

Traffic walk notes 1 - Chetwynd Road to South Grove via West Hill

17 November 2023 8.45am to 11.30am

My walking route was Chetwynd Road, Grove Terrace, Highgate Road and Highgate West Hill. The most difficult walking due to narrow and blocked pavements was on West Hill. The pavements are very narrow from roughly Millfield Lane to the Summit building. North of the junction with Millfield Lane the pavements are blocked by parked cars and there is bad disruption to traffic flows due to the parking between roughly Nos 15 and 29 West Hill. In Chetwynd Road traffic was mainly cars and vans. On Highgate Road and West Hill there were buses and heavier delivery vehicles as well as vans and cars.

Chetwynd Road

I'm just making some notes from Chetwynd Road. I've been here since about 8:45 this morning. It's a Friday morning the traffic has not been heavy. It does tend to go in waves governed by the change of the traffic lights at York rise and at Highgate Road. Clearly the road is not wide enough to have parked cars on both sides and two way traffic, so there do tend to be some conflicts. The arrangement for cars to park partially on the road doesn't solve the width issue and is obviously unsatisfactory. The pavements are good quality Yorkstone, but narrowed in places by the parked cars. Immediate impressions are that things could be improved by making the traffic one way and arranging the parking so that it was fully on the road and also allowed for pulling in.

The walk along Highgate Road did not show any particular traffic disturbances or other issues.

West Hill

I walked up West Hill on the west side. My first stop was just north of the junction with Millfield Lane.

I'm standing now on West Hill just below the houses on the left I've taken a couple of photos the parking here is similar in concept to in Chetwynd Road but the remaining pavement is even narrower for pedestrians who want to walk on this side of the road, the western side. The pavement on the other side is much wider and actually you can see from one of the photos there is the van that has taken the opportunity to actually park on the pavement which is not great either for pedestrians or for the pavements. The time now is just before 10:30.





The situation is made much worse by wheelie bins being left on the pavement. I'm not sure if this is permanent or if it's rubbish collection day. Why is it that residents here do not have recycling arrangements using bags that can be used in places where wheelie bins are not suitable? Here they're not suitable because of all the steps up to or down from the houses.

I then continued a little further.

It's fairly chaotic here at the moment there are two buses trying to pass and there's also some building work going on in one of the houses. The traffic is backing up and this is at 10:30am on a Friday morning. The problem is having two lines of traffic attempting to pass while there are parked cars. This is particularly if buses are trying to pass. The bus is now having to go up onto the pavement - the bus is driving down the pavement half on the pavement and half off in order to get through. It's going to have to do something different here because there's a lamppost in its way.

Okay now we've got an ambulance just getting through. Cars had to go up onto this quite narrow pavement. The main cause of the hold-up is that you can't get large vehicles passing each other and the parking is such that there isn't any pull in space.

I then continued further towards the junction of Merton Lane.

The pavement here on the west side is so narrow it would literally be impossible for two people to pass except sideways. There are double yellow lines on both sides the traffic is flowing quite smoothly. I'm now just near West Hill Park at the junction of Merton Lane.



I'm now just on the corner of Merton Lane and have taken a photograph. There's quite a nice bench here for people who may have struggled up the hill but there's no footpath coming down and round the corner - there's no pavement and people obviously need one because there are informal tracks across the grass I've taken a photograph to make that evident.

Continuing now up West Hill the pavement here is still ridiculously narrow. One also wonders whether given those double yellow lines on both sides whether the hatched area in the middle of the road is necessary. Surely more space could be allowed for pedestrians - there is a bus stop here so people coming off the bus stop have to walk down this road if they're going in a southerly direction towards Merton Lane.

Continuing up the Hill. There's a steady stream of traffic and a large lorry just went past me. I'm now at a place where the vegetation has grown across the pavements. I can get past but if I had a pushchair I certainly wouldn't be able to do so. Heavy traffic is passing me and I'm uncomfortably close to the traffic. Just past the Summit clinic the pavement does widen out to a satisfactory size.

Observations were stopped at the junction of West Hill and South Grove.

William Britain
17 November 2023