

A response to the Windsor Avenue area consultation from Get Sutton Cycling (March 2019)

This response is from Get Sutton Cycling, the local borough group of the London Cycling Campaign. We represent the interest of cyclists living or working in Sutton, and aim to expand the opportunities for all to cycle safely in the borough. We have discussed this consultation on CycleScope¹ and at our committee meeting.

Headline response

We welcome the introduction of 20mph, the installation of zebra crossing in Molesey Drive outside Cheam Park Farm Infants School, and the no-entry point on Hamilton Avenue, as outlined in the Windsor Avenue area scheme proposals. However, in order to successfully deliver on the stated aim of the scheme 'to encourage more people to walk, cycle and use public transport', we would like to see further engagement with residents around the idea of establishing a 'low traffic neighbourhood' in the area.

Response summary

We welcome any proposals that will truly encourage people to switch from using the car to using more sustainable modes of transport for some of their short journeys. Although the scheme proposed for the Windsor Avenue area is a step in the right direction, we do not feel it is sufficiently robust enough to actively encourage many people to walk, cycle or use public transport. This is because the scheme proposals do not fully address the issues around the amount of non-local traffic that currently uses, and which will continue to use, many of the residential roads in the area. To enable residents to switch to more healthy ways of getting around, particularly for short journeys, far quieter, safer-feeling, streets are required. Although a 20mph maximum speed limit goes some way towards achieving this, inappropriate levels of remaining traffic may negate those advantages.

All informal consultations, such as the Windsor Avenue area consultation, are opportunities for councillors, officers, residents and businesses to get together and discuss the bigger picture. The Walking and Cycling Commissioner, Will Norman, went further at the recent launch of Bromley's successful Liveable Neighbourhood bid, saying that such partnerships were crucial for success². We would like to see the opportunity taken in all future similar consultations to address people's understandable concerns around issues relating to filtered permeability and traffic replacement. It is worth noting that the first low traffic neighbourhood in Waltham Forest's mini-Holland saw motor traffic levels fall by over half inside the residential area and by 16% even when including the main roads³.

1 <https://getsuttoncycling.cyclescape.org/>

2 <https://twitter.com/SustransLondon/status/1102926603821158400> (5 March 2019)

3 'Low traffic neighbourhoods: an introduction for policy makers' (Rosehill Highways, Living Streets, London Cycling Campaign, June 2018), available at <https://lcc.org.uk/pages/low-traffic-neighbourhoods>

Monitoring of the scheme, post-implementation, to assess the success in delivery of the stated aims, along with feedback from residents, would be welcomed.

More detailed comments on the scheme

• The proposed 'No entry' point/plug on Hamilton Avenue by London Road

- We are pleased that cyclists will be able to continue to access Hamilton Avenue from London Road through a permitted gap adjacent to the proposed 'No entry' point. We do not feel, however, that this 'No entry' plug alone will result in a sufficient enough reduction in the volume of non-local traffic use along Hamilton Avenue that will encourage and engender safe cycling here. Our recommendation would be for a trial point closure elsewhere on Hamilton Road instead, possibly between Warner Avenue and Watson Avenue, along with similar interventions over the wider area.
- We do not support the proposal to replace the existing 'hump' at this location with a cushion. In terms of vertical deflection, we would either prefer nothing at all, or a road hump with a sinusoidal or shallow profile (as outlined in the London Cycling Design Standards⁴).
- Some further segregation/protection afforded to cyclists would be welcome here in order to reduce conflict with motor vehicles. The outline plan would suggest there were no proposals to make changes to kerb-side parking at this location. With constant queuing north-bound traffic on Hamilton Avenue in the morning peak, and with vehicles permitted to park on both sides of the road, space for cycling can be compromised.
- In relation to the Hamilton Road intersection with London Road, it is worth noting that in 2015 councillors representing the Nonsuch, Stonecot Hill and Worcester Park wards agreed a recommendation from council officers that ideas for possible new cycling infrastructure on London Road (A24) be presented to Transport for London for consideration⁵.

