

SWAN ROAD, WEST DRAYTON - PETITION REQUESTING TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES AND PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Keith Burrows
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Planning, Transportation and Recycling
Officer Contact(s)	David Knowles/ Steve Austin, Residents Services Directorate
Papers with report	Appendix A

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Member that the Council has received a further petition from Swan Road, asking for traffic calming and pedestrian crossings.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	The request can be considered in relation to the Council's strategy for road safety and on-street parking controls.
Financial Cost	There are none associated with the recommendations to this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents' and Environmental Services.
Ward(s) affected	West Drayton

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member:

- 1. Meets and discusses with petitioners their request for traffic calming and enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities in Swan Road, West Drayton;**
- 2. Notes that he heard a previous petition, from the same lead petitioner, seeking a 20mph Zone, as recently as March 2015;**
- 3. Notes that the Council has to date commissioned four separate sets of independent traffic surveys in Swan Road, undertaken in November 2008, July 2011, January 2014 and July 2014, the results of which are set out in this report and none of which in themselves have supported a case for traffic calming;**

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4. Seeks clarity from the lead petitioner on his specific requests and the extent to which other petitioners were involved in the consideration of this level of detail;
5. Subject to (4), considers whether further detailed studies are justified on the basis of any fresh evidence which the petitioners are able to provide;
6. Subject to (3) and (5), considers whether further traffic surveys may be justified, at locations to be agreed with petitioners and Ward Members;
7. Subject to (5), asks officers to review the situation in Swan Road with London Buses and TfL as part of any ongoing investigation;
8. Invites Ward Members to encourage relevant local schools to work with the Council's School Travel and Road Safety Team to formulate their School Travel Plans and establish a case, if any, for further measures in Swan Road as part of this;
9. In light of the ongoing claims that there are incidents of vehicles speeding, albeit despite the lack of independent traffic survey evidence to support this, considers asking officers to specifically raise Swan Road with the Metropolitan Police and other emergency services at the next available liaison meeting with them, seeking their own monitoring and enforcement at his specific request, and furthermore to seek a report back via officers for his consideration along with his Ward Member colleagues.

Reasons for recommendation

The petition hearing will provide a valuable opportunity to hear directly from the petitioners of their concerns and suggestions.

Alternative options considered / risk management

None at this stage.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

1. A petition of 199 signatures has been submitted to the Council from residents concerning Swan Road asking for the introduction of traffic calming measures and the creation of new pedestrian crossings.
2. Swan Road is a mainly residential road close to West Drayton Town Centre with its shops and local amenities. The location of Swan Road is indicated on the plan attached as Appendix A.

3. The Cabinet Member will be aware that a previous petition, led by the same lead petitioner, was heard by him in March 2015, the petition hearing having been deferred from February at the lead petitioner's request. The Cabinet Member will recall that the lead petitioner did not attend the meeting in March, although he will recall that he heard from local Ward Members.

4. The present petition was subsequently submitted by the lead petitioner and although it is set out with a greater level of detail, with a helpful list of key issues, it may be noted that the petition is again seeking action in Swan Road, West Drayton, where previous investigations, including a series of traffic surveys, have so far failed to support the case for significant intervention.

5. The petition has been signed by 43 residents who stated an address in Swan Road. Other signatories have given addresses from a much wider area and whilst some failed to identify their precise address, post codes from some petitioners indicated a number from the West Drayton, Yiewsley and Uxbridge area.

6. It is not the usual practice for the Council to consider repeat petitions on broadly the same subject after such a short intervening period, but the Cabinet Member will recall that in discussion with officers and his colleagues, he concluded that if fresh evidence and a stronger case could be made, with more specific detail in terms of the measures being sought, in particular if the Cabinet Member could hear the testimony of the lead petitioner as well as the Ward Members, then it would be reasonable to hear the petition after a suitable gap.

7. In an accompanying statement to the recent petition, the lead petitioner suggests the problems are as follows:

"We are submitting a petition for Swan Road to receive traffic calming measures and pedestrian crossings. We are suggesting three speed tables and two pedestrian crossings (at the Baptist Church and at the shops/ bus stops). We are doing this because we would like the council to be aware of what residents are experiencing on a daily basis and take action before there are any more accidents or incidents on the road.

