

## KINGSEND & B466, RUISLIP - VEHICLE SPEED, NOISE AND TRAFFIC ISSUES

<b>Cabinet Member(s)</b>	Councillor John Riley
<b>Cabinet Portfolio(s)</b>	Cabinet Member for Public Safety and Transport
<b>Officer Contact(s)</b>	Steven Austin Residents Services Directorate
<b>Papers with report</b>	Appendix A – Location plan

### HEADLINES

<b>Summary</b>	To inform the Cabinet Member that a petition has been received raising concerns over vehicle speeds, noise, and traffic issues on Kingsend and B466 (Ickenham Road) Ruislip.
<b>Putting our Residents First</b>	This report supports the Council objective of Our People. The outcome of the discussion with petitioners will be considered in relation to the Council's strategy for road safety.
<b>Financial Cost</b>	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.
<b>Relevant Select Committee</b>	Public Safety & Transport.
<b>Relevant Ward(s)</b>	West Ruislip.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member:

- 1. Meets and discusses with petitioners their on-going concerns with vehicle speeds, noise, and traffic on Kingsend and Ickenham Road (B466) and considers their suggestions;**
- 2. Notes the on-going discussion with London Councils on the effectiveness of the enforcement of the London Lorry Control Scheme (LLCS) in relation to the concerns**

raised over the increase in the volumes of large goods vehicles associated with on-going nearby infrastructure developments;

3. Asks officers to commission independent '24/7' vehicle speed and volume surveys, at locations agreed with the lead petitioner and Ward Members, the results of which will be reports to the Cabinet Member, local Ward Members, the emergency services and the lead petitioner; and
4. Notes that any traffic calming measures involving physical measures of changes to the road layout would be subject to both independent road safety audits and a consultation with all affected residents and stakeholders before implementation.

### Reasons for recommendation

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

### Alternative options considered / risk management

None at this stage.

### Select Committee comments

None at this stage.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. The Council has received a petition submitted by local residents signed under the following heading;

*"We the undersigned petition Hillingdon Council to seek changes to road layout and speed systems to reflect the high levels of usage as well as noise and pollution issues. We seek appropriate plans to improve traffic flow whilst given consideration to safety, noise and pollution which will continue to increase with HS2 and planned school developments locally."*

In addition to the above, the petitioners have helpfully added comments as to why they have brought the petition to the Cabinet Member for his consideration and possible suggestions which are;

*"The ultimate purpose is to address the following issues and seek sensible solutions, including a rethink of the junction close to the B466 junction which is high risk due to the multiple junctions that spur on to this point."*

*Points in relation to Kingsend*

- a) *Excessive speed of all types of vehicles from motorbikes to HGVs.*

- b) *High noise levels which accompany this speeding during the day and at unsociable hours*
- c) *Danger associated with the above for our elderly/ disabled/ vulnerable and indeed all residents in terms of being hit by vehicles on pavement or in the road.*
- d) *Distress to some”*

2. Kingsend and subsequently Ickenham Road (B466) is a major east-west route in Hillingdon that links Ruislip towards Ickenham and the A40 beyond. Ickenham Road is designated as a borough secondary distributor road and forms part of the U1 and U10 bus routes. Ickenham Road has a mixture of residential properties, local shops and amenities and West Ruislip Station. Kingsend is largely residential in nature but also provides easy access to Ruislip Town Centre and Underground Station. A location plan is attached as Appendix A to this report.

3. Within the petition residents have raised several issues and suggestions, so it may be useful to provide the Cabinet Member with some information and commentary on each point as submitted, to support the submission he will hear from the lead petitioner and ward councillors. Comment has also been included based on a further submission that the petitioners helpfully provided.

*“Excessive speeding, noise levels and the resulting road safety issues.*

4. The practical enforcement of speeding traffic remains, as it always has been, with colleagues in the Metropolitan Police. This is chiefly because speeding is an endorseable offence, with the potential for prosecution, prescribed penalties and points on a driver’s licence, or even disqualification, and it is important to appreciate that the Council does not have comparable enforcement powers, nor does it – contrary to a popular public belief – own, operate or maintain speed cameras (more properly known as ‘safety cameras’). The Police can and do often undertake targeted enforcement when they become aware of a specific area of concern, but obviously they will wish to prioritise their resources to where evidence is strongest. Survey data can be a valuable aid to the Police in this regard.

