

Meeting:	Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel
Date:	29 November 2006
Subject:	Whitefriars Avenue, Wealdstone – Proposed 20 MPH zone
Key Decision: (Executive-side only)	No
Responsible Officer:	Steve Swain, Interim Head of Public Realm Infrastructure, Urban Living
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Eileen Kinnear, Urban Living – Community Safety & Public Realm
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Appendix A: Consultation Area Appendix B: Scheme Proposals Appendix C: Consultation Leaflet Appendix D: Consultation Questionnaire Appendix E: Consultation Responses Appendix F: Respondents General Comments / Officer Response

SECTION 1 – SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report provides the findings of the public consultation exercise for a proposed 20 MPH zone scheme in Whitefriars Avenue and is presented to the Panel to seek approval to implement the scheme in the next financial year 2007/8.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Panel recommends that the Portfolio Holder for Urban Living – Community Safety and Public Realm:

Authorises officers to take all steps necessary to introduce a 20 MPH zone in the

Whitefriars Avenue area of Wealdstone as shown at Appendix B, the details of which be delegated to officers subject to the consideration of any formal objections to the advertised statutory notices and subject to implementation funding being made available by Transport for London (TfL).

REASON: To address safety concerns on Whitefriars Avenue in the vicinity of Whitefriars First and Middle school.

SECTION 2 - REPORT

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 The Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel agreed a five-year programme of 20mph zones on 18th September 2002. Whitefriars School was included in that programme for implementation in 2006/07.
- 2.1.2 At the meeting of Council held on 26 February 2004, Councillor Marie-Louise Nolan presented a 95 signature petition requesting the implementation of traffic calming measures outside of Whitefriars Primary School. Council resolved that the petition be referred to the Traffic and Road Safety Advisory Panel for consideration.
- 2.1.3 In an information item submitted to TARSAP on 22nd September 2004 officers advised that Whitefriars Avenue had been re-assessed under the Council's traffic calming assessment method and was found to have a higher priority than indicated by previous assessments. As a result a bid of £110,000 had been made in the July 2004 BSP submission to Transport for London for implementation of a 20mph zone in 2005/2006.
- 2.1.4 This bid was unsuccessful but a further bid was made in the July 2005 BSP submission for implementation of a scheme in 2006/7. £20,000 was made available by TfL in April 2006 to develop proposals through the design and consultation stages only. A further bid has been made for £100,000 to implement a scheme in 2007/8. An announcement on whether this bid has been successful is expected in early December 2006. This report sets out the findings of the public consultation exercise on the preliminary design proposals.
- 2.1.5 Proposals for the 20 MPH zone scheme were developed with the involvement of the head teacher of the school, the head petitioner and ward councillors including ex-councillor Nolan.
- 2.1.6 The public consultation process that followed and which has now concluded has demonstrated support for the proposals put forward. The proposals are predominantly speed reduction measures.

2.2 Issues identified

- 2.2.1 In recent times Whitefriars First and Middle Schools has suffered persistent traffic problems outside the entrance to the school, particularly illegal parking of vehicles along the school zig-zag road markings during the school run. This creates traffic congestion and visibility problems along Whitefriars Avenue that puts pedestrians at risk.
- 2.2.2 Traffic speed survey data obtained in June 2006 indicates that speeds are in excess of 20 mph along Whitefriars Avenue. 40% of traffic travels above 20mph in the northbound direction and 65% in the southbound direction. There were 3 personal injury accidents recorded over the last 3 year period.
- 2.2.3 A series of complimentary traffic calming measures have been drawn up to address the issues identified. These include entry treatments, junction improvements, speed reduction measures such as speed cushions and traffic islands, pedestrian crossing facilities and enhanced road markings and signs at key locations along Whitefriars Avenue.
- 2.2.4 In order to limit the impact of the scheme on response times for emergency services the 20 mph zone has been confined to roads immediately adjacent to the school.

