

PETITION REQUESTING TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES FOR LADYGATE LANE AND WHITEHEATH AVENUE, RUISLIP

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

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Member that the Council has received a petition concerned with road safety on Ladygate Lane and Whiteheath Avenue, Ruislip
Contribution to our plans and strategies	The request can be considered in relation to the Council's strategy for on-street parking controls and road safety.
Financial Cost	Subject to the outcome of discussions with petitioners the Cabinet Member may be minded to commission speed and traffic surveys. The current cost of these is in the region of £85 per location and can be funded from within existing revenue budgets for the Transportation service.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents, Education and Environmental Services.
Ward(s) affected	West Ruislip

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Meeting with the Petitioners, the Cabinet Member:

- 1. Listens to their concerns over road safety and parking on Ladygate Lane and Whiteheath Avenue, Ruislip;**
- 2. Notes the previous petition submitted by residents of Whiteheath Avenue, Ruislip and works already undertaken;**
- 3. Subject to the outcome of the above, asks officers to investigate possible options to mitigate the concerns raised by petitioners and then to report back to the Cabinet Member;**

4. Considers whether, in light of the petitioners' testimony, to instruct officers to commission independent 24/7 traffic speed and volume surveys at locations to be agreed with the petitioners and Ward Members;

5. Instructs officers from the Council's Road Safety and School Travel Team to build on the excellent work with the Junior School and continue to seek engagement by the Infant School.

Reasons for recommendations

To allow the Cabinet Member to discuss with petitioners their concerns and if appropriate add their request to the parking scheme and road safety programme.

Alternative options considered / risk management

These will be discussed with petitioners.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

1. A petition with 197 valid signatures has been submitted to the Council signed under the following heading:

" Traffic calming measures/ Road safety, Ladygate Lane and Whiteheath Avenue. Road changed from 30 to 20 mph. Install a speed monitor Install an additional Zebra Crossing on Whiteheath Avenue/Ladygate Lane. One side parking between set times on Ladygate Lane. Ladygate Lane zigzag covered by CCTV and fines issued. One way system on Whiteheath Avenue - exit via Grassmere. Widen pathway Bowls Club to allow parking at drop off and pick up times."

2. Whiteheath Avenue and Ladygate Lane are mainly residential roads within easy walking distance of Ruislip Town Centre and various other local amenities. A location plan is attached as Appendix A. The entrance to Whiteheath Junior School is located on Whiteheath Avenue, while the nearby entrance to the Infant School is located on Ladygate Lane. Ladygate Lane forms part of the 331 bus route which runs between Ruislip and Uxbridge and travels through Northwood and Harefield en route.

3. Of the 197 signatures on the petition, just ten are from residents who live on Ladygate Lane, these respondents representing seven households, while two residents of different addresses in Whiteheath Avenue also signed the petition. It is, therefore, likely that the remaining signatures are parents or guardians of pupils who attend one of the two schools and, therefore, may not necessarily reflect the views of people who live in the roads near the two schools.

4. The Cabinet Member will recall previously considering a petition submitted by residents of Whiteheath Avenue who had two main areas of concern;

- i) *Teachers parking in the road (Whiteheath Avenue) all day opposite the school gate rather than in the school car park thus reducing the space available for parents to stop.*
- ii) *Parents turning their vehicles around in the road after collecting or dropping their children rather than continuing around the block.*

Unlike most other roads adjacent to schools in the borough, Whiteheath does not have any traffic calming measures."

5. The latest petition mentions the possibility of a one-way system with an exit via Grasmere Avenue which it suggests could be done on a voluntary basis, although the direction is not defined. Grasmere Avenue connects to Fairfield Avenue and from there to Glenfield Crescent. The latter joins to Ladygate Lane and there is as a consequence an informal 'loop' of school-related traffic serving Whiteheath Junior School as drivers follow either a clockwise or anti-clockwise route when picking up or dropping off at the school entrance in Whiteheath Avenue. It should be noted that none of the residents of those other roads have signed the petition, but clearly their views would be important to secure any support.

