

HIGHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

14 January 2014

REPORT

Subject Heading:

Upgrade of existing cycle route and
20mph speed zone in Highview Gardens
area, Upminster

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**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 report deals with the responses to a consultation relating to upgrading the existing cycle route between Upminster to Hornchurch and seeks a recommendation that the proposals be implemented as set out in the report.

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 as listed in Appendix A (Schedules 1 and 2) of this report and paragraph 2 and 3 of this recommendation are implemented and the necessary traffic orders are made.
 - i) **Schedule 1** – 20 mph speed zone for traffic calming measures in Branfill Road, Champion Road, Cranborne Gardens, Gaynes Road, Highview Gardens and Wilson Close (newly named service road) on south side of Gaynes Road. The proposals are shown on drawing no. GM024-OF-101.
 - ii) **Schedule 2** – flat top humps as entry treatments in Cranborne Gardens and Gaynes Road. The proposals are shown on drawing no. GM024-OF-101.
2. **Carlton Close** - Kerb alignment on both sides at the entrance of Carlton Road at its junction with Highview Gardens. The proposals are shown on drawing no. GM024-OF-101.
3. **Highview Gardens** – Upgrading the existing emergency access to include block paving, kerb build out, landscaping and facilities for cyclists. The proposals are shown on drawing no. GM024-OF-111.
4. That it be noted the cost of carrying out the works is £50,000. This would be met by Transport for London through the allocation for 2013/14 Local Implementation Plan for upgrading the existing A124 cycle route package.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Background

The Mayor of London has published his vision for cycling which proposes to increase the number of people cycling in the capital over the next decade and Havering is one of the Mayor's designated Biking Boroughs. As a result, Transport for London has allocated funding through the Local Implementation Plan for 2013/14 to upgrade the existing cycle route centred on the A124 corridor.

The existing cycle route commences from the borough's western boundary with Barking and Dagenham and connects Upminster via Rush Green and Hornchurch. The route was implemented in late 1990's based on old design guidelines.

Through local research over the years in the UK and adopting some best practice from other European countries such as Denmark and the Netherlands, the design standards have improved immensely, therefore, it is important to upgrade the existing cycle infrastructure which forms part of asset of this borough with a view to improve safety for cyclists.

2. Review of the existing cycle route

2.1 The existing cycle route is centred on the A124 corridor and it commences from the borough's western boundary with London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and it connects Upminster via Rush Green and Hornchurch. Along the route, it is connected to other strategic cycle routes such as the Link 91 (part of London Cycle Network plus) which connects Romford to Rainham via Elm Park. It further connects with the National Cycle Network (designated route 136) which runs between the village of Noak Hill and Rainham via Upminster.

2.2 The existing cycle route was implemented in late 1990 based on the guidelines that were available at that time. During the course of period, the Council has maintained it and certain sections of the route need to be upgraded to bring them to safe use for cyclists.

3. Proposals to improve cycle facilities

3.1 The existing cycle route traverses from St Mary's Lane into Highview Gardens and enters into Champion Road (via the emergency access), continues into Branfill Road and finally terminates into Station Road. The cycle route runs in both directions.

3.2 As part of the upgrade, it is proposed to establish a 20mph speed zone to enhance safety for cyclists. 20 mph speed zones are an effective way to decrease the frequency and severity of road accidents, largely by reducing traffic speeds. The zone cordon is between St Mary's Lane (north side), Station Road (west side) and Highview Gardens (all) and Branfill Road (all). Below is a list of the roads within the cordon:

- Branfill Road
- Carlton Close
- Champion Road
- Cranborne Gardens
- Gaynes Road
- Highview Gardens
- Wilson Close (newly named road), south of Gaynes Road.

The proposals are shown on drawing no. QM024-OF-110.