Some of residents' concerns which have led to this petition are:

- 1. Excessive speed outside peak hours and no place to cross safely;*
- 2. High noise level from speeding vehicles;*
- 3. Vibration of windows in residents' houses due to speeding vehicles;*
- 4. Increasing volume of traffic particularly during last two years;*
- 5. Curving nature of road creates accident risk areas;*
- 6. Driver demography. Many vans, commercial vehicles and skip lorries going to*

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The Common, Donkey Lane or Iver whose drivers disregard speed limits;

7. Downhill gradient of road from Station Road to Swains Close causing increase in speed as cars turn off Station Road;

8. Poor state of road doesn't slow traffic;

9. Mixed development urban road with chapel (no crossing point to this), shops on both sides of the road, route to school (St Catherine's), new supported living units, Southlands etc where safe use of road and crossing points needed;

10. Daily incidents of scratched cars, broken wing mirrors, near misses and road rage confirmed by residents and councillors. These are not recorded but are observed and known by local people;

11. Accidents caused by vehicles speeding and not giving way so there is ability to speed which is residents concern. (see photos of recent accident caused by speeding vehicles leading to head on collision with bus);

12. Varying width of road, inconsistency of parking and bend all contribute to accident risk factors on the road."

8. Also included with the main petition were letters of support from the local Member of Parliament, John McDonnell, Swan Road Church, Cllr Jan Sweeting, and a number of local businesses. In his letter, Mr McDonnell stated:

'I am writing to add my support to the petition signed and supported by local residents, local businesses and local community organisations calling for action by the council to introduce a crossing and traffic calming measures on Swan Road. I know just how busy with traffic this road is and the risks this poses to pedestrians, cyclists and other car users. I am especially worried about the risk to children from the nearby St Catherine's school. I fully support the proposals called for in the petition and urge the council to take swift action to prevent any further risk to the safety of local residents'.

9. The letter of support from Swan Road Church stated:

'As Minister of the Baptist Church on Swan Road I support the petition for a 20 miles per hour speed limit on the road past the church building. In recent years we have witnessed increasing volumes of traffic past the church, and several serious accidents, which can only be expected to reoccur unless a change is made. The proposed increased density of residential accommodation in the area can only be expected to exacerbate the situation'.

10. It would appear that this letter may perhaps be referring more explicitly to the previous report by the lead petitioner, which specifically sought a 20mph Zone. The other letters of support follow broadly the same theme; i.e. seeking a reduction in the speed limit. Nevertheless,

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the Cabinet Member will wish to note that the petition has received support from a variety of local institutions.

11. Subsequent to receipt of the petition, a statement was issued by Cllr Janet Duncan as follows:

'Residents and businesses in Swan Road, West Drayton have submitted today a petition for traffic calming measures and a pedestrian crossing to be installed in Swan Road and I am writing in full support of such, safety measures being taken in the road. I understand that customers of the shops in Swan Road have also supported the petition as well as local school children, who have been encouraged by the Council's road safety initiative for school children, to make their voice heard also. I have heard from both parents and grandparents who walk their children to St Catherine's School that they would like some safety measures installed in Swan Road having witnessed near misses and hazardous road behaviour by some users on several occasions. I do hope that something can be done in the area particularly as there is a programme to install 20mph zones near schools which is to be applauded although St Catherine's is not included in this programme it appears to date. There is also a parking problem which exacerbates traffic concerns in some areas. Old Farm Road for example experiences commuter and holiday parking, I have been told, to the extent that residents have great difficulty on occasions in parking in their own road'.

12. Mr McDonnells' and Cllr Duncan's reference to St Catherine's School is noted and the Cabinet Member will be aware that the Council seeks close co-operation with all schools in the Borough, to help them develop School Travel Plans ('STPs'). As the Cabinet Member and local Ward Members will also be aware, the STP can be used to support the case for road safety and other measures outside the school grounds, and facilitate financial support for such measures in the form of grants received from Transport for London.

13. Officers have looked at the previous feedback from the school and note that whilst there have been other road safety concerns raised, Swan Road does not appear to have been specifically referred to. The Cabinet Member may remember that in recent years a new Zebra Crossing was created near The Green and indeed there is now a School Crossing Patrol in regular attendance there.

14. St Catherine's School is currently in the early stages of writing their STP, with the offer of Council officer support, but the Cabinet Member may wish to encourage his Ward Member colleagues to assist in encouraging the school to accelerate this important dialogue.

Previous work including surveys

15. As a result of past petitions and in order to promptly address residents' concerns, the Cabinet Member will recall that he approved the introduction of a new 'SLOW' marking in Swan Road, at a location agreed with the lead petitioner and furthermore instructed officers to commission an independent speed and traffic survey at three locations in Swan Road.

16. In accordance with the Council's normal practice, these surveys were undertaken by an independent specialist third-party company, the results therefore being not only accurate and comprehensive but totally impartial. The survey data was captured using Automatic Traffic Counters (ATCs) which, as the Cabinet Member will know, are pairs of rubber tubes laid across the carriageway and attached to a road-side data recorder. These types of surveys are the most reliable means of measuring traffic volumes, types and speeds over a 24-hour, seven day a week basis so any particular patters during different times of the day or week.

17. The most recent survey was undertaken between 19th January and 25th January 2014. The 85th percentile was found to be 28mph northbound and 26 mph southbound at location one, 28mph northbound and 27mph southbound at location two and 29mph northbound and 27mph southbound at location three.

18. As the Cabinet Member will be aware, the 85th percentile is the speed at or below 85% of all vehicles are observed to travel. This is a nationally recognised method of assessing traffic speeds as it effectively refers to the majority of traffic movements. It is worth noting that a similar survey was undertaken in Swan Road in November 2008 and at the time the 85th percentile was found to be 29mph in both directions.