6. The Cabinet Member will be aware that another school, Bishop Winnington-Ingram (BWI) is situated just to the south, on the opposite side of the tributary of the River Pinn which runs across the lowest point of Grasmere Avenue, which ends with a pedestrian footbridge over the river. As a consequence of the lack of road crossings over the Pinn, other than this footbridge and the road bridge in Bury Street, there is a tendency for staff and parents bringing children to BWI to park in Grasmere Avenue and Fairfield Avenue at peak school times, which demonstrates that school travel patterns in this local road network are slightly more complex than just that associated with the two Whiteheath Schools.

7. Officers from the Council's Road Safety and School Travel Team are working closely with Whiteheath Junior School and have been informed that they are encouraging parents to embrace the concepts of an informal one-way working arrangement and are adopting the Parents' Parking Pledge. However, the distance from the Junior School entrance to Ladygate Lane when following the suggested route is approximately 800 metres while the distance from the school gates to the junction when travelling along Whiteheath Avenue is around 80 metres.

8. The Council has had previous discussions with local residents over the possibility of formalising a one-way system operating 24/7, which is the only option when implementing this type of moving traffic restriction. The general opinion is that this type of restriction would be too prescriptive for a problem that is only acute for a relatively short period of time at school pick-up and set-down times.

9. Anecdotal evidence shows that traffic levels in these residential roads are generally low, and apart from the inconvenience to a large number of residents in roads which did not form part of the petition submission, the Cabinet Member will know that the introduction of one-way working on a formal basis can easily result in unintended consequences such as higher traffic speeds, as drivers know that in such circumstances, they will not face any other traffic coming towards them. As already noted, the aspect of parking and school related travel associated with BWI adds to the complexity of this. It is, therefore, unlikely that a formal one-way scheme would be progressed at the current time.

10. The Council's Road Safety and School Travel Team will continue to offer support to the Junior School who have achieved Silver Accreditation through Transport for London's STARS programme, which is an excellent achievement. The school has booked pedestrian training for every pupil in 2019 and in the meantime has already completed Bikeability training for Year Six pupils. The school has also appointed 'Junior Road Safety Officers' (from Year 5 or 6) and plans to attend the Council's Junior Road Safety Officer event at which they have the opportunity to bid for funding to implement road safety initiatives in the school, which can include scooter or cycle storage as well as campaigns.

11. At the present time the Infant School has not taken up the opportunity to work with the Road Safety and School Travel Team on their School Travel Plan and other road safety initiatives but have booked pedestrian training for all the school children.

12. Petitioners have suggested that the current speed limit of 30mph in Ladygate Lane and Whiteheath Avenue be reduced to 20mph and that further traffic calming measures are implemented. As the Cabinet Member will be aware, Ladygate Lane already benefits from two raised junctions, a resided table and a raised zebra crossing close to the entrance to the Infant School. The Cabinet Member may also recall that 'before and after' traffic speed surveys were undertaken (prior to the present scheme, in 2016, and then again afterwards). For convenient reference the outcome of those surveys (together with some useful data from an earlier 2014 survey) are shown in the table below:

TRAFFIC SURVEY DATA FOR LADYGATE LANE – COMPARISONS OF 85TH PERCENTILE SPEEDS BEFORE AND AFTER TRAFFIC CALMING					
Location	Direction of Travel	May 2014	January 2016	September 2019	Reduction from 2016 to 2019 as a Percentage
West of Whiteheath Avenue	<i>East bound</i>	36.9	35.3	30.8	13
	<i>West bound</i>	33.6	33.6	28.6	15
Westwood Close	<i>East bound</i>	n/a	31.3	28.7	8
	<i>West bound</i>	n/a	30.9	26.6	14

13. What this table indicates is a significant reduction in the speeds recorded of up to fifteen percent.

14. Police recorded collision data for Ladygate Lane and Whiteheath Avenue for the three years up to December 2018 indicated that there have been three police recorded collisions on Ladygate Lane in the three years to December 2018 (the latest data available). The first occurred in December 2016 when a driver lost control of their vehicle in bad weather conditions. The second occurred in September 2017 when a cyclist was in collision with a motor vehicle but no information on how the incident occurred is available. The latest crash took place in May 2018 where the information available suggests that a car drove into the rear of another car.

15. As mentioned previously within this report, a petition from residents of Whiteheath Avenue was submitted previously and they also mentioned in their submission that Whiteheath Avenue does not benefit from any traffic calming measures or a 20mph speed limit. While this is true, these measures on their own are unlikely to resolve residents' road safety concerns of drivers undertaking dangerous manoeuvres within the road.

