

NORTHWOOD WAY, NORTHWOOD - PETITION REQUESTING 'ENHANCED ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE'

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 requesting 'enhanced road infrastructure' for Northwood Way, Northwood.
Putting our Residents First Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026	This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: Live in good quality, affordable homes in connected communities This report supports our commitments to residents of: Safe and Strong Communities The request can be considered as part of the Council's annual programme for road safety measures.
Financial Cost	Should speed and traffic surveys be commissioned, costs will be c.£85 per location, managed within existing Transportation Services revenue budgets.
Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee.
Ward(s)	Northwood Hills

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member:

- 1) Meets with petitioners and listens to their request for 'Enhanced Road Infrastructure' on Northwood Way, Northwood.**
- 2) Also, subject to the outcome of the above, decides if officers should commission independent 24/7 speed and traffic surveys on Northwood Way, at locations agreed with petitioners and Ward Councillors, and.**

3) Decides if officers should undertake an informal consultation on possible parking restrictions.

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 23 signatures has been submitted to the Council by residents, all of whom live on Northwood Way, Northwood asking for 'Enhanced Road Infrastructure'.

The lead petitioner has helpfully provided the following additional information:

"We write to urgently address the increasingly perilous conditions prevailing on our section of Northwood Way. The reckless driving behaviour of certain motorists has created a real threat to our neighbourhood, necessitating immediate intervention to avert potential tragedy.

Our community has recently experienced a surge in unsafe driving incidents, culminating in several severe collisions. These include head-on collisions between moving vehicles and crashes involving parked cars obstructing the road, which are likely exacerbated by the disregard for speed limits. These incidents (see examples in attached annex A) serve as glaring dangers we face. While no pedestrians have been harmed so far, the potential for a catastrophic incident is alarmingly high. This ongoing pattern of accidents underscores the urgent need for action before a more tragic outcome occurs.

Our neighbourhood predominantly consists of family homes, and the proximity of Hillside School - a cornerstone of education and growth for our children – renders the need for enhanced safety measures paramount. It is imperative that steps be taken to ensure the well-being of all residents, particularly given the presence of children and pedestrians.

With great concern, we turn to the London Borough of Hillingdon Council, the authority entrusted with regulating speed limits and road infrastructure improvements. We implore you to consider the gravity of the situation and collaborate with us to find effective solutions.

To this end, we propose the following measures:

- *The addition of single yellow lines along the route, signalling a clear no-parking zone to prevent vehicles from obstructing the road;*
- *Adding speed bumps along the road to force motorists to slow down;*
- *Requesting a reduction of the speed limit to 20mph, align with neighbouring street (e.g., Green Lane)*
- *Installation of a RADAR system, reinforced by prominent warning signs, to promote adherence to the speed limit.*

Your support and active participation in enacting these measures would significantly contribute to preventing potential tragedies and fostering a safer environment for our community.

We extend our sincere gratitude for your attention to this pressing matter. By working together, we can safeguard the lives of our neighbourhood members and ensure the continued prosperity of Northwood Way.

2. The section of Northwood Way petitioners are concerned with, is mainly residential but with, what appears to be, on further assessment, an emergency access to Hillside school. The average width of the carriageway is approximately 7.5 metres and is bounded on both sides by a grass verge supporting mature trees and a footway behind measuring approximately 1.7 metres in width.
3. Officers have interrogated the most recently available police recorded collision data for the last five years and there have been no recorded incidents on the section of Northwood Road mentioned by petitioners. However, this data may not include any recent collisions highlighted in the petition or crashes that the emergency services do not attend and so do not form part of the Police database records.
4. The petition mentions so-called 'speed humps'; if by these, as seems likely, petitioners are thinking of the older type of round-topped narrow transverse road humps – often known colloquially in the past as 'sleeping policemen' - then the Cabinet Member will be aware that the vast majority of councils, Hillingdon included, have not introduced these particular types of measure for many years.
5. Having said that, various forms of traffic calming features could be considered, where appropriate, if there is a case for them. However, petitioners may wish to consider that such features can sometimes have the unintended effect of increasing noise from passing traffic, notably skip lorries and similar commercial vehicles which may carry loose loads although Northwood Way benefits from a 7-foot width restriction close to the school, so larger goods vehicles are prevented from using the road.
6. Horizontal traffic calming measures, such as chicanes and similar measures, are seldom suitable for the average residential road; they can cause loss of parking, are visually intrusive and are less effective at actually reducing the speeds, of cars and vans in particular. The Cabinet Member may wish to advise the petitioners to consider these

factors in their own deliberations and it should be noted that any form of physical measures can prove to be 'popular' and 'unpopular' in equal measures.

7. Subject to the above, the Cabinet Member may be minded to commission independent 24/7 speed and traffic surveys on Crane Gardens at locations agreed with petitioners and Ward Councillors.
8. As the Cabinet Member will be aware, independent traffic surveys are a reliable and well-established means to understand the real situation on the ground. These surveys generally use specialist equipment, including pneumatic tubes which are mounted temporarily on the road surface, fitted transversely across the whole width of the carriageway. These devices are installed for a period of at least a week or ten days and monitor traffic movements on a '24/7' basis. The discreet equipment is sufficiently sophisticated such that not only can it record traffic speeds at any given time, but also records the size and type of vehicles, from motorcycles to large multi-axel lorries.
9. It is also recommended that if they have not already done so, residents raise their concerns directly with the Metropolitan Police because they alone have the necessary powers to tackle speeding and inconsiderate driving in general (if this is the case in Northwood Way) through enforcement. Physical traffic calming can be an effective tool, but as mentioned previously, it can also have unwelcome side effects including an increase in noise caused by traffic passing through.
10. Petitioners have also asked for "single yellow lines along the route" and highlighted incidents of parked vehicles being damaged. Whilst many properties on the road appear to benefit from off-street parking provision, from officers' site inspections and knowledge of the area, it would appear that some of the vehicles parked along this section of Northwood Way either belong to residents, their guests or trades-people working in residents' houses. If yellow lines were to be considered, then it is worth noting that these apply to residents and non-residents alike and there are no exemptions for residents to be able to park.
11. Another unintended consequence of removing parking from the kerbside is that these vehicles often act as an informal traffic calming measure, so their removal could lead to an increase in traffic speeds. It is therefore suggested that subject to petitioners' and ward councillors' testimonies, the Cabinet Member considers whether officers should undertake an informal consultation on possible parking restrictions. Clarity on the extent of these restrictions will be needed from the petitioners to ensure the effectiveness of any such exercise.

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, with spend managed through the existing Transportation 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

Chapter 3 of the Council's Constitution provides that residents of the Borough may bring concerns to the direct attention of the Council by using the Council's Petition Scheme. A cabinet member petition relates to Council services within the remit of the Cabinet or relevant Cabinet Member.

If valid this Petition should be considered by the Cabinet Member at a Petition Hearing where he will decide what action (if any) will be taken. At that hearing the lead petitioner has the right to argue their case or promote a particular issue to the Cabinet Member and the procedures detailed under Cabinet Member Petitions, Chapter 3 of the Constitution shall apply.

Comments from other relevant service areas

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Individual consultation responses

TITLE OF ANY APPENDICES

Appendix A - Location plan.