19. However, the Cabinet Member will recall that officers felt that the data captured for vehicle classification on the survey appeared to show some discrepancies and so in order to ensure that residents' concerns were properly investigated, and that the data available was of the best quality, the surveys were undertaken again at the same locations on Swan Road over a seven-day period from 7th to 14th July 2014.

20. The results of the second 24/7 speed and traffic survey were, however, very similar to those recorded in January. The July results showed the 85th percentile at location one was 27mph northbound and 26mph southbound, at location two it was 28mph in both directions and at location three it was also 28mph in both directions.

21. During a similar survey in November 2008, the 85th percentile was found to be 29mph in both directions. Additionally a manual speed survey was undertaken using a hand held device in July 2011 and again the 85th percentile was recorded as 28mph in one direction and 27mph in the other.

Accident history

22. In a separate meeting with the lead petitioner, local residents, the three local Ward Councillors and officers, residents cited a number of accidents in Swan Road including two fatalities in a single accident, a recent head on collision with a bus at the same location and a further two accidents in Swan Road. The lead petitioner in various emails to the Council suggests that the Council have ignored all of this police evidence. The Cabinet Member will note that these accidents have been cited in the evidence supporting the present petition (e.g. see petitioners' "point 11" cited above).

23. As the Cabinet Member is aware, officers rely upon the Police recorded collision data and it is always considered in context. In the regrettable circumstances where a collision results in a

fatality the Council will meet Metropolitan Police Traffic Officers on-site to look into the circumstances so the Council always carefully considers police evidence. The collision that the lead petitioner refers to where there were two fatalities took place on April 2005. The police concluded that in this incident *"this is a busy link road with few other injury accidents on record. The main cause of this accident was the behaviour of the Renault and VW Golf drivers who are unlikely to be influenced by any engineering measures"*. The report also hinted the driver being intoxicated was a contributory factor.

24. The two further incidents mentioned above were at the Station Road junction. One involved a 16-year old moped driver "undertaking" a car queuing to turn out of Swan Road and in the process he collided head-on with a car turning into Swan Road. Injuries were recorded as slight. The second incident of which the Council has details involved a motorcyclist who collided with a car in the process of turning right at the junction.

25. Again, the injury was recorded by the police as "slight". In the case of the collision involving a bus, two drivers were found to be driving without due care and attention. This incident is part of an on-going police investigation but their initial view is that this was entirely down to the inappropriate and dangerous driving of those involved.

26. More recently, there was a further incident which has prompted e-mails from a concerned local business, making specific reference to the Church Road/ Swan Road junction. Included with this feedback was a view that *'the problem [is] not due to speed but to the position of the bus stop, the parking at the top of Swan Road, and the ever increasing population round this particular area with all the new developments that are going up'*.

27. Whilst this detail was not a specific part of the petition, the Cabinet Member will note that issues associated with buses have featured more than once in recent dialogue and so, should he feel further investigations are justified, they should involve dialogue with London Buses and TfL and report back to him on the views of these third parties.

The detail of the present petition

28. It is appreciated that the petitioners, having previously asked for the creation of a 20mph Zone, have now asked for more specific measures in Swan Road.

29. However, it should be noted that the signatory sheet which has been signed by the 199 petitioners only states:

'we the undersigned petition the Council to install traffic calming measures and pedestrian crossings in Swan Road for the safety of all users and residents'.

30. It is not clear, therefore, if the lead petitioner has sought detail from his fellow petitioners on his own ideas for traffic calming and pedestrian crossings when seeking their support, or has canvassed more generally on the slightly wider road safety line quoted directly above.

31. For this reason the Cabinet Member may wish to seek clarification from the lead petitioner on the extent of the dialogue he has had with his fellow residents and local Ward Members prior

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to gaining the signatures of support. This can be discussed with the petitioners when they present their petition to the Cabinet Member and will be helpful to guide the Cabinet Member when making his decision.

32. In conclusion, the Cabinet Member will be aware that there have been several externally commissioned surveys into the traffic speed and volume in Swan Road over a number of years, and none of these in themselves supported a case for traffic calming changes in Swan Road. However, in light of the testimony which petitioners may be able to bring forward for his consideration, it is recommended that he meets with petitioners and seeks further detail on the extent of their concerns and suggestions.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations to this report. If works are subsequently required, suitable funding will need to be identified within the parking programme.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

To allow the Cabinet Member an opportunity to discuss in detail with petitioners their concerns

Consultation Carried Out or Required

None at this stage.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

No financial implications at this stage.

Legal

There are no special legal implications with the Cabinet Member to meet and discuss with petitioners their request for traffic calming and enhanced pedestrian crossing facilities in Swan Road, West Drayton and to consider recommendations 5-7 above.

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.

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

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. If specific advice is required Legal Services should be consulted.

Corporate Property and Construction

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

Relevant Service Groups

None at this stage

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.