5. As the Cabinet Member will be aware, securing comprehensive traffic survey data is vitally important when establishing any case for intervention such as traffic calming or other road management; if he is minded to instruct officers to commission a series of independent traffic surveys these will provide an indication not only of the speeds of traffic passing through but also the times of day and the type and size of all the vehicles, thereby providing a clear picture of the proportion of larger HGVs and the times at which they are using Kingsend and Ickenham Road. Such data would as a matter of course be shared with the Metropolitan Police to allow them to consider if they feel enforcement activity may be beneficial.

*“Speed systems to reflect the high levels of usage as well as noise and pollution issues”*

6. As mentioned previously in the report, Ickenham Road is designated as a borough secondary distributor road where one would expect commercial traffic to pass through. This unfortunately is a common dilemma in many roads across the whole country, where residents

living along a road have a reasonable right to expect a decent quality of life weighed against the need for people and goods to move about a road network.

7. Residents have asked for '*speed systems*' and this could take many forms. Traffic calming can take a number of forms and it may be helpful to comment briefly on some of the more common types and their suitability or otherwise.

- **Round-topped speed humps**, often referred to colloquially as 'Sleeping Policemen': Like most local authorities throughout the United Kingdom, the Council no longer installs these most severe types of transverse vertical deflections. They would be in any case unsuitable for this type of road which carries a significant volume of traffic;
- **Flat-topped speed tables**: in suitable circumstances these may be considered, although they do not always prove popular with residents living alongside them. They can also have an adverse impact on emergency vehicle response times. They do remain, however, quite an effective tool and by way of example this type of traffic calming feature may be found in nearby Park Avenue, where residents originally lobbied for them. A more substantial traffic calming feature of this type can be created by raising the surface of an entire side road junction or even the whole junction (but often drainage considerations add to the costs involved in such radical changes);
- **Speed cushions**: these are as the name implies roughly square rectangular raised features that broadly resemble speed tables but have gaps to allow cyclists and emergency response vehicles to pass over or between them relatively unhindered. They also have the benefit of little adverse impact on highway drainage. They are however less effective in terms of reducing lorry volumes or speeds;
- **Chicanes and similar horizontal deflections**: seldom used in modern urban situations; they are visually intrusive, remove kerb side parking space, interfere with accesses and can encourage slalom driving behaviours;
- **Traffic islands, including pedestrian refuges**: these can often have a dual purpose in that they serve to reduce the speed of passing traffic. They do however have to be carefully positioned to avoid conflicts with driveways and other on-street features;
- **Zebra crossings and Signal controlled crossings**: pedestrian crossings by their very nature interrupt traffic flows and can have a traffic calming effect. Signal controlled crossings are the responsibility within Greater London of Transport for London (TfL) which owns, installs, operates and maintains over 6,000 sets of such equipment across London. They can prove to be a mixed blessing as they can lead to significant traffic delays and of course add to street clutter;
- **Signed-only speed limits**: in suitable situations, it is increasingly common to see 20mph speed zones where there is little or no physical traffic calming, and such a scheme is reliant on speed limit signs alone. Despite their widescale use, they should ideally be used in certain appropriate circumstances (e.g. a network of residential side roads) and not in cases where their effectiveness is governed entirely by the levels of speed enforcement by the Police;
- **Antiskid road surface treatments**: where it proves necessary to enhance stopping distances – such as on the approaches to a busy junction or a pedestrian crossing – then a specially applied skid-resistant surface can be applied. There are nevertheless costs and ongoing maintenance considerations with such measures;

- **Carriageway markings:** the careful use of markings that narrow the perceived carriageway width may sometimes be appropriate;

8. The Cabinet Member will be aware that many such schemes tend to be expensive and for this reason, the Council has to identify and prioritise suitable funding for its borough-wide programmes of such work. Ordinarily a significant source of such funding comes from Transport for London (TfL), but as is well known, TfL is at present undergoing a major funding crisis as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, and this has curtailed some of the usual funding streams. It is hoped that this problem will eventually be addressed once TfL reaches a suitable accommodation with central government, possibly as soon as this autumn, but it should be noted that the delivery of many schemes within boroughs across the whole of Greater London have been and may continue to be impacted by this situation.

9. It should be noted that where traffic calming measures have been installed on roads with relatively high volumes of commercial traffic, residents close to these engineering features have sometimes complained of an increase in noise levels as some drivers of these commercial vehicles may not slow down as much as cars and motorcycles tend to. Although Kingsend is not a classified road it is clear from petitioners' submission the road is also used by commercial traffic and may face similar issues as mentioned above.

