

GORDON ROAD, YIEWSLEY - PETITION REQUESTING RESTRICTED ACCESS TO THE ROAD AT THE START AND END OF THE SCHOOL DAY

Cabinet Member & Portfolio	Cllr Steve Tuckwell, Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Growth
Responsible Officer	Karrie Whelan - Corporate Director Place
Report Author & Directorate	Steven Austin – Place Directorate
Papers with report	Appendix A

HEADLINES

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Member that a petition has been received asking for restricted access to Gordon Road at the start and end of the school day.
Putting our Residents First Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026	<p>This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: Live in good quality, affordable homes in connected communities</p> <p>This report supports our commitments to residents of: Safe and Strong Communities</p> <p>The request can be considered as part of the Council’s annual programme for road safety measures.</p>
Financial Cost	Should speed and traffic surveys be commissioned, costs will be c.£85 per location. Should video surveys for pedestrian and cycle movements be commissioned, this will cost in the region of £900. These costs can be managed within existing Transportation Services revenue budgets.
Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee.
Ward(s)	Yiewsley

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member:

- 1) **meets with petitioners and listens to their request for the Council to restrict access to Gordon Road at the start and end of the school day;**

- 2) **subject to the outcome of the above, asks officers to commission independent traffic surveys in an area agreed with ward councillors and video surveys for pedestrian movements in Gordon Road; and**
- 3) **In the meantime, asks Ward Councillors to encourage Rabbsfarm School to move forward with the work already co-developed with the Council's School Travel and Road Safety Team, in particular the 'Living Streets WOW' challenge referenced in the report.**

Reasons for recommendations

The Petition Hearing will provide a valuable opportunity to hear directly from the petitioners regarding their concerns and suggestions.

Alternative options considered / risk management

None at this stage.

Select Committee comments

None at this stage.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. A petition with 376 signatures has been submitted to the Council signed under the following heading:

*"Implementation of restricted road use around the school hours to ensure the safety of our community.
8:15am – 9am
2;45pm – 4:30pm.

Road only available to residents and school staff during this time."*
2. Gordon Road is a mainly residential cul-de-sac comprising of semi-detached properties, all of which appear to have access to off-street parking provision. The width of the carriageway is approximately 5.7 metres and is bounded on both sides by a wide footway averaging around 1.4 metres wide. Although many properties appear to benefit from off-street parking, the road also benefits from a Parking Management Scheme operational Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5pm with the bays partially on the footway. Gordon Road provides the only access to Rabbsfarm School, and at the school entrance there are 'school keep clear' markings, some double and single yellow lines. A location plan is attached as Appendix A .
3. Although not specifically mentioned in the petition, it appears that the lead petitioner, in this instance one of the ward councillors, is asking for a 'School Street' for Gordon Road.
4. The idea of a 'School Street' is to make it safer and easier for children, parents and guardians to walk and cycle to school. The principle behind a 'School Street' is to temporarily

close the road outside the school to all except essential traffic. It is hoped that the closure of the road will encourage the school community to walk and cycle to school instead of driving. As well as improved road safety, there should be an overall improvement in air quality at these times.

5. As Gordon Road is effectively the only access to the school, restricting access to residents, businesses, pedestrians and cyclists only should significantly reduce traffic congestion around the school and improve the environment for local residents.
6. In order for a 'School Street' to be successful, it does require support from the local community, who will be most directly affected by any restricted access. Residents, businesses, and school staff can apply for an exemption so that they can still go about their business as usual.
7. Another essential element to the success of a 'School Street' and general road safety improvements around a school is positive engagement between the school and the Council's School Travel and Road Safety Team (STARS) team. The Cabinet Member will be aware the STARS team actively works with several schools across Hillingdon to develop their school travel plans (STPs). This dialogue can not only result in the development of physical measures but can also help the school engage with children, parents and carers to consider how they travel to and from school and to start to embed positive change to more sustainable modes of transport.
8. In addition, the STARS team offers free education, training and publicity to all schools in Hillingdon to improve safety and sustainability through travel plans, campaigns, projects and initiatives.
 - Support for 'Walk to School week/ month'
 - 'Bikeability' training
 - Funding for scooter and cycle storage facilities,
 - Support for 'Junior and Youth Travel Ambassadors',
 - Delivering active and safe travel assemblies and classroom talks
 - Practical pedestrian training
 - 'Moving On' to secondary school presentations
 - 'Theatre in Education' productions
9. The STARS team have been in contact with Rabbsfarm School and there has been some positive indications that the school want to progress work on their STP. For example, Rabbsfarm was one of 14 schools the STARS team offered to take part in the 'Living Streets WOW' challenge this year to encourage more families to walk, scoot or cycle to school, which the school accepted. Rabbsfarm were targeted in particular as a result of the congestion issues the team had discussed with the school before the summer holidays. However, it seems from our recent report that they are yet to launch this within the school. It may be that the Ward Councillors could helpfully intervene to encourage the school to move forward with this.

10. However, as the Cabinet Member will be aware, there can be negative consequences to surrounding roads if a school street is introduced, with the displacement of traffic into the surrounding area being a concern identified through studies in in other areas.
11. Department for Transport guidance on 'School Streets' published on 19th November 2024 provides Highways Authorities with detailed information on factors to consider before a 'School Street' is implemented. One essential factor in developing a 'School Street' to monitor and evaluate the scheme to determine whether it is working as intended. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation need to be considered at an early stage of scheme development to inform the collection of baseline data prior to introducing the scheme.
12. This can take many forms but essentially it is recommended that traffic volume, type and speed within the area covered by the School Street and on surrounding streets should be monitored. Automatic traffic counters and/or video surveys are both useful methods of capturing this data. Monitoring traffic on streets surrounding the School Street zone is important for understanding the impact of any traffic or parking displacement, especially where residents have raised concerns about such impacts.
13. In conclusion, therefore, the Cabinet Member may wish to hear the testimony of petitioners and their local ward councillors and decide whether to ask officers to commission independent traffic and video surveys are part of the initial investigation on the development of a possible 'School Street'.

Financial Implications

Subject to the outcome of discussion with petitioners, the Cabinet Member may request the commissioning of speed and traffic surveys, the current cost of these is c.£85 per location. If the Cabinet Member is minded to commission video surveys for pedestrian and cycle movements, this will cost in the region of £900. Expenditure can be managed within the existing Transportation Services revenue budgets.

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 & Engagement 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

There are no legal impediments to following the recommendations set out within the report.

Comments from other relevant service areas

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Individual consultation responses

TITLE OF ANY APPENDICES

Appendix A - Location plan