

HIGHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

13 August 2013

REPORT

Subject Heading:

Provision of Pedestrian Crossing Facility
for Oakfields Montessori School,
Upminster

Report Author and contact details:

Nicola Childs
Engineer
01708 433103
Nicola.childs@havering.gov.uk

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Clean, safe and green borough	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Excellence in education and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities for all through economic, social and cultural activity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value and enhance the life of every individual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
High customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUMMARY

This document reports on the outcome of a consultation on the provision of pedestrian improvements in Harwood Hall Lane, outside the Oakfields Montessori School, Upminster.

The scheme is within **Upminster** ward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee having considered the responses and information set out in this report recommends to the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment that the measures are approved for implementation as detailed in this report and shown on the following drawing:
 - QM021/OB/02.B.
2. That it be noted the cost of carrying out the works is £17,800. This would be met from the 2013/14 Transport for London Local Implementation Plan allocation for School Travel Plans Implementation.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Background

- 1.1 Oakfields Montessori is an independent school for early years, reception and years one to six. It is situated on the south side of Harwood Hall Lane, Upminster within the Upminster Conservation Area.
- 1.2 As of July 2013, the school has 187 pupils and the percentage of pupils living within 1.2 miles is 47.9%. Considering this is an independent school and pupils may travel from outside of the borough to attend, a significant proportion do live within walking distance.
- 1.3 Harwood Hall Lane starts at its junction with Corbets Tey Road and runs south west for 630m to Aveley Road. It is subject to a 30mph speed limit and a 7.5 tonne weight restriction along its entire length. The road is rural in nature. The only substantial footway runs on the north side from the junction with Corbets Tey Road up to the Corbets Tey School for children with complex learning needs, which lies opposite the Montessori School.
- 1.4 The vehicular entrance to the school is 100 metres south west of the entrance to Corbets Tey School. Some parents choose to walk with their children to and from Oakfields School, which requires walking in the carriageway for 135 metres and through vehicular access.
- 1.5 For a number of years the school has said that there has been a strong desire from parents for a dedicated pedestrian access to the school. A pupil of the school has even taken this request to the Council and local press.
- 1.6 There is an existing pinch point between the entrances to the two schools (road narrows on both sides). This is on a bend and east

(Upminster) bound traffic has to give way to oncoming traffic. This acts as an effective traffic calming feature as east bound drivers cannot see around the bend so must slow down before they can determine whether there is opposing traffic.

- 1.7 Street lighting commences at this pinch point and continues up to Corbets Tey Road.
- 1.8 An automatic classified traffic count was carried out with loops laid in the carriageway between the entrance and exit of Corbets Tey School between Monday 8th July and Sunday 14th July 2013.
- 1.9 The eastbound weekday average 24hr flow was 3341 vehicles and westbound was 4034 vehicles. The 85th percentile traffic speeds (the speed at which 85% of the vehicles are travelling at or below) is 35.56 eastbound and 36.08 westbound. A maximum speed of over 60mph was recorded twice. Staff consider these speeds are especially undesirable outside schools.
- 1.10 These results match the anecdotal evidence from the schools and staff observations of vehicle speeds being excessive through the site, either side of the current buildout.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 Oakfields School has a narrow gate in its perimeter wall opposite the exit to the Corbets Tey School. This is ideally placed for use as a pedestrian access. It will require widening and creation of a footpath within the school grounds. The school has a contractor in place for this work but it is pending the result of this HAC. If the highway proposals are not approved, the school will lose its funding for the pedestrian route within its grounds.
- 2.2 The highway verge outside this gate is less than 1 metre wide and totally inadequate for a footway. To create an area large enough to accommodate pedestrians waiting to cross the road, it is proposed to build out the footway into the carriageway, opposite the exit from Corbets Tey School.
- 2.3 This then doubles as a continuation of the traffic calming pinch point to the west, but with reversed priorities, requiring west bound traffic leaving Upminster to give way to opposing traffic.
- 2.4 This pedestrian facility could be used by both schools when they have a critical incident evacuation, a drill for which they have once a year when one school evacuates to the other.
- 2.5 Consideration was given to the creation of another build out closer to the Corbets Tey Road junction. The short footway outside the Bearblock cottages on the south side is much less than 1 metre wide and the

cottages' building line directly abuts the footway. Therefore, any traffic calming along this length would benefit residents here.

