para 1.6 of Technical Note 02.
7. In cross examination of Ms Tilbrook by the Ramblers, it was suggested that it was not clear what the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit was asked to consider. The Stage 1 Road Safety Audit brief described the use of the A1245 overbridge as part of the diversion route and therefore the Auditors were required to consider the principle of pedestrians walking along the A1245, not the specific alterations to the vehicle restraint system. The alterations to be carried out to provide suitable gaps in the VRS with appropriate overlaps will be considered as part of a Stage 2 Road Safety Audit.