

DEPUTATION 4

Thank you for the opportunity to present this deputation to Harrow council.

I object to the proposals for the Low Traffic Neighbourhood LTN02 scheme Pinner View area and Headstone South.

I live on Chandos Rd in the middle of LTN-02 where there are plans to implement a scheme which will place physical vehicular blockades, or planters, on Pinner View, thus leaving residents stranded on one side of the road or the other and having to drive in various directions to get to the nearest main road and onwards.

When I first heard there were proposals to improve the local environment, encourage walking etc I looked forward to seeing the proposals. To learn that the proposals amount to planters blocking resident's main access road was disappointing and there was frustration at what is a wasted opportunity.

Normally one would expect that when a public scheme is tabled that a number of options would be discussed and assessed in terms of impact on the environment, impact on crime, impact on other forms of transport, impact on the public realm, impact on health and safety, impact on residents. From the responses I have received from Harrow Council, either none of these impacts are known or else are not being disclosed.

For any scheme to get the green light, the benefits must be clear, otherwise the default option is do nothing. Going ahead with a scheme which has no benefits is playing with residents' lives and is reckless. If the proposer cannot articulate the benefits and back up the proposals with evidence or data, then it must be questioned whether the benefits exist or are achievable.

Residents that managed to hear about the proposals have been given no data, reports, impact assessments or modelling that suggest the scheme will benefit residents; Residents will actually be worse off after the scheme is implemented in terms of traffic, air pollution and additional travel time; Residents are being penalised for the driving habits and behaviours of non-residents; No alternative options have been presented, e.g. ANPR; The so called "problem" has been overstated and the council has been disingenuous about this now being a reaction to covid. If there ever was a real problem there would be data to support it.

The additional traffic on Pinner View from traffic cutting through from Parkside to Pinner Road during rush hour is negligible, it is certainly not a "rat-run" that needs to be fixed. There is no logic in imposing a poor scheme which will adversely affect residents 24hrs a day because of a negligible increase in traffic for a short time during the day. Remember the scheme not only blocks Pinner View to non-residents, it blocks it to residents. 14 roads lead on to Pinner View and you are sending every one of the residents of those roads in another direction, it is ridiculous and will result in gridlock elsewhere in the area. Pinner View is a road, it's meant for traffic and is currently doing what it was built for, why you would look to block it is a mystery.

What options were discounted in order to arrive at the solution to place planters blocking Pinner View? Surely the technology exists that will not adversely affect residents, while keeping non-residents to the main roads, as other areas in London have managed to do successfully? The technology absolutely exists to fix the alleged problem without adversely affecting residents. We live in an age of autonomous cars and intelligent traffic management, if the best that the council can suggest is blocking the roads with big flowerpots then questions must be asked. I note that Hounslow council has made ANPR work in south Chiswick but Harrow has gone the flowerpot route. Why can't we make this work?

Residents can continue to use Pinner View and visitors will have to use the side roads, which is what they would have to do under the LTN-02 proposals anyway. In this way you are only penalising non-residents and allowing residents to carry on as before. There is a win-win solution out there if only the scheme was planned correctly. Any solution is not the best solution. What Harrow should be concerned about is the additional traffic coming from the new developments Harrow View West and Eastman village. It is insanity and a disaster waiting to happen to force us into Harrow View given the current traffic flows on that road. What traffic modelling has been done on this or are residents expected to take a leap of faith and wait for the inevitable accident on Harrow View? If you tried to design a worse solution you couldn't have done it any worse than the current proposals.

One of the reasons we decided to make our home in Harrow was accessibility. We can drive to tube stations, supermarkets, church, schools and work relatively easily. To lose access to 2 of our 3 tube stations and to make all of the other destinations longer and further, for no discernible benefit and for no apparent reason, is unacceptable.

Many of my neighbours have expressed a similar view where losing access via Pinner View will have a negative impact on their lives and there is frustration that no other options have been discussed.

The proposed blockade of Pinner View is unnecessary. There are no stated benefits for the scheme other than alleged reduction in air pollution and walking, but these are aspirational. Nothing has been quantified and the scheme has no success criteria. I have asked Harrow for this information twice and both times nothing has come back other than it is now being done for "covid crisis" reasons. Which is it? I don't believe these schemes have anything to do with coronavirus mitigation as the council now claims as the plans for LTN-02 were in place long before the virus outbreak.