3.3 Provision of flat top road humps can raise driver's awareness of an impending change in condition in the road level, therefore, these types of

humps are proven to reduce speeds. Such type of humps are proposed at the following locations:

- i) Cranborne Gardens junction with Highview Gardens.
 - ii) Gaynes Road junction with Champion Road. The proposed humps will be similar to the existing flat top hump at the eastern end of Gaynes Road junction with Station Road. The proposals are shown on drawing no. QM024-OF-110.
- 3.4 The eastern end of Highview Gardens junction with Champion Road is currently closed to general traffic. The gate was installed several years ago to overcome the problems of rat running traffic between St Mary's Lane and Station Road. Only emergency vehicles are permitted to use the access. The proposals are shown on drawing no. QM024-OF-111.
- 3.5 There are several measures that can be implemented to improve this location. It is proposed to narrow the junction by creating a semi-circular island adjacent to the footway and creation of a dedicated access for cyclists. The island would create a chicane effect in the street. In addition, two trees will be planted as part of environmental improvements.
- 3.6 At present, the entrance of Carlton Close junction with Highview Gardens has a wide entrance. It is proposed to realign the entry kerbs of Carlton Close to reduce the entry and exit speeds. This arrangement will further have the advantage of increasing the footway width at the junction. The proposals are shown on drawing no. QM024-OF-110.

4. **Outcome of the consultation**

- 4.1 Following the Approval in Principle by the Council's Highways Advisory Committee as part of the 2012/13 Local Implementation Plan programme, Streetcare Services proceeded with the design and consultation on the scheme.
- 4.2 Approximately 270 letters were hand delivered in the consultation area and the proposals were also advertised in the Romford Recorder on 29th November 2013 and London Gazette. In addition, site notices were displayed at various locations of the consultation area. The local Councillors for Uppminster ward were pre-consulted and they had supported the proposals in principle.
- 4.3 The closing date for receiving any comments was 18th December 2013. 12 responses were received which represents (4.4%) of the letters delivered.

5. Summary of consultation responses

The responses are summarised and these are included in Appendix B of this report. The majority of the respondents are in favour of the proposals (except two residents of Cranborne Gardens that 20 mph speed measures are not needed in their road).

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the proposals as publicly advertised and consulted are implemented. The proposals involve provision of an improved access for emergency vehicles, cyclists and traffic calming measures. The measures are included in schedule of proposals in Appendix A of the report and are shown on drawing nos. QM024-OF-110 and QM024-OF-111 attached to this report.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial Implications and risks:

It is estimated that the cost to implement the measures is £50,000, which would be met by Transport for London through the allocation for 2013/14 Local Implementation Plan for measures to upgrade the existing A124 Cycle route by 31st March 2014, to ensure full access to the grant.

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:

20mph speed zones require Traffic Regulation Order and public advertisement.

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:

The Council has a general duty under the Equality Act of 2010 to ensure that its highway network is accessible to all users. Where infrastructure is provided or substantially upgraded, reasonable adjustments should be made to improve access. In considering the impacts and making

improvements for people with protected characteristics (mainly, but not limited to disabled people, the young and older people), this will assist the Council in meeting its duty under the Act.

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.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Scheme project file: QM024 - Upgrading existing cycle route and 20 mph zone, Upminster.

Appendix A

(Notice of Proposals)

Draft schedule for recommendations:

- 20 mph speed zone – traffic calming.
- Junction entry treatments – flat top humps.

Schedule 1: Proposals for 20 m.p.h Speed Limit

The effect of 20mph zone would be to impose a speed limit of 20 miles per hour on the lengths of streets specified below:

- **Branfill Road** for its entire length
- **Carlton Close** for its entire length
- **Champion Road** for its entire length
- **Wilson Close**, off Gaynes Road, for its entire length.
- **Cranborne Gardens** for its entire length
- **Gaynes Road** for its entire length
- **Highview Gardens** for its entire length

The proposals are shown on drawing no. QM024-OF-110.

Schedule 2: Flat top humps

The speed tables or flat top humps will have a nominal height of 75mm and will be constructed in accordance with the Department for Transport specifications at the following locations:

- **Cranborne Gardens**, at its junction with Highview Gardens,
- **Gaynes Road**, at its junction with Champion Road.

The proposals are shown on drawing no. QM024-OF-110.

Appendix B

Summary of the consultation responses

1. London Buses (LB), part of Transport for London has no objections to the proposals.
2. Local Ward Councillor Linda Hawthorn fully supports the scheme, especially the 20mph around St Josephs' School.
3. Peter and Valerie James welcome the proposals about the 20mph speed zone which they consider is long overdue. They are of the opinion that the measures will solve many of the traffic/pedestrian problems in the area. Highview Gardens is a designated cycle route and is also regularly used by school children walking to St Josephs Catholic Primary School and Sacred Heart of Marys Girls' School.