2.3 Options considered

- 2.3.1 Two options were prepared which were designed to address the following areas of concern;
- Unsafe crossing points for pedestrians
 - Congestion caused predominantly by inappropriate parking along Whitefriars School at dropping-off and picking-up times
 - Inappropriate traffic speed
- 2.3.2 The options differ only in that Option One provides a raised feature outside the school where pedestrians can cross at footway level and which encourages vehicular speed reduction. Option Two provides a 1.2m wide traffic island with speed cushions and associated road markings instead of the raised table outside the school. This is aimed at deterring vehicles parking illegally along the school zig-zag markings and encouraging vehicular speed reduction. Other than these the two options are the same and incorporate self-enforcing speed reducing features in the form of gateways, speed tables and speed cushions.
- 2.3.3 A separate scheme being carried out in the Whitefriars Avenue area proposes to introduce permit parking for residents and business owners through an extension of the Wealdstone controlled parking zone. Waiting restrictions at junctions within the area have also been introduced to improve access, pedestrian safety and sight lines for drivers.

2.4 Consultation Results

- 2.4.1 Consultation on the proposals has been carried out with all key stakeholders, which included the emergency services, Harrow Association of Disabled People, the Metropolitan Police and the local schools and residents.
- 2.4.2 The consultation document included preliminary design drawings and described the proposals and the background to the scheme and included a questionnaire to enable local residents and businesses to have their say. Appendices C and D shows the consultation leaflet and the consultation questionnaire respectively.
- 2.4.3 A total of 792 consultation documents were distributed, 44 residents and 1 business owner responded which represents 5.7%. 420 of the 792 consultation documents were given to local school children for delivery to their parents, 18 of whom returned questionnaires that represents 2.3% of those consulted. There was an overwhelming support, from those that responded, for all aspects of the proposals from both parents and residents.
- 2.4.4 The respondents' answers to each of the questions on the questionnaire are tabulated at Appendix E. General Comments made by Respondents and Officer Response is in Appendix F.
- 2.4.5 In the following paragraphs a summary of the respondents' answers to the part of the questionnaire that asked their views on a 20 MPH zone and on which of the two options they prefer are analysed and discussed.
- 2.4.6 Question 7 asked the respondents if they were generally in favour of the introduction of a 20 MPH zone on Whitefriars Avenue. There was a note saying a 20 mph zone MUST include speed reduction features as shown on the drawing, that is, speed cushions and raised entry features etc. A summary of the results is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of consultation responses received for question 7

Respondents	Yes	No	No strong view
Residents	35	4	3
Businesses	1	0	0
Parents	16	0	2
TOTAL	52	4	5

Table 1 indicates strong overall support, from those that responded, for the implementation of a 20 MPH zone in Whitefriars Avenue.

In addition to the above responses a letter was received from the Metropolitan Police who have no objection to the proposed 20mph limit with speed cushions and tables as self-enforcing measures. If the proposed measures prove to be ineffective, then it is not their policy to routinely enforce 20mph speed restrictions. However, in appropriate cases they would conduct enforcement as it is their duty to enforce speed limits and would look to an engineering solution in response to any speed complaints. They would have to justify “appropriate cases”, such an example maybe where the problems exists in the vicinity of a school during start and end of school times. With regard to traffic calming measures the Metropolitan Police feels that these have impact on the emergency services in terms of response times and damage to their vehicles. They have fewer objections to speed cushions as proposed in Option 2 but consider these to have little effect on motorcycles, 4x4 vehicles or heavy goods vehicles and buses. They have no objection to speed tables and view them as the preferred method of all the options of “Vertical Deflection” speed reduction measures.

2.4.7 Question 13 asked the respondents which of the two options they preferred. A summary of the results is given in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Summary of consultation responses received for question 13

Respondents	Option 1	Option 2	No preference
Residents	14	6	22
Businesses	0	0	1
Parents	9	4	5
TOTAL	23	10	28

Table 2 shows that the majority of respondents had no preference to any of the options proposed for the scheme. However there were a high proportion of respondents who supported Option 1. The Metropolitan Police were in support of Option 2.

2.4.8 There were 3 respondents who were not in favour of the introduction of a 20 MPH zone and expressed no preference for either of the two options. These responses were from residents within the area.

a) Officer response: the numbers in favour of traffic calming measures significantly outweigh those opposed.