Harrow planning told me in July this year that "*the proposals are to assist with the corona virus crisis*". This is demonstrably untrue, Harrow wanted to implement these schemes long before coronavirus was an issue.

If the proposals were allegedly being consulted on before the crisis they couldn't have been part of a response to a "crisis" that didn't exist 6 months ago.

If “*the council’s priority is to address the health crisis*” which didn’t exist when you started trying to implement this, what were the original reasons for implementing this scheme pre-Covid?

A company called Sustrans allegedly held consultation and workshops with stakeholders some months before the coronavirus outbreak. If the proposals were being consulted on before the virus outbreak how can Harrow say that these proposals are part of a response to the coronavirus health crisis, it isn’t and it wasn’t, LTN-02 was in motion long before anybody had heard of coronavirus. If it is now to do with coronavirus what were Sustrans discussing back in January 2020?

I believe the council has received, or is about to receive, funding which it wants to spend on these schemes. I can’t comment on other LTN’s but LTN02 has not been planned properly, there are no reports available and therefore no assessments of traffic modelling, environmental or crime impacts other than the claim that “it’s worked elsewhere”. I don’t live “elsewhere”, my family and I live in Harrow. It’s not clear what it is that has worked elsewhere but despite zero evidence of any planning having taken place Harrow Council are happy to proceed at haste. The implementation has now been accelerated without adequate consultation. I fear that because of the lack of planning and in an attempt to secure and spend funding as quickly as possible, a poor scheme is about to be implemented on the basis that somebody “thinks” it is a good idea. This will adversely impact the lives of hundreds of residents, many of whom are still unaware of the proposals or it’s impacts.

I believe the planned implementation of LTN-02 should be stopped or at least postponed so that proper planning can take place and the data on which the decision should have been made can be made available and properly assessed and the benefits quantified before public money is wasted. I find it unusual that Harrow Council are adamant that they will proceed with a proposal that will adversely affect hundreds of residents’ lives, without a shred of data existing upon which this decision has been based. The notion of doing something just because you’ve been given money is wasteful and I’m sure was not the intention of the funding source. Implementing this scheme is the equivalent of firing shots into a crowd just because you’ve been given free bullets, it’s reckless and negligent. Blowing money on a half-baked scheme that is detrimental to many residents’ lives is worse than doing nothing.

It is folly to disrupt the lives of hundreds or maybe thousands of residents under the guise of coronavirus crisis management. I work for a telecoms company and I can state for a fact that working patterns have changed forever, the telecoms industry has reacted to put in place fibre and 5G infrastructure to allow people to work from home, it is conjecture from Harrow to say that we need to change road layouts because of the “risk” of an increase in traffic. That is an opinion bordering on misrepresentation.

While we are talking about the involvement of Sustrans, I have looked at Sustrans’ website and their “Introductory Guide to Low Traffic Neighbourhood Design”. Sustrans’s website says the issues to consider are;

- *poorest air quality*
- *highest deprivation*

- *poor access to green space*
- *highest traffic volumes, particularly percentage of through traffic*
- *the high density of collisions, particularly for the most vulnerable users*
- *the greatest number of schools*
- *low public transport accessibility*
- *low car ownership*
- *highest childhood obesity*
- *local support.*

On Harrow's own Transport Local Implementation Plan it states "*Harrow contributes 2.1% of all the CO2 emitted across London. This puts the borough in 28th position out of the 33 London boroughs*". Further, a report by Switchcraft in Aug 2019 confirmed that Harrow has the 2nd lowest CO2 emissions of all the London Boroughs. Harrow must be commended on having such excellent air quality, but if you are trying to adversely disrupt our lives to improve us from being second best to best, i.e. one position, that is ridiculous. Have you completed modelling that measures air pollution and what levels you expect emissions to reduce to? This scheme will increase pollution rather than helping the health and wellbeing of residents.

By Sustrans's own design criteria therefore, there is no justification. The environmental situation is certainly not a priority. So we can safely discount this being about covid and its certainly not about the environment. If anything, sitting in cars making longer journeys and queuing at the traffic lights on Harrow View will make air pollution worse not better. This scheme is impossible to justify under Sustrans's own planning guidelines.

According to Plumplot.com, robbery, anti social behaviour and drug crime in Harrow have increased in the last year. Anti-social behaviour has increased by 47%. Why not spend the money on crime reduction which is actually needed, rather than blowing money on an aspirational scheme?

(I ran out of time here).