

# Traffic Management Sub-Committee

11 January 2024



**Reading**  
Borough Council  
Working better with you

<b>Title</b>	Petition Response - Hemdean House School request for speed calming measures
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision
<b>Report status</b>	Public report
<b>Report author</b>	James Penman, Network Services Manager, Network Services
<b>Lead councillor</b>	John Ennis
<b>Corporate priority</b>	Healthy Environment
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Note the content of this report.</li><li>2. Agree to propose a new entry on the 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' report to reflect the receipt of this petition and the requested measures.</li><li>3. Agree to the lead petitioner being informed of the decisions of the Sub-Committee, following publication of the agreed minutes of the meeting.</li><li>4. Agree that no public inquiry be held into the proposals.</li></ol>

## 1. Executive summary

- 1.1. To update the Sub-Committee on the receipt of the written petition requesting the Council to place speed calming measures on Hemdean Road, outside Hemdean House School. This follows the verbal presentation of the petition at the November 2023 meeting of this Sub-Committee.
- 1.2. Officers have considered the content of the petition and make a recommendation to add this request (and make reference to this entry on the existing 'Lower Caversham' 20mph request) on the regularly reported 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' report. This report entry is recorded for future funding allocation and the next update is expected at the March 2024 meeting of this Sub-Committee.

## 2. Policy context

- 2.1. The recommendations of this report will not directly lead to changes being introduced. However, the implementation of such a traffic calming scheme would be expected to align with the following theme in the Council's Corporate Plan for the years 2022/25:
  - Healthy Environment
- 2.2. A speed reduction scheme at this location would be expected to reduce risks and severity of potential casualty incidents. This may have the added benefit of removing barriers that some may have to using sustainable transport modes for travel to/from the school, such as walking and cycling.

### 3. The proposal

#### Current Position

- 3.1. Representatives from Hemdean House School have been in contact with Ward Councillors and officers, following their review of Hemdean Road and considering changes that could reduce risks.

These proposals primarily included speed reduction measures, such as 20mph and traffic calming, signage as well as cycling improvements. The school has been provided with high-level feedback to inform their further review of desirable changes and notified the Council of their intention to bring a petition to this Sub-Committee meeting.

- 3.2. Following their verbal presentation of the petition at the November 2023 meeting of this Sub-Committee, representatives from Hemdean House School submitted a written petition that was received by officers on 20 November 2023.

The full wording of this petition is contained in Appendix 1, however, the primary request is as follows:

*'We, the undersigned, petition the Council to place speed humps in front of our school which will slow the traffic down and reduce risks to pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and all other road users.'*

Later in the petition, it is also implied that a speed reduction (i.e. 20mph) is also being requested alongside the speed calming features.

- 3.3. The petitioners refer to an online petition that they set up, which at the time of writing has 120 signatures. It should be noted that the petition was originally set up to request '...digital road signs...', but was later updated to request speed cushions.

- 3.4. As per the initial report to November 2023's Sub-Committee meeting, Officers noted that the section of Hemdean Road in the vicinity of the school is open to two-way traffic including a scheduled bus route. There is a slight bend in the road as it passes the school and there is on-street parking on both sides of the road to the north and south of the school. Parking is restricted immediately outside the school by the provision of 'School Keep Clear' markings.

Within the latest 3-year period of Police-supplied casualty data (period up to 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023), there are no recorded incidents on Hemdean Road between its junctions with Queen Street and Hemdean Hill. Officers therefore consider requested measures to be in the context of risk reduction, rather than casualty reduction.

- 3.5. The regular 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' report contains an entry for a desired area 20mph zone in lower Caversham. This request is line 69, Appendix 3 of the latest report update to this Sub-Committee (November 2023), which is also available on our website [here](#). This line refers to an earlier report that proposed a concept area including the section of Hemdean Road outside the school and this report (and concept area plan) are available on our website [here](#).