2.4.9 One respondent instead of returning the questionnaire wrote a letter expressing his views on the proposals and the need to extend the 20 MPH zone to other areas such as Whitefriars Drive, Toorack Road and Athelstone Road. 7 respondents also expressed the need for the extension of the 20 MPH zone along Whitefriars Drive.

b) Officer response: this would have a much greater impact on the response times for the emergency services and would increase costs beyond that likely to be made available. Extension of the scheme beyond the current proposals is not therefore recommended.

2.4.10 Another letter was received from a local resident stating that the proposals for road safety are important and admirable, but there has been a vast increase in volumes of traffic caused by the Sri Lankan and Muslim Culture Centre's (SLMCC) visitors and allied garage facility in Whitefriars

Avenue. Similarly employees of Winsor and Newtons factory park their cars in Whitefriars Avenue making it difficult for residents to park.

c) Officer response: the extension of the Wealdstone CPZ referred to in paragraph 2.3.3 will deal with the parking problem caused by factory workers but will only partially deal with the parking problem associated with the SLMCC. Officers have written to the centre requesting that they ask their visitors to have more regard for the needs of local residents when travelling to the centre.

2.5 Option recommended and reasons for recommendation

2.5.1 The result of the public consultation carried out on the two options has determined which of the options to take forward on the basis of comments received together with relevant traffic impact and road safety factors.

2.5.2 The results indicate that the respondents are generally in favour of proposals to provide a 20 MPH zone. The majority did not give a preference for any of the two options but there was more support for the implementation of Option 1 than for Option 2.

2.5.3 It is therefore recommended that Option 1 be put forward for implementation. This option would provide a raised feature outside the Whitefriars First and Middle School as a crossing point for pedestrians and especially the pupils of the school. The raised feature would also encourage vehicular speed reduction.

2.6 Financial Implications

2.6.1 £20,000 has been provided by TfL in the current financial year to develop the scheme through public consultation to completion of the legal process needed before measures can be introduced on the ground. Further funding is required in 2007/08 for implementation - £80,000 for Option 1 or £75,000 for Option 2. The scheme is included in the 2007/08 provisional bid in the TfL programme (seeking funding of £100,000 to cover all costs to complete the scheme (referred to in Section 2.1.4)). The bid is subject to confirmation when the settlement is announced in early December 2006. The scheme would be fully funded by Transport for London.

2.7 Equalities Impact consideration

2.7.1 The proposals in Option 1 are a means of improving road safety for pedestrians, cyclists and local residents and therefore encouraging these more sustainable modes of transport. They are particularly beneficial in areas around schools where they can reduce accidents and encourage walking to school.

2.8 Legal Implications

2.8.1 A 20mph speed limit can be introduced using powers available under Section 84 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

2.8.2 Road humps can be provided by Notice under Sections 90A and 90C of the Highways Act 1980.

2.8.3 Traffic calming works can be introduced under Section 90G of the Highways Act 1980.

2.8.4 'School' warning signs, when laid as road markings, require special authorisation from the Department for Transport. This will be sought in the following stage of the project whilst progressing through the formal legal processes mentioned in 2.8.1 to 2.8.3 above.

2.9 Community Safety (s17 Crime & Disorder Act 1998)

2.9 These proposals do not have any impact on Community Safety.

SECTION 3 - STATUTORY OFFICER CLEARANCE

Chief Finance Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Name: Anil Nagpal
		Date: ...17/11/2006.....
Monitoring Officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Name: Adekunle Amisu.....
		Date: ...17/11/2006.....

SECTION 4 - CONTACT DETAILS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

Contact: Bill Heale, Principal Engineer, Traffic and Road Safety, 0208 424 1065

Background Papers: List **only non-exempt** documents relied on to a material extent in preparing the report. (eg previous reports) Where possible also include electronic link.

IF APPROPRIATE, does the report include the following considerations?

1.	Consultation	YES
2.	Corporate Priorities	YES
3.	Manifesto Pledge Reference Number	