

## **Appendix – Ward Councillors’ Comments and Suggestions**

### **Introduction**

Please find set out below our thoughts on the Hounslow Streetspace Programme – SCLN described in Tom Sharland’s letter to residents dated 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020. This letter describes what will be done but not why, nor how the success of these measures is to be assessed.

### **Hartington Road – Trial Closure to Northbound Traffic (except for permit holders)**

This is the key measure to prevent rat running across the ward from the A316 in the south-east to the A4 and Harvard Hill in the north-west. However the Council have provided no explanation as to why this closure is required 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. The problem that it addresses exists only during the rush hour periods.

If the Council really wished to encourage cycling on Hartington Road it would upgrade the existing cycle route on that road. Ward Councillors have long requested such an upgrade and Officers agree that an upgrade is sorely needed and yet strangely it is not part of the measures being brought forward. We understand that the upgrade is “on the back burner”.

Residents returning home by car across Chiswick Bridge (who are not permit holders) are forced to make a detour north along the busy A316 to Burlington Lane or Staveley Road (outside the rush hour). Those living in the west and south of the Ward will be forced north of the railway line and then have to cross the railway bridge to reach their homes. This does nothing to improve air quality and fails to make life safer for pedestrians and cyclists since it does not remove any traffic from roads within the ward

### **Strand on the Green – Trial Access Only Zone**

This is another key measure preventing commuter rat running across the ward between Chiswick Bridge and Kew Bridge. However, most of the east-west traffic flow will already be blocked by the Hartington Road closure (see above). Once again this is a twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, solution to a problem that exists for only a few hours a day.

On occasion Thames Road becomes blocked when commercial vehicles meet head on where the road is narrowest. The simple solution to this would be to ban access to Thames Road at Kew Bridge for commercial vehicles travelling east. Alternative routes are available.

Residents (who do not live in the access only zone) are forced when leaving and returning to the area via Kew Bridge, Kew Bridge Road or Chiswick High Road to make a long detour along the North Circular, Chiswick High Road and the A4. This will have a huge impact on those living in the east and north of the ward. This poorly designed measure does not in total remove any traffic from the roads within and surrounding the ward and will therefore not improve air quality or make life any safer for pedestrians and cyclists.

### **Staveley Road/Park Road – Trial Diagonal Road Closure**

The School Street planned for the eastern section of Staveley Road should greatly reduce the volume of traffic travelling west along the rest of Staveley Road during the morning rush hour. This will make the barrier on the Staveley Road/Park Road junction unnecessary. Yet again the council

have not provided an explanation as to why it is necessary for this unsightly blockage to operate 24 a day 7 days a week.

The proposed barrier will force west bound traffic off the wide boulevard of Staveley Road in to Park Road (south) and Lawford Road which are quiet narrower residential streets. At the southern end of Park Road diverted traffic will be forced to join Burlington Lane at the point where pupils and commuters cross the road to and from the railway station and heavily used bus stops. This increases the danger to pedestrians and cyclists.

In order to fit the new barrier into the space available two existing pedestrian refuges or traffic islands will have to be removed from Staveley Road. These pedestrian refuges are important safety features for pedestrians walking north and south on Park Road.

It is bizarre that a measure whose objectives include making the road safer for pedestrians will require the removal of hard infrastructure designed to protect pedestrians. Unless additional traffic calming measures are installed it is unlikely that the barrier will make either Staveley or Park Road safer for anyone.

Officers were unable to provide us with any comfort that proper financial provision has been made to reconstruct the pedestrian refuges if the diagonal road barrier proves to be ineffective or unnecessary and needs to be removed.

Despite requests from Ward Councillors the Council have not funded anti-speeding campaigns by the police on Staveley Road. When traffic speeds are periodically monitored it is reported the 20mph speed limit is observed by relatively few motorists. There is no guarantee that the barrier will keep vehicle speeds below 20 mph.

### **Harvard Hill – Trial Northbound Road Closure**

The objective of blocking access to the A4 is to prevent rat-running. There is a particular problem when commercial vehicles use these narrow residential streets as a short cut to the A4. One in every fifty vehicles accessing the A4 from Harvard Hill in November 2019 was a commercial vehicle.

However, if the measures described in sections above are effective, why is the blocking of access to the A4 from Harvard Hill necessary (i.e. the closure of the Hartington Road northbound access, the Staveley Road school street and the Staveley Road / Park Road – diagonal road barrier)? Once again, the Council has provided no explanation as to why the measure is required nor why it must be in place 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Residents of Hartington Road and surrounding streets and residents of Thames Road and Strand on the Green ARE allowed unrestricted vehicle access to and from the area that they live in. But residents of the streets around Harvard Hill have to make a long detour. This is grossly inequitable. No explanation is provided as to why these residents should be disadvantaged in such a specific way.

Residents are forced to make a detour via Fauconberg Road or Elmwood Road to reach Sutton Court Road and the A4. This adds to journey times, increases air pollution and makes walking and cycling less safe by increasing traffic volumes on residential streets. This is simply unnecessary. Fauconberg Road is a heavily used walking route to and from Grove Park School. An additional pedestrian crossing is even being considered. Why add to more local traffic to this road?

The permanent barrier preventing access from Harvard Hill is easily driven round and many drivers have been observed doing just that. This poor design puts themselves, other motorists, cyclists and pedestrians at risk of serious injury (photographs available). A mobile camera has been installed at Harvard Hill to deter aberrant behaviour by motorists. A permanent camera could be linked to ANPR software just as the cameras on Hartington Road, Thames Road and the School Streets will be. Residents local to Harvard Hill could register their vehicles on a white list (like the residents of Hartington Road and surrounding streets) and then be allowed unfettered access to the A4.

### **School Street Trials**

We welcome the introduction of these long overdue trial schemes. They will make walking and cycling to school safer with minimal adverse impact on residents. The Head Teachers and School Governors have been consulted and are in broad agreement with what is proposed. A watchful eye will need to be kept however on how the changes affect driving habits. It may in the light of experience be necessary, for example, to expand the boundaries and/or operational times of some school streets.

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