*“Rethink of the junction close to the B466 junction which is high risk due to the multiple junctions that spur on to this point”*

10. The current layout at this junction is similar to how it was mapped by early cartographers shown on an 1868 Ordnance Survey map, except for Kingsend which did not exist at the time. Past alterations have tended to focus on limited interventions to improve the pedestrian crossing movements and at every stage that the junction has been looked at, opportunities to alter the geometry of this junction are severely constrained by the adjacent properties.

11. Traffic flows at the busiest periods often tend to be linked to congestion on each arm, especially where queues build up on the south bound arm that leads past West Ruislip Station; in part these queues in turn may be associated with the simple fact that there are few crossing points over and on/ off the TfL A40 Western Avenue. The aforementioned traffic surveys will be helpful in better understanding the dynamics of the local network, although it must be appreciated that opportunities for practical changes whilst understandably seen as 'desirable' may be limited.

12. The Cabinet Member will also be aware of the impact of construction work on the HS2 rail project, which will include a new tunnel portal at West Ruislip Station and a surface level section of new railway leading westwards. As is well known, the Council objected to the format and predicated many of the impacts of HS2, even submitting its own proposal for the HS2 railway to continue in tunnel through to the Chilterns, but the HS2 Act was passed without this change and the project is ongoing. However, the Council continues to actively engage with HS2 and their contractors and this includes oversight of traffic movements on the adjacent road network, and there are strict controls governing lorry movements via approved routes and at certain times of day and week. Recent meetings between Council officers and HS2 representatives have secured the possibility of CCTV monitoring of HS2's contractors and their suppliers as a tool to help govern their lorry movements.

*“Excessive speed of HGVs during the day and at unsociable hours”*

13. The Cabinet Member will be aware that for several years, the Council has not been not a subscriber to the London-wide ‘London Lorry Control Scheme’ (‘LLCS’), having taken a decision in 2003 to withdraw on the basis of a perceived lack of enforcement in return for the membership fees levied at the time. The Cabinet Member will also be aware however that officers have recently engaged with London Councils (who administer the LLCS) as assurances have been given that enforcement has improved, and at the same time the fee has been waived for all LLCS members. At the time of writing, the Council is in the process of re-engaging with the LLCS and will be seeking to review and better influence the enforcement of heavy goods traffic movements in the borough.

14. Although it is not possible to cover the topic in detail in this present report, it is worth noting that the LLCS does not operate on every single road in Greater London which carry heavy goods traffic. The LLCS is designed to regulate the movement of heavy goods vehicles over 18 tonnes maximum gross weight on weekdays between 9pm and 7am and weekends from 1pm Saturday to 7am on Monday. The Traffic Order is designed to ensure that goods vehicles over 18 tonnes cannot use those roads controlled by the Order during these times without prior permission. The aim is to help minimise noise pollution in residential areas during unsocial hours.

15. It should also be noted that should the Cabinet Member choose to instruct officers to commission a series of independent traffic surveys, these will provide an indication not only of the speeds of traffic passing through this particular area but also the times of day and the type and size of all the vehicles, thereby providing a clear picture of the proportion of larger HGVs and the times at which they are using Kingsend and Ickenham Road. This data will therefore be very useful in terms of the dialogue with London Councils and the LLCS.

16. In conclusion, therefore, the Cabinet Member may wish to meet petitioners and discuss with them their concerns and the various options which may be open to him. Information in this report will at the same time be of use to help advise the Cabinet Member and petitioners on what has been done and what may be feasible.

17. Subject to the outcome of these discussions and if considered appropriate, the Cabinet Member may be minded to ask officers to commission independent 24/7 traffic and speed surveys at locations agreed with petitioners and the local ward councillors. As noted several times in the report, such survey information may be beneficial for a number of purposes.

### **Financial Implications**

If the Cabinet Member is minded to agree to undertake independent speed and traffic surveys the cost is usually in the region of between £80 and £85 per location which can be funded from existing revenue budgets. If works are subsequently required, suitable funding will also be identified existing from revenue budgets within the Road Safety Programme.

## **RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION**

## **The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?**

The recommendation will allow the concerns of petitioners to be considered in detail.

## **Consultation carried out or required**

None at this stage.

## **CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Corporate Finance**

Corporate Finance has reviewed the recommendations to this report and concurs with the financial implications as set out above.

### **Legal**

The Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

### **Infrastructure / Asset Management**

None at this stage.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NIL.

## **TITLE OF ANY APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Location plan