

PETITION REQUESTING THE INSTALLATION OF A HEDGEROW AT UXBRIDGE COMMON

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Eddie Lavery
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Residents' Services
Officer Contact(s)	Stuart Hunt, Head of Green Spaces
Papers with report	None

HEADLINES

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Member that a petition, signed by 26 residents, has been submitted to install a hedge at Uxbridge Common along Park Road to prevent animals straying into the road.
Putting our Residents First Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026	This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: Enjoy access to green spaces, leisure activities, culture and arts This report supports our commitments to residents of: A Green and Sustainable Borough
Financial Cost	There are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendations of this report
Relevant Select Committee	Residents' Services Select Committee
Relevant Ward(s)	Uxbridge

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member:

- Meets with petitioners and listens to their request to install a hedge at Uxbridge Common to prevent access to Park Road; and
- Subject to the outcome of the above, decides whether to instruct officers to install the hedge.

Reasons for recommendations

The petition hearing will provide a valuable opportunity to hear directly from petitioners regarding their suggestions.

Alternative options considered / risk management

None at this stage.

Select Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. A petition with 26 signatures has been submitted to the Council under the following heading:

Request for Resident and Dog Friendly Hedge along Park Road Section of North Uxbridge Common.

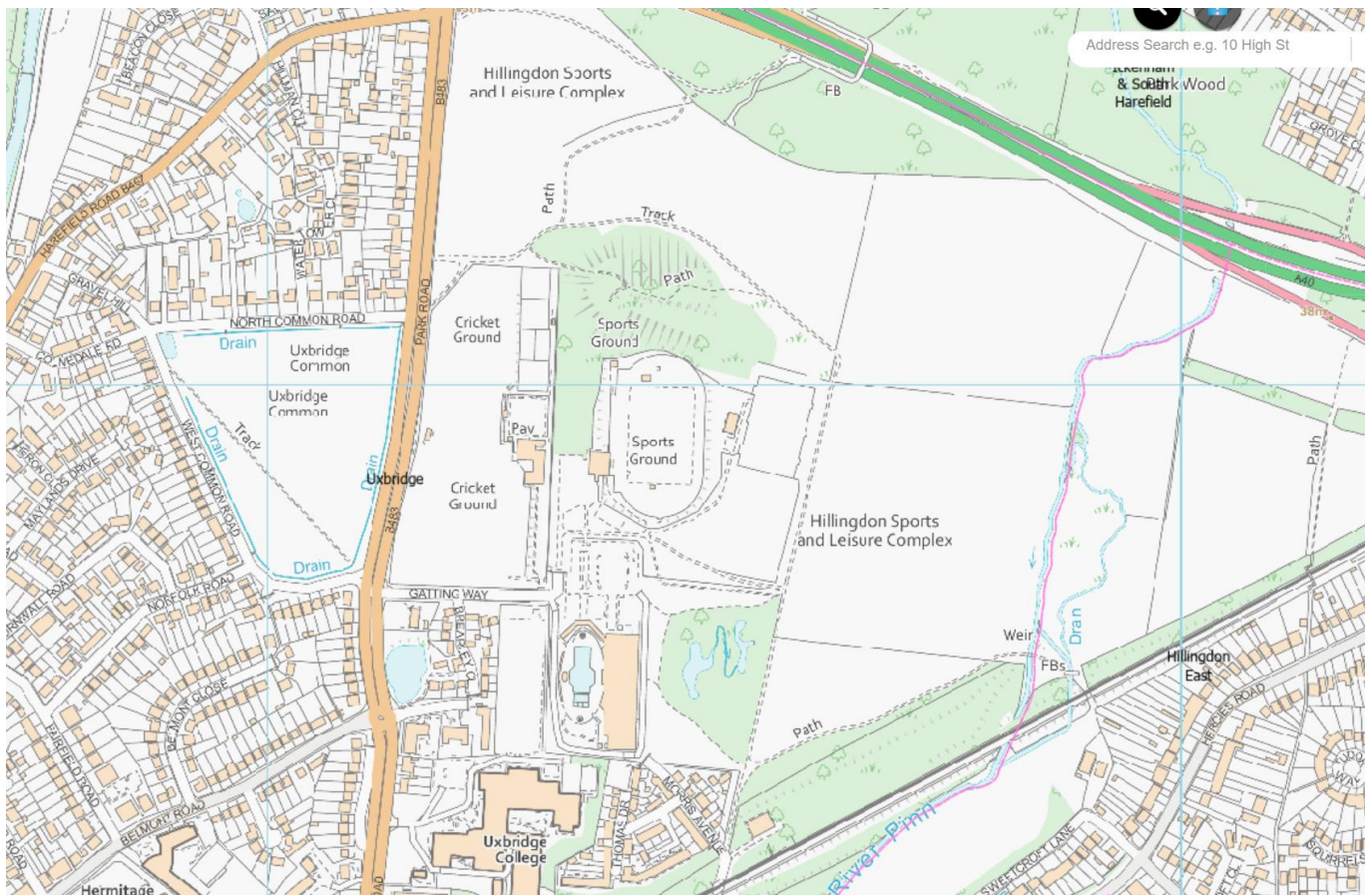
“We the undersigned petition Hillingdon Council to provide a short (at least 1m) high, quick growing, hedge (made from Hawthorne whips) to act as a barrier to car sound and air pollution from Park Road and act as safety feature for dogs and children straying onto the road”

Justification:

“The hedge would not only act as an important inward barrier from car noise and exhaust pollution but also act as an outward barrier for children chasing balls and dogs (who can easily slip their leads if enticed by foxes etc..) into the busy traffic of Park Road.”

2. Uxbridge Common is a pleasant and historical green situated just north of the busy Uxbridge town centre. The Common is an open landscape surrounded by leafy mature trees. Local residents and visitors regularly use it is an ideal place to walk, sit, relax and enjoy the peaceful open air.
3. The Common is 5.2 hectares and is designated as Common Land. Part of its area is also designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation. Features of the Common also include some unusual and interesting species including Great Crested newt and mistletoe. Key habitats include an area of acid grassland and gorse and a wildlife pond.
4. The installation of a hedge at the Park Road boundary would directly affect the open views of Uxbridge Common from Park Road and the historical openness of the site.
5. Should a hedgerow be established, this would require fencing (at least during the establishment period), mulching and regular maintenance to ensure successful establishment. This would further detract from the open aspect of the common.

6. Common land and village greens are protected by the Common Act 2006. Consent from the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs may be required to carry out any works that would prevent or impede access to common land or for works for the resurfacing of land. These works could include putting up new fences.
7. Within open spaces dog owners must always keep their pet under control. If they are hard to control or might chase other dogs or wildlife, then they must stay on a lead.
8. Hillingdon House Farm on the other side of Park Road is 50 hectares greenspace enclosed with fencing which is a much more suitable area for dogs during training or who are susceptible to slipping their leashes.



Map of Uxbridge Common and Hillingdon House Farm opposite

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendations contained in this report at this stage. However, if the Council was to consider installing the hedge this would need to be costed, and its regular maintenance considered for future budget provision.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

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

To allow the Cabinet Member to consider the petitioners' request.

Consultation carried out or required

None at this stage.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance have reviewed this report and concur with the Financial Implications set out above, noting there are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendation in this report, with the second recommendation expected to be delivered within the approved budget for 2024/25 with future year impacts to be considered as part of the refresh of the Council's budget strategy.

Legal

Legal Services confirm that the installation of a hedge on any part of Uxbridge Common will require the consent of the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.

TITLE OF ANY APPENDICES

None.