

PETITION REQUESTING THE REMOVAL OF GRANITE BLOCK SAFETY HAZARDS IN RYEFIELD AVENUE

Cabinet Member(s)	Cllr Keith Burrows
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Planning, Transportation & Recycling
Officer Contact(s)	Caroline Haywood Residents Services
Papers with report	Appendix A: Ryefield Avenue, Hillingdon - Area Plan

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Member that a petition has been received from residents of various roads within the Oak Farm Estate requesting the removal of the granite block safety hazards.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	The request can be considered as part of the Council's annual programme of road safety initiatives.
Financial Cost	There are none associated with this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents' & Environmental Services.
Ward(s) affected	Hillingdon East

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member:

- 1. Considers the petitioners' request and discusses with them in detail their concerns regarding the traffic calming measures;**
- 2. Notes the receipt and consideration of a largely identical petition, which was heard by him, together with the various actions which followed that hearing;**
- 3. Notes the reduction of accident levels and traffic speeds since the scheme was introduced;**
- 4. Subject to the concerns raised by petitioners, asks officers to conduct a review of the street furniture in Ryefield Avenue under the Road Safety Programme.**

Reasons for recommendation

To allow the Cabinet Member to discuss in detail matters raised above with petitioners.

Alternative options considered / risk management

These can be identified from the proposed detailed discussions with the petitioners.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

1. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

1. The Council has received a petition containing 113 signatures asking for the removal of "the granite block safety hazards from the full length of Ryefield Avenue".
2. The petition was signed by 31 households of Ryefield Avenue and 69 properties in other nearby roads. A local Ward Councillor has also signed the petition indicating support of the petition.
3. Ryefield Avenue is within Hillingdon East Ward and is mainly residential with a small parade of shops and school at one end of the road. The carriageway in Ryefield Avenue is approximately 7 metres wide with approximately 3.8 metre wide footway either side. Vehicles are currently allowed to park with four wheels up on the footway. Ryefield Avenue connects the majority of roads within the estate with Long Lane; a plan of the area is shown on Appendix A.
4. The Council previously received and considered a largely identical petition in August 2010 requesting the removal of the granite set over-runnable areas, which was heard by The Cabinet Member for Planning, Transportation and Recycling. The outcome of the petition hearing included an instruction from the Cabinet Member to officers to review the traffic calming measures, including their construction and condition.
5. Officers from the Council's Streetscene Maintenance section undertook a review of the condition of the over-runnable areas within the scheme in 2011 and actioned appropriate permanent repairs. Detailed investigations of the structure and state of these features were undertaken and no further changes were deemed necessary at the time.
6. In the letter attached to the present petition, the petitioners cite the same reasons previously mentioned as to why they feel that the over-runnable areas should be removed which are:
 - i. *'There is so much street clutter along Ryefield Avenue that it distracts drivers to a dangerous extent;'*
 - ii. *'The 8 granite setts are extremely dangerous hazards in the roadway when covered in snow.'*
 - iii. *'When vehicles are parked opposite the 8 granite setts, drivers have to play "chicken" with oncoming vehicles;'*
 - iv. *'The 8 granite setts often come apart leaving the roadway dangerous, and need constant repairs that are costing our council taxpayers a lot of money;'*
 - v. *'The granite setts cause bad drainage which can makes the roadway slippery and are especially dangerous for cyclists.'*

7. In response to each of these comments, officers make the following observations:

(i) The amount of street furniture in Ryefield Avenue is comparable to other similar roads in the Borough. However, the petitioners have attached a detailed log of all the street furniture and traffic calming measures in Ryefield Avenue and therefore it would be sensible to review the area and if appropriate, to remove any redundant street furniture.

(ii) All drivers should proceed with extreme caution when the roads are covered in snow as in such conditions, any feature such as kerbs, manhole covers, gullies, carriageway markings and road markings are similarly invisible. This is a view that is shared by the Metropolitan Police, whose views were specifically sought on the scheme following receipt of the first petition in 2010.

(iii) The design of the chicanes is deliberately intended to slow traffic. This design has been used in many other sites throughout the United Kingdom and has generally found to have been effective in reducing speeds. The slopes of the over-runnable areas are moderate and well within national design guidelines. They have been designed to provide 3m wide running lanes in each direction. If vehicles are parked on one side of the road there is adequate carriageway width to maintain two-way traffic.

(iv) Since January 2011 there have been limited repairs at minimal cost to the Council. Over the preceding period from 2006 onwards, a total of £250 was spent. In some cases temporary repairs have been undertaken which, whilst unsightly, are suitable to ensure the site has been made safe.

(v) The drainage arrangements have been reviewed and the Council is not aware of any reports to the Council of flooding since the scheme was installed except in exceptionally bad weather conditions. There has been no problem observed relating to the existing drainage arrangement.

Accident Data

8. The table below shows the reduction in the number of accidents before and after the scheme was installed. The data is for all Police reported personal injury accidents in the preceding 36 months.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number of accidents</u>
End of August 2006	9
End of September 2010	6
End of March 2014	2

9. The two most recent accidents in Ryefield Avenue were at the roundabout with Windsor Avenue. The first accident involved a car who failed to give-way at the roundabout and was hit by another car. The other accident involved a car, who slowed down and then accelerated on to the roundabout colliding with a cyclist. Neither of these accidents can be attributed to the over-runnable areas.

Speed Surveys

10. Speed surveys undertaken before and after the scheme was installed showed there was a reduction in vehicle speeds in Ryefield Avenue. Northbound there was a 18% reduction and a 23% reduction southbound.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Northbound - 85% speed</u>	<u>Southbound - 85% speed</u>
August 2006	34mph	35mph
August 2008	28mph	27mph

11. The Cabinet Member will be aware that the 85th percentile speed is the speed at or below which 85% of traffic is found to travel and is the standard statistical tool used by traffic engineers to assess speed trends overall.

12. The Cabinet Member will be mindful that the Council generally install 20mph speed limits with suitable physical traffic calming measures, as the guidelines state they should be self enforcing.

13. It is suggested therefore that the Cabinet Member discusses with the petitioners their specific road safety concerns and establish if any further actions are required and agrees to officers reviewing the street furniture in Ryefield Avenue.

Financial Implications

There are none associated with the recommendations to this report, as feasibility studies can be undertaken with in house resources. However, if the Cabinet Member subsequently considers the introduction of any additional measures suitable funding will need to be identified.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

The recommendations will identify the extent of the petitioners concerns and look at possible solutions to mitigate these.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

One Ward Councillor has signed the petition in support of the petitioners.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate finance has reviewed this report and concurs that the cost of an in-house feasibility study can be contained within existing Council resources and that additional funding would need to be identified if any changes to the current traffic calming measures were required

Legal

There are no special legal implications for the proposal to discuss with petitioners their concerns regarding the traffic calming measures, which amounts to an informal consultation. A meeting with the petitioners is perfectly legitimate as part of a listening exercise, especially where consideration of the policy, factual and engineering issues are still at a

formative stage. Fairness and natural justice requires that there must be no predetermination of a decision in advance of any wider non-statutory consultation, including the outcome of the previous 'largely identical petition in August 2010.'

In considering any informal consultation responses, decision makers must ensure there is a full consideration of all representations arising including those which do not accord with the officer's recommendation. The decision maker must be satisfied that responses from the public are conscientiously taken into account.

Should there be a decision that further measures are to be considered then the relevant statutory provisions will have to be identified and considered.

Corporate Property and Construction

There are no property implications resulting from the recommendations set out in this report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Petition received: May 2014
- Accstats – Accident database
- Petition report: 2010