16. As the Cabinet Member will be aware, the problem of traffic congestion around schools is unfortunately common across the Borough. Notwithstanding this, and dependent upon the

petitioners' testimony, the Cabinet Member may wish to consider the possibility of a series of independent traffic surveys in locations to be agreed with the petitioners and their Ward Members.

17. Although congestion around schools is unfortunately a common occurrence across Hillingdon and London in general, the Cabinet Member previously agreed to commission a further series of independent traffic surveys in Whiteheath Avenue (as opposed to Ladygate Lane) at locations agreed with residents and Ward Councillors. Below are the results of those further surveys:

Location/ Direction of Travel	Total Vehicles	30- 35 MPH	35-40 MPH	40- 45 MPH	45-50 MPH	50-55 MPH	55-60 MPH	60-100 MPH	85th% speed - mph
<u>Whiteheath Avenue</u>									
<u>South of Ladygate Lane</u>									
<i>Northbound</i>	2,574	151	22	6	0	0	1	0	28
<i>Southbound</i>	3,187	111	17	3	1	0	1	0	26
<u>Whiteheath Avenue</u>									
<u>South of Grasmere Avenue</u>									
<i>Northbound</i>	923	11	5	1	0	0	0	0	24
<i>Southbound</i>	933	14	6	1	0	0	0	0	24
<u>Grasmere Avenue</u>									
<u>South of Whiteheath Avenue</u>									
<i>Eastbound</i>	1,565	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	24
<i>Westbound</i>	951	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	23

18. As the Cabinet Member will be aware, the so-called '85th Percentile Speed' is a statistical tool used by traffic and road safety professionals throughout the UK and represents a speed 'at or below which 85 percent of vehicles were recorded'. In simple terms, it represents the 'majority' of traffic and is often somewhat higher than the more familiar 'average' speed. The 85th percentile speeds recorded in Whiteheath Avenue and Grasmere Avenue were somewhat lower than the posted speed limit of 30mph and on the basis of extensive experience are considered entirely typical and normal for such residential roads.

19. 20 mph zones and speed limits are becoming increasingly common. '20 mph Zones' usually require traffic calming measures and appropriate signs and road markings in order to make them largely self-enforcing. '20mph speed limits' on the other hand do not necessarily require physical measures but do require terminal and repeater signs; however, the effectiveness of a 20mph limit which relies solely upon signage and which is seldom enforced may be open to debate.

20. When assessing requests for 20mph zones or speed limits, the Council needs to consider the advantages and disadvantages to the local community and the road network in general. The introduction of 20mph zones can encourage more sustainable and healthy modes of transport modes including walking and cycling. Some commentators argue that reducing vehicle speeds to a slower steady pace can reduce pollution while other studies indicate the opposite.

21. The challenge for the Council is to weigh up the advantages of these types of scheme where pedestrian and pedal cycle movements are a significant consideration over the disadvantages of possible longer journey times for motorised traffic.
22. The petitioners have made reference to the installation of a 'speed monitor' but with respect it is not entirely clear what is meant by this. The outcome of the petition hearing may, potentially, include the commissioning of fresh traffic surveys on a '24/7' basis over a week-long period, but these do not comprise a permanent monitoring presence.
23. If the petitioners are thinking of a 'Safety Camera' then, as the Cabinet Member will know, these are neither installed nor operated by the Council but are the joint responsibility of TfL, The Metropolitan Police, Her Majesty's Courts and the body called 'London Councils' which represents the interests of all 33 London Local Authorities (including Hillingdon). This is because any prosecutions for speeding offences remain a matter for the Police, and furthermore, there are particular road safety criteria to be met before such a camera may be considered (fortunately none of these roads fall within those severe criteria).
24. Another request put forward by petitioners is to implement limited-time restricted parking on one side of Ladygate Lane. There are existing double yellow lines at all of the junctions of the roads off this section of Ladygate Lane. There is also an existing length of single yellow line operational Monday to Friday, 8-10am and 2.30-4.30pm opposite the Infant School between the zebra crossing and the start of the double yellow lines at the junction with Thames Drive. Although there are already extensive parking restrictions around the school, from officers' observations obstructive parking continues to be an issue.
25. Although not expressly referred to by the petitioners, the Cabinet Member will recall that the Council has recently consulted upon proposals to limit heavy goods vehicles using Ladygate Lane to more than 7.5 tonnes. This was in response to concerns, chiefly from local residents, at a pattern of increases in such vehicles using the road; partly it may be assumed in the wake of temporary closures of Breakspear Road South in connection with construction of the planned HS2 railway line, which will slice east-west across West Ruislip, Ickenham and Harefield. Petitioners, who may not be aware of this Council initiative, will it is hoped welcome the principle as it should lead to a reduction in the kind of traffic congestion they may often witness when a large HGV meets a bus, an opposing HGV and/ or school traffic.
26. The petitioners have also made reference to the existence of the Ladygate Lane Bowls Club and its substantial car park, with a narrow entrance on the opposite side of Ladygate Lane to the front of Whiteheath Infant School. The wording of the petition is '*widen pathway bowls club to allow parking at drop off and pick-up times*'. It is not entirely clear what is intended here, but a few salient points may be of assistance to petitioners and the Cabinet Member.
27. Firstly, the idea of utilising the car park at Ladygate Lane Bowls Club may at first seem attractive, but there are some clear obstacles to this, which include:
- The entrance gates are not wide enough to allow easy access and egress at the same time, which could lead to queuing inside the car park and on Ladygate Lane itself;
 - There would be security implications; someone would need to be responsible for managing the locking, opening, closing and locking of the gates;
 - There would need to be some marshalling by the school of children within the car park.