This 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' report typically comes to this Sub-Committee twice-annually and captures requests for traffic management schemes that do not currently have identified funding. Schemes originating from this list have attracted funding nominations, including those from Local 15% Community Infrastructure Levy and successful government funding bids, such as the Active Travel Tranche 4.

The lower Caversham 20mph zone concept was developed at a time when significant developer contributions were expected. Unfortunately, these did not materialise, however, this is still a desirable scheme for development and delivery. While the scale of the concept area is such that it would require significant funding, relatively smaller funding nominations could contribute to a phased delivery on an area priority basis.

## Options proposed

- 3.6. There is currently no allocated funding for the development and delivery of the changes requested in this petition. Officers acknowledge the concerns that have been raised and the requested changes appear appropriate for this location.
- 3.7. It is recommended that a new entry be proposed on the next update of the 'Requests for Traffic Management Measures' report, which is expected to be at the March 2024 meeting of this Sub-Committee. Taking into consideration the petition references to speed cushions, humps and the reference to 30mph being too fast, it is proposed that the entry proposes a section of 20mph with appropriate physical speed calming measures, which will be investigated and consulted when funding is allocated.
- 3.8. It is additionally recommended that the Lower Caversham 20mph entry referred in item 3.5 be amended to include a summary reference to this proposed new report entry, as they potentially cover the same area. Given the specific nature of this petition, however, it was considered by officers that a new request, rather than brief amendment to the wide area Lower Caversham request, was more appropriate.
- 3.9. It should be expected that scheme development will only commence once funding has been identified, where it will be programmed around other scheme development priorities.

## Other options considered

- 3.10. None at this time.

## **4. Contribution to strategic aims**

- 4.1. The Council's new Corporate Plan has established three themes for the years 2022/25. These themes are:
  - Healthy Environment
  - Thriving Communities
  - Inclusive Economy
- 4.2. These themes are underpinned by "Our Foundations" explaining the ways we work at the Council:
  - People first
  - Digital transformation
  - Building self-reliance
  - Getting the best value
  - Collaborating with others
- 4.3. Full details of the Council's Corporate Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the [Council's website](#). These priorities and the Corporate Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.
- 4.4. The recommendation of this report does not directly deliver changes. Requests for new traffic management measures would need to be considered alongside the Borough Council's Strategic Aims, the Local Transport Plan (LTP), and Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).
- 4.5. When funded and delivered, a speed reduction scheme at this location would be expected to reduce risks and severity of potential casualty incidents. This may have the added benefit of removing barriers that some may have to using sustainable transport modes for travel to/from the school, such as walking and cycling.

## **5. Environmental and climate implications**

- 5.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 5.2. The recommendation of this report does not directly deliver changes, so a Climate Impact Assessment has not been considered necessary at this time.

## **6. Community engagement**

- 6.1. The lead petitioner will be informed of the decision of the Sub-Committee regarding the request that they have made, following publication of the meeting minutes.
- 6.2. Meeting reports and minutes are published on the Council's website and Traffic Management Sub-Committee is a public meeting that can be attended. Recordings of the meetings are also available via the Council's website ([www.reading.gov.uk](http://www.reading.gov.uk)).

## **7. Equality impact assessment**

- 7.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
  - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.2. It is not considered that an Equality Impact Assessment is relevant at this time as the report recommendation does not directly lead to any physical change. Assessment will be considered once funding for development and delivery of a scheme is identified.

## **8. Other relevant considerations**

- 8.1. None expected from the recommendations and decisions for this report.

## **9. Legal implications**

- 9.1. There are no foreseen legal implications relating to the recommendation of this report.

## **10. Financial implications**

- 10.1. None arising from the recommendation of this report.

## **11. Timetable for implementation**

- 11.1. Not applicable.

## **12. Background papers**

- 12.1. There are none.

## **Appendices –**

1. Written petition submitted to Reading Borough Council