- 2.6 However Corbets Tey School has submitted a Planning Application for the creation of a new car park in a grassed area on the eastern end of its site. It is prudent for any traffic calming here to be designed at a future date once the new entrance has been created, some 40 metres west of Bearblock Cottages.

3. Outcome of Consultation and Staff Response

- 3.1 Fifty five letters were posted to residents and businesses in the consultation area plus Oakfields School emailed the letter to its parents on Friday 5th July with replies required by Friday 26 July. The emergency services were also consulted.
- 3.2 Appendix B is a summary of responses received. Other than the ward councillors and the schools, all other responses were from parents of Oakfields Montessori School who were all in favour of the proposal. Many commented that they currently take the risk and walk to school and will benefit from the proposals. It will also enable children in year six to walk to school independently, preparing them for secondary school.
- 3.3 The head teacher of Corbets Tey School accepts the benefits the scheme will bring to the schools, pedestrians and traffic calming. However she commented that the large Havering coaches that drop off and collect children at the school will have difficulty exiting their site. Subsequently, adjustment was made to accommodate left-turning coaches from Corbets Tey School. This results in the coach drivers being better able to see westbound traffic that might be on the 'wrong' side of the road passing the new build out.
- 3.4 Any further alteration to any of the proposal will be borne out during detailed design stage.
- 3.5 The ward councillors, although in favour of pedestrian safety improvements objected to the proposal on the grounds that it might be confusing to drivers to have a mix of driver priorities. They were also concerned it may not be well used by the school parents but this was not reflected in the parent response.
- 3.6 Officers consider that the location of the proposed build out has good visibility on both approaches: west bound traffic would have just left the pinch point where they would have had to slow down or stop and east bound traffic has excellent forward visibility.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 It is recommended that the proposals as publicly consulted (with the addition of kerb realignment opposite the proposed build-out) are implemented. There is no alternative option for providing this school with a pedestrian access.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial Implications and risks:

It is estimated that the cost of carrying out the works is £17,800. This would be met from the 2013/14 Transport for London Local Implementation Plan allocation for School Travel Plans Implementation.

This is a standard project for Streetcare and there is no expectation that the works cannot be contained within the cost estimate. There is an element of contingency built into the financial estimate. In the unlikely event of an over spend the balance would need to be contained within the overall Streetcare Capital budget.

Legal Implications and risks:

None arising from this scheme.

Human Resources Implications and risks:

The proposal can be delivered within the standard resourcing within Streetcare, and has no specific impact on staffing/HR issues.

Equalities Implications and risks:

Traffic calming can help reduce traffic speeds, traffic volumes and the risk of collisions, especially involving vulnerable users. Older and younger people find it more difficult to judge traffic speed and they are especially at risk of being involved in a collision. Some people may be intimidated by traffic speed and so traffic calming may assist in reducing the problem.

The provision of crossing facilities makes it easier for all sectors of the community to cross busy streets or have more confidence in crossing streets. This is especially helpful to disabled people, children (lone and accompanied), young families and older people.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