28. If on the other hand the petitioners are thinking of widening the carriageway, narrowing the footway or converting the footway in some way to allow parking on it, there could be serious road safety implications of creating an active drop-off and pick-up area right outside the school and so near to the Zebra Crossing. The Cabinet Member may wish to consider asking the petitioners to elaborate on their suggestions here.

29. Further requests made by petitioners are for '*...an additional Zebra Crossing on Whiteheath Avenue/ Ladygate Lane... Ladygate Lane Zig-Zag covered by CCTV and fines issued.*' The Cabinet Member will be aware that the existing yellow 'School Keep Clear' zig-zag markings are specifically designed to protect important access points for a school and are covered by a Traffic Regulation Order which facilitates enforcement by the Council's Civil Enforcement Contractor. Under a specific initiative by Hillingdon Council, the yellow zig-zag markings at over a hundred schools across the Borough are enforced by dedicated cameras, one of which is positioned in Whiteheath Avenue. Should further yellow zig-zag markings near these two schools be deemed viable and appropriate, then similar camera enforcement could be considered.

30. The petitioners need to know, however, that Zebra Crossings are covered by separate Primary Legislation which is enforced by the Metropolitan Police and therefore the Council does not have powers to install cameras of the kind used for the yellow 'School Keep Clear Zig-Zags' just described. This means therefore that cameras cannot be used to enforce the white zig-zag markings either side of Zebra Crossings; this is not something unique to Hillingdon but is the same throughout the United Kingdom.

31. With regard to the idea of a second Zebra Crossing, it will be important to understand where the petitioners feel that this would be needed, and at the same time for them to understand that the siting of any Zebra Crossing needs to be considered carefully in the context of:

- Proximity to a junction (the crossing cannot, for example, be located right on a road junction);
- The existence of residential driveways leading to off-street parking;
- The consequential displacement of parking into the adjacent side roads, something that residents there, who have already complained about school-related parking, may not support.

32. In view of the above, it is recommended that the Cabinet Member meets with the petitioners to seek clarification of their aspirations and practical ideas, and having heard from them, instructs officers to undertake a review of the effectiveness of the existing traffic calming and waiting restrictions on Ladygate Lane and to report back to him.

33. In addition, it is recommended that the Council's Road Safety and School Travel Team continue their excellent work with the Junior School and continue to try to engage with the Infant School, as it is clear from the existence of the petition itself that there is an aspiration from the parents and guardians for some action in terms of road safety, and it is absolutely imperative that the schools play their part and do not absolve themselves of any responsibility in a mistaken view that road safety is solely a matter for the Council in isolation.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendations to this report; however, if the Council were to recommend traffic management or parking restrictions then funding would need to be identified from a suitable source.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendations?

To allow the Cabinet Member to consider the petitioners' request and available options the Council has to address these concerns.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance note that there are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Legal

There are no special legal implications for the proposal to discuss with petitioners their request for traffic calming measures in Ladygate Lane, 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.