• Molesey Road

- We support the proposed raised crossing by Cheam Park Farm Infants School. As a precursor to low traffic neighbourhood ideas, we would

⁴ LCDS (TfL, November 2014), Chapter 3, Section 3.5 Physical traffic calming
<https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/streets-toolkit#on-this-page-2>

⁵ 'Destination North Cheam!' Get Sutton Cycling, December 2015
https://getsuttoncycling.org.uk/2015/12/05/north-cheam_says-yes/

like to see consideration and discussion with the school around the idea of Molesey Road becoming a 'School Street'⁶.

- **Windsor Avenue area**

- We approve of the proposed number and distribution of 20mph roundels. These provide a constant reminder of the 20mph limit. They will require maintenance and not be left to fade. We would like consideration be given to the provision of one or more SIDS (Speed indicator device/display). Some people describe them as "cool". They certainly catch the eye, and may be able to monitor compliance.
- We question why it is proposed to preserve a 30mph on Gander Green Lane, running through the centre of the Windsor Avenue area. It is noted that there are already a number of traffic calming features on Gander Green Lane, including a raised table at the junction with Brocks Drive. Although Gander Green Lane is described as having distributor road status, with higher traffic levels than the surrounding roads, retaining the 30mph limit here will result in a requirement for the adjacent 20mph roads to have 30mph signs posted at the intersections. This will detract from the slower speeds effect that the 20mph limits elsewhere are attempting to engender. (A similar situation exists along Thornton Road in St Helier, when there was an area-wide 20mph introduced here a number of years ago. This approach for Gander Green Lane in 2019 would suggest that ideas have not moved on in the intervening years).

Conclusions

The proposed scheme for the Windsor Avenue area is a step in the right direction. However, we challenge the idea that the proposals as outlined in the scheme will actually encourage more people to walk, cycle or use public transport, despite this being the stated aim.

Although the proposals are generally welcomed, we feel the main beneficiaries will be those who already walk, cycle and use public transport in the immediate area. More ambitious ideas, such as the introduction of low traffic neighbourhoods, would bring much greater benefits. Lower levels of traffic on the street can result in more community interaction, and increase the chance of healthy physical activity of the residents. Lower noise levels, and better air quality follows too.

Proposals, such as the scheme outlined for the Windsor Road area, present an ideal opportunity to engage with residents, inform (or remind) them of emerging policy (with a focus on a healthier, cleaner, more inclusive environment), and seek their views on ideas that could see their streets reimagined for active lifestyles. We would like to see reference made to the

⁶ 'Swap the School Run for a School Walk' (Living Streets, May 2018): https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/media/3618/ls_school_run_report_web.pdf

Healthy Streets Approach⁷ in all future informal traffic related consultation material (including, importantly, letters to stakeholders)⁸.

It is hoped that in all future consultations similar to the Windsor Avenue area, the opportunity is taken to look at the bigger picture. Sutton's draft third Local Implementation Plan for Mayoral Approval⁹ notes that "Sutton does not have a separate traffic reduction strategy, but the key borough traffic reduction objectives are set out in the Sustainable Transport Strategy, the Local Plan and the Cycling Strategy". Evidence that these policy documents are being rigorously adhered to would be welcomed, so that the targets set out within these documents are met.

⁷ The Healthy Streets approach is where people's well-being is prioritised, where the emphasis is about making streets more pleasant places to spend time, and where walking, cycling and using public transport are not just simply encouraged but become the obvious choices for travel for more people more of the time.

⁸ We are aware from the [minutes of the Cheam North and Worcester Park Local Committee meeting on 17 January 2019](#), that a resident has collected 154 signatures requesting Hamilton Avenue to be made one-way northbound between Warner Avenue and London Road (A24), and that in response to the petition, officers mention the Healthy Streets approach: "...the 'Healthy Streets' approach is promoting measures that improve residential streets and encourages more journeys on foot, or bicycle or using public transport and restricting access in to a residential area is an effective measure to achieve that aim". Petitions such as this create even more of an opportunity to engage across a wider area and we support the use of them as seen here.

⁹ <https://modern.gov.sutton.gov.uk/documents/s64799/Local%20Implementation%20Plan%20Funding%20Settlement%202019-20%20-%20Appendix%20A.pdf>