

BOTWELL LANE, HAYES – PETITION REQUESTING ‘TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES’ BETWEEN BARRA HALL CIRCUS AND BOTWELL COMMON ROAD

Cabinet Member & Portfolio	Councillor Steve Tuckwell Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Economic Growth
Responsible Officer	Dan Kennedy – Corporate Director of Residents Services
Report Author & Directorate	Steven Austin – Residents Services Directorate
Papers with report	Appendix A – Location Plan

HEADLINES

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Member that a petition has been received requesting traffic calming measures for Botwell Lane, Hayes.
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, managed within existing Transportation Services revenue budgets, subject to the Council's required spend control approvals.
Select Committee	Corporate Resources & Infrastructure Select Committee
Ward	Wood End

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing & Economic Growth:

- 1) Meets with petitioners and listens to their request for traffic calming measures for Botwell Lane, Hayes; and
- 2) Subject to the outcome of the above, decides if officers should commission independent 24/7 speed and traffic surveys on Botwell Lane, at locations agreed with petitioners and Ward Councillors.

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 valid petition, with 20 signatures has been submitted to the Council signed under the following heading:

We the undersigned petition Hillingdon Council to introduce traffic calming measures on the stretch of Botwell Lane, between Barra Hall Circus and Botwell Common Road.

Of the 20 signatures, two are from one household of Botwell Lane.

2. In addition, the lead petitioner has helpfully provided the following information:

“Given the increase in population and therefore vehicular traffic over the last few years, the lane has become prone to excessive speeding, loud music from vehicles and general vehicle-related ASB. It is increasingly busy and this causes an escalated risk to pedestrians and animals, as well as an increased burden on residents. The road surface is also degrading rapidly.”

3. The section of Botwell Lane referred to in the petition, is a mainly residential road with a mixture of apartments, detached and semi-detached properties. Although many of the properties appear to benefit from off-street parking, from officers' observations, the demand for the on-street parking provision is high. This section of Botwell Lane also forms part of the 'U4' bus route.
4. There are some existing traffic calming measures in this section of Botwell Lane, including a 20mph zone, which starts at around No.169 Botwell Lane, a raised junction at Compton Road and a further raised junction with Botwell Common Road.
5. Officers have interrogated the most recently available official police recorded collision data for the last three years and there have been two recorded collisions on this section of Botwell Lane both classified as 'slight'. However, this data may not include any recent collisions or crashes that the emergency services did not attend and so do not form part of the Police database records.
6. The petition mentions 'traffic calming measures', and various forms of traffic calming features could be considered, where appropriate, and only 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.

7. 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.
8. Subject to the above the Cabinet Member may be minded to commission independent 24/7 speed and traffic surveys on Botwell Lane at locations agreed with petitioners and Ward Councillors.
9. 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-axle lorries.
10. In addition to the petition a further concern has been raised over the condition of the road surface. In view of this concern, this matter is being investigated further by the Highways Team.
11. 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 Botwell Lane) through enforcement. Physical traffic calming and traffic management can be effective tools, but as mentioned previously, it can also have unwelcome side effects including an increase in noise caused by traffic passing through.

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, which subject to the Council's spend control measures, and would be funded 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

Legal Services confirm that there are no specific legal implications to following the recommendations within this report in relation to the petition received for traffic-calming measures between Barra Hall Circus and Botwell Common Road. The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 provides the Council with powers to regulate or restrict traffic on roads within Hillingdon, which may include introducing certain traffic-calming measures after following due consultation and order-making processes. Further powers to introduce traffic-calming measures are included in the Highways Act 1980.

A meeting with the petitioners is in line with the Council's constitution and is a perfectly legitimate as part of a listening exercise, especially where consideration of the policy, factual and engineering issues are still at a formative stage. Public law principles provide that there must be no predetermination of a decision in advance of completion of any wider planned consultation. Therefore, decision makers must ensure there is a full consideration of all representations arising, including those which do not accord with their own.

Should there be a decision that the traffic-calming measures between Barra Hall Circus and Botwell Common Road are to be considered further, then the relevant statutory provisions and processes for these will have to be considered and followed. To this end, more specific legal comments will be provided in subsequent reports as the proposal progresses.

Comments from other relevant service areas

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Petitions

TITLE OF ANY APPENDICES

Appendix A – Location Plan