Irrespective of Councillor's support for the scheme, there must be no predetermination of a decision in advance of any wider non-statutory consultation if the process is to be fair and just.

In considering the residents' responses, decision makers must ensure there is 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 at that time.

Corporate Property and Construction

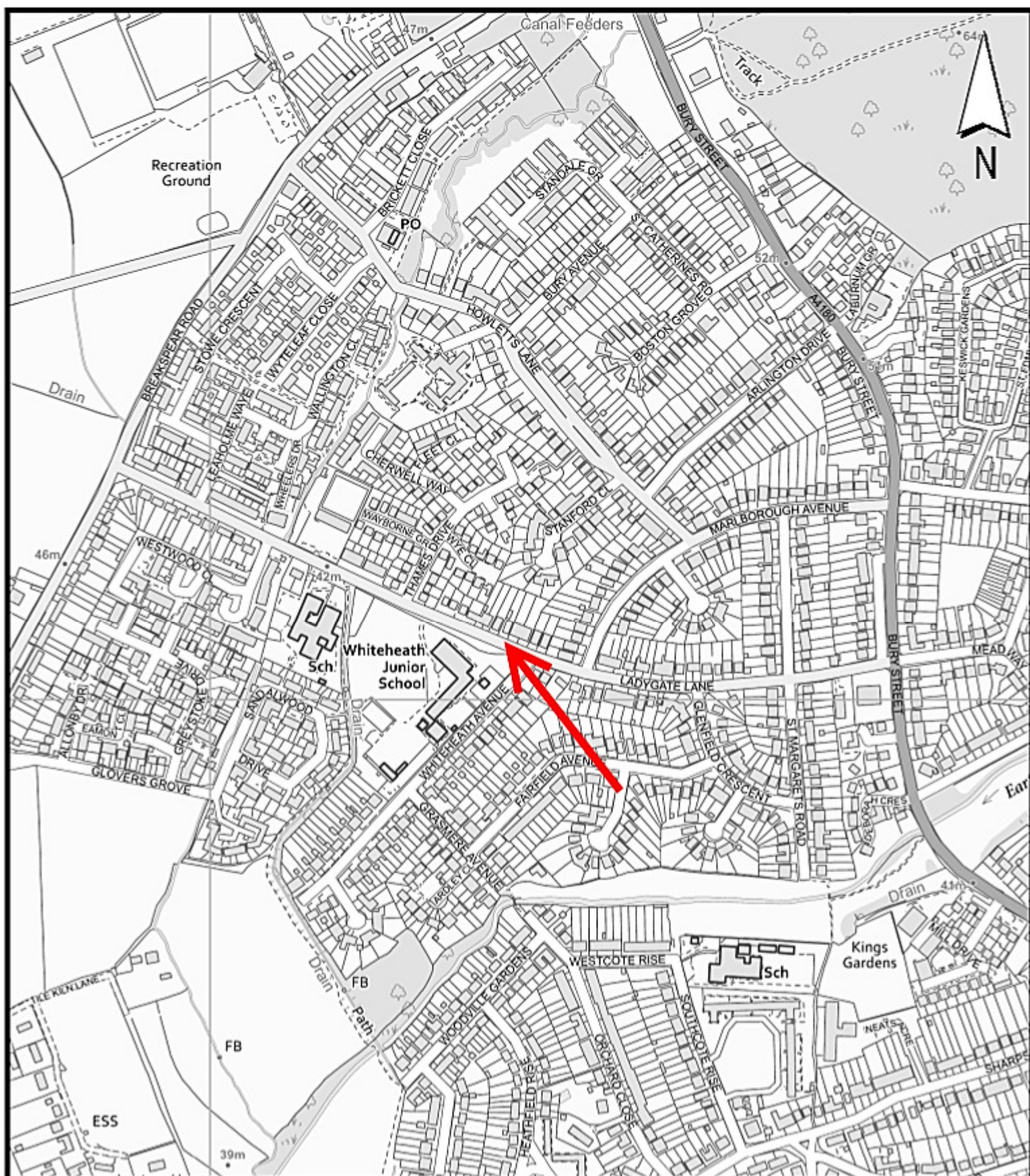
None at this stage.

Relevant Service Groups

None at this stage.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Petition received.



Ladygate Lane, Ruislip Location plan

Appendix A

December 2019

Scale 1:6,000