They have further stated that the bend at the corner of Branfill Road/Champion Road is a potentially dangerous corner with many near misses as the drivers cannot always see the traffic coming from the opposite direction. The problem is made worse by both legal and illegal on the corner. They consider that 'At Any' time waiting and loading restrictions will prevent illegal parking.

Staff comments: The suggested location has been included on the list of schemes for parking restrictions. The list is reviewed periodically by the Council's Highway Advisory Committee prior to the consultation.

4. Ms. Harper, a resident fully supports the proposals.
5. Mr.Mandie fully supports the proposals. He has, however, stated that drivers ignore the right turn prohibition at the southern end of Champion Road.

Staff comments: The violation of such prohibition is a moving traffic offence and its enforcement is carried out by the traffic unit of Metropolitan Police. On several occasions the Council informs the police about the abuse and the police carry out the enforcement as their resources allow them.

6. Mrs. Carter has welcomed the road safety improvements in the area. She considers that there is the need for flat top humps in Branfill Road and Champion Road to slow the traffic that persistently speeds down both roads to avoid the traffic lights in the town centre. Furthermore, traffic sometimes performs right turn at the southern end of Champion Road which is prohibited and also traffic entering into Champion Road from St Mary's Lane where vehicular entry is prohibited.

Staff comments: The comments are as above.

7. Mr. Cooper supports the proposals. He had queried if the access will only permit emergency vehicles and cyclists and that no other vehicles will be able to use this access to Champion Road as a 'cut through'.

Staff comments: In response to his query, Mr Cooper was assured that the existing emergency access will only be used by emergency vehicles and cyclists.

8. Mr. McCabe is in full favour of the proposals, however, he considers that there would no point for a flat top hump at the western end of Gaynes Road as cars on entering into Gaynes Road from Station Road are slow but accelerate along the length of the road before slowing down at the junction with Champion Road. Instead, he has suggested that a flat top is installed in the middle of Gaynes Road would be more affective.

He has further suggested a road hump is installed at the entrance of the service road leading to the Aldi car park. Drivers often park close to the mouth of the junction with Gaynes Road. If a road hump is installed it would prevent in discriminate parking.

Staff comments: The location has been included the location on the potential list of Waiting and loading restrictions which will be considered in the future.

9. Mr. Rolfe cannot see the justification for installing a road hump in Highview Gardens. He is not aware of any traffic accidents taking place given that the topography of the road keeps all traffic travelling below 20mph.

Staff comments: The current scheme does not include the measures of a flat top hump in Highview Gardens. It appears that the respondent is mistaken that the kerb build out at the eastern end of Highview Gardens is a flat top hump.

10. Mr. Neale has objected by stating that as Cranborne Gardens is of short length, speeds in excess of 20 mph do not occur. He further considers that the provison of other measures proposed such as remodelling the emergency gate, installation of humps and new signage would be a burden on the Council Tax payers.

Staff response: When designing 20 mph speed zones, it is a good practice to consider a large area as the problem later shifts to other roads in the area.

11. Mr. Wicks agrees with the concept of the proposed 20 mph zone but has questioned the proposed flat top humps in Cranborne Gardens and Gaynes Road given that vehicles slow down at the junctions. He considers that it would be more effective in slowing vehicles down by installing the humps in the middle of the roads.

He further cannot see the benefit of remodelling the barrier at the junction of Highview Gardens and Champion Road.

Staff comments: The purpose of installing the flat top humps is to prevent the traffic from over shooting at the junctions. The measure is an effective means in slowing the traffic. The purpose of remodelling the barrier is to upgrade the existing barrier and incorporate safe facilities for cyclists.

12. Mr & Mrs Chester had queried the purpose of the kerb alignment at the corner of Carlton Close and if very wide entrance is maintained at the emergency access without a fire gate then school parents will drive through it.

Staff comments: The respondents were advised that the purpose of kerb alignment is to narrow the wide entrance of the junction and to increase the width of the footway.

Appendix C

Proposed layout drawings

(20 mph speed zone and emergency access)