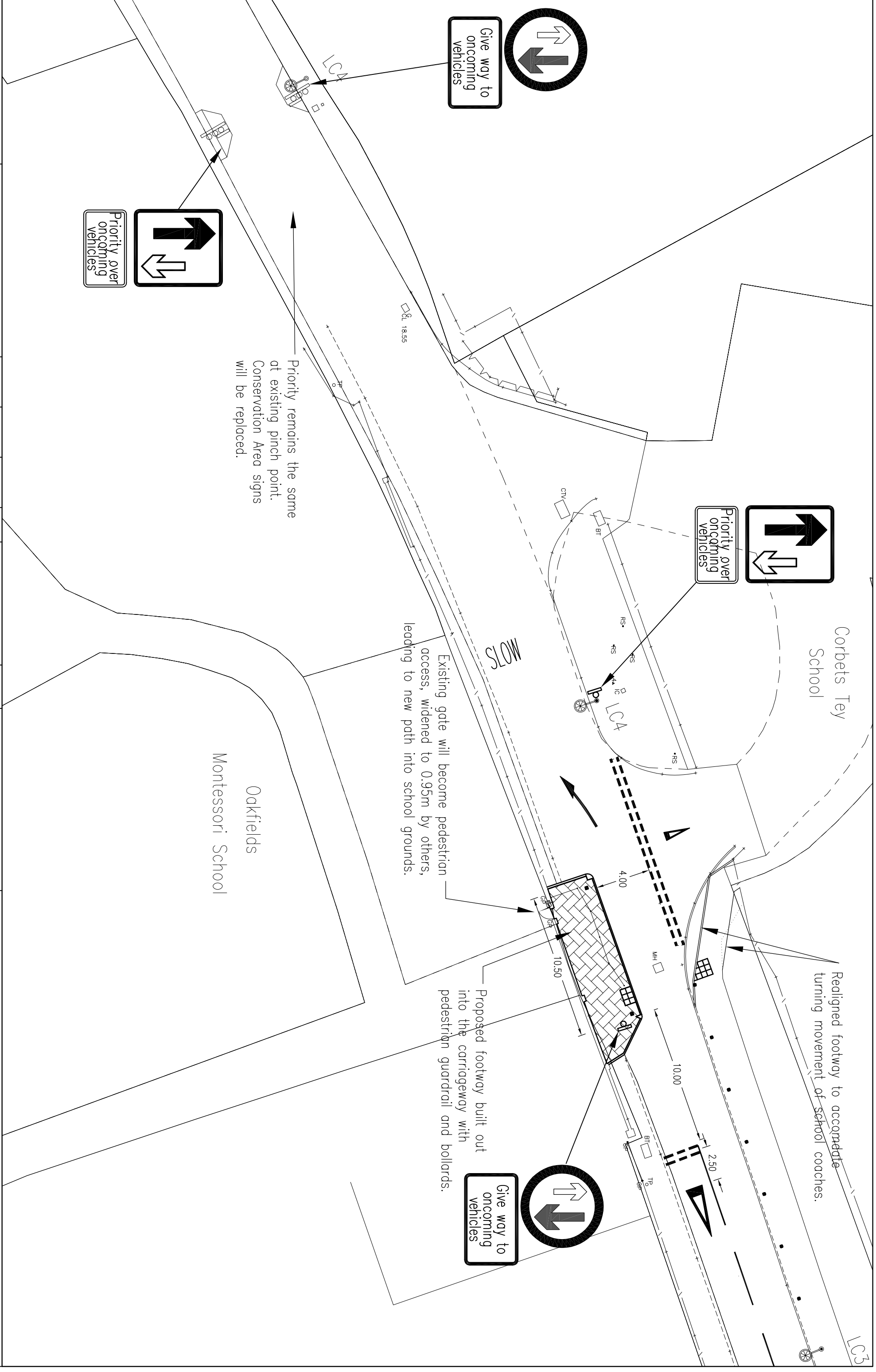
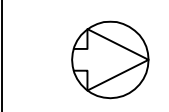
Scheme project file: QM021 – Oakfields Montessori School –
Pedestrian Facility.

Appendix A

Scheme Drawing QM021/OA/02.A (as consulted)
Scheme Drawing QM021/OB/02.B (revised)

DRAWN BY NC	CHECKED BY	APPROVED BY
DATE: Jul 13	SCALE: NTS	
PURPOSE:	ISSUE	
DWG No: QM021/08/02	REVISION: B	
	REVISION	AMENDMENT
		DATE

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Appendix B

Summary of Consultation Responses

Response details			Views		Comments
	Date	Name	Object	Agree	
1	11.7.13	Ward Councillors	*		All though they ped safety improvements, think scheme will confuse drivers with alternating priorities from existing pinch point.
2	12.7.13	Oakfields Montessori School school		*	The plans look great and this will allow us at Oakfield's to create the much needed pedestrian access.
3	12.7.13	Ms Almeida parent		*	Will benefit those living local to school, providing journey choice.
4	12.7.13	Ms Balcomb parent		*	Supports scheme.
5	12.7.13	Emma parent		*	Supports scheme.
6	12.7.13	Ms Njoroge parent		*	Supports scheme.
7	12.7.13	Oseni parent		*	Supports scheme.
8	12.7.13	Toyinudojie parent		*	Pedestrian access would be great benefit to school
9	12.7.13	Mr & Mrs Kassner parent		*	Supports scheme. Option to walk is not currently available. It will promote healthier lifestyle
10	12.7.13	Ms Fisher parent		*	Supports scheme. Will increase ped safety in area and would like to be able to walk to school.
11	12.7.13	Raj parent		*	Supports path as it's dangerous without one.
12	12.7.13	Ms Ingleson parent		*	Necessary to allow children to walk/cycle safely. Road is currently too fast and dangerous.

Response details				Views		
13	12.7.13	Ms Harvey	parent		*	Supports scheme. Concerned when parents negotiate footway where no footway exists.
14	12.7.13	Ms Johnston	parent		*	Will have positive traffic calming and environmental benefit. Would enable daughter to travel by bus and walk.
15	12.7.13	Mr Tragen	parent		*	Supports scheme.
16	12.7.13	Mr Olugbodi	parent		*	Supports scheme.
17	12.7.13	Mr & Mrs Lockey	parent		*	Son cycles and will now be able to do it safely
18	13.7.13	Mrs Batty	parent		*	Currently those that can walk chose to drive as no safe alternative.
19	13.7.13	Ms Mayor	parent		*	Supports scheme, will make it safer for people walking to school
20	14.7.13	Mrs Sparks	parent		*	Walks every day and will make journey easier and safer.
21	15.7.13	Mrs & Miss Kinder	parent		*	Walk children to school and would like for year 6 child to walk unaccompanied. Daughter's letter was printed in local press requesting pedestrian access.
22	15.7.13	Mr Batty	parent		*	Supports scheme.
23	15.7.13	Mr Robertson	parent		*	Walks to school but the trip is dangerous and they share the school entrance with cars. Will encourage more parents to walk.
24	16.7.13	Mrs Mir	parent		*	Supports scheme
25	16.7.13	Mr Small	parent		*	The journey is precarious for pedestrians. Doubts the additional build out will negatively affect traffic flow.
26	17.7.13	Mr & Mrs Toth	parent		*	Supports scheme.

Response details				Views		
27	17.7.13	Mr & Mrs Jackson	parent		*	Supports scheme. Has witnessed near misses with cars speeding, especially with vehicles travelling from the west towards the pinch point.
28	20.7.13	Potter	parent		*	Walks son to school and will use pedestrian access.
29	25.7.13	Corbets Tey School	school		*	Corbets Tey School. Acknowledges how the scheme will benefit both schools, pedestrians and traffic calming. However, concerned the affect on coach drivers exiting Corbets Tey school.
30	28.7.13	Dr Adewole	parent		*	Children go to school by bus. Supports pedestrian access.
55	Letters posted to residents & businesses. (Parents of Oakfields emailed by the school.)			1	29	
30	RESPONSES RECEIVED BY CLOSE OF SURVEY					
				3.3%	96.7%	