Council Tax Exemption Consultation

Public Consultation

Environment and Customer Services

HAVE YOUR SAY

Proposed closure of Hillcrest Road to through traffic

Introduction

We are consulting the Residents of Wilcott Road, Hillcrest Road, King Edwards Gardens, King Edwards Place and Whitehall Gardens on the proposal to physically close Hillcrest Road, at the junction with Gunnersbury Lane to the passage of motor vehicles.

Please complete this questionnaire. Your views are important.

The closing date for this consultation is 19 December 2014

Please complete the questionnaire online at www.ealing.gov.uk/consultations. Your views are important. You may alternatively return your completed questionnaire using the envelope provided.

Traffic Surveys

The surveys we undertook in November 2011 confirmed that the right turn from Uxbridge Road into Gunnersbury Lane had relatively low traffic flows of 60 vehicles per peak hour. Although Hillcrest Road was already subject to relatively high flow of approximately 200 vehicles per hour we hoped that in conjunction with the ‘no motor vehicles except access’ signs which were installed that the increase in traffic would be small.

We completed new after surveys in September 2014 to confirm the impact of the proposal on traffic volumes on the roads. The following graph compares the before and after hourly flows throughout the busiest days recorded surveys.

The total number of vehicles travelling on Hillcrest Road has increased significantly by 39% from 1894 to 2629 vehicles throughout the busiest survey day. It is noteworthy that the numbers of large vehicles recorded on the road has increased substantially from less than 10 a day to over 60 a day. The before survey recorded only 25 large vehicles turning right from Uxbridge Road into Gunnersbury Lane which indicates that some wider change in traffic patterns has increased the number of large vehicles on this route.

Your Views

The responses to the questionnaire enclosed will be analysed and reported to your ward councillors. Taking into account the responses of residents a decision will be taken regarding implementation of the scheme.

If you have any queries please contact Highway Services on 020 8825 5000 or HighwayServices@ealing.gov.uk
**Background**

We recently completed works throughout Acton Town Centre. This included banning turning movements at the Uxbridge Road / Gunnersbury lane junction in order to allow pedestrian green man crossings to be introduced and congestion at the junction to be reduced.

There were concerns that banning the right turn from Uxbridge Road into Gunnersbury Lane would increase through traffic on Wilcott Road, Hillcrest Road, and King Edwards Gardens. These residential roads already had a history of through traffic problems being caused by drivers seeking an alternative to congestion at the Gunnersbury lane / Uxbridge Road junction.

Although the Council recognised the issues presented by the proposals to local residents, we proceeded with the scheme due to the significant benefits it provided to the wider area. However, we did commit to undertaking this consultation after the scheme was complete to give residents the option of a permanent solution to through traffic issues on their road.

**Proposed Measures**

We propose to place a barrier the existing one way restriction on Hillcrest Road near Gunnersbury Lane. This would mean motor vehicles would no longer be able to exit onto Gunnersbury Lane, cycle access would be unaffected.

The advantages of this proposal are:

- All through traffic and the associated congestion, noise, pollution and damage to parked vehicles would be stopped
- The substantial reduction in traffic would make the road safer, quieter and more appealing for residents.

The disadvantage of this proposal is that Wilcott Road, Hillcrest Road, King Edwards Gardens, King Edwards Place and Whitehall Gardens would only be accessible from Uxbridge Road. This would mean undertaking a U-Turn at the Steyne Road roundabout if travelling to Gunnersbury Lane.

**Other Options Considered**

There were various alternative options which we considered not to be feasible when we considered them. These included:

**Enforcement of the existing 'No motor vehicles except Access' restriction.**

Unfortunately it is not possible for us to collect the evidence which we would require to enforce the current access only restriction. We have investigated the enforcement of the current restrictions in detail: the only way we identified of being able to enforce the current restrictions is to shrink them to a small area near the current one way. This would put most of the local residents outside of the restricted area, meaning they also would not be permitted to travel through it. People may consider this to be unclear and entrapping drivers into committing offences. As this would in effect operate in the same way as a physical road closure, but with additional complications, we do not consider this to be a feasible option.

**Introduce a 7.5T weight restriction**

We would need to provide an exemption for larger vehicles to access the roads for deliveries and loading - this would present similar enforcement difficulties to the current no motor vehicle restriction. A weight restriction would only target a small proportion of through traffic on the road.

**Introduce width restrictions**

These would stop larger vehicles from travelling through the road, however, it would not target the main issue of cars and smaller vans rat running. Even when well signed, width restrictions can cause issues with large vehicles getting stuck at the end of the road and causing congestion/damage when turning or reversing back out of the road.

**Replace the existing ‘except access’ restriction with no access during peak hours**

Due to the no entry restrictions at the other end of the roads this would leave residents with no access into the road during enforcement hours. This option would not target the problem of overnight traffic.

**Replace the ‘No motor vehicle’ restriction with a ‘No Entry’ restriction**

Providing ‘No Entry except access’ may provide a clearer message than the existing signage. Unfortunately, the Council is not able to use this combination of signs as it is not permitted by government regulations.

**Use a rising bollard activated by resident pass in place of a road closure**

This would allow access for residents to be maintained. However, this system would have ongoing running costs which would need to be covered by the cost of permits. The severance created by shutting the roads is not great enough to create the demand for people to pay a subscription fee to use the barrier.
Consultation Questionnaire
Proposed closure of Hillcrest Road to through traffic

Please fill in this questionnaire and return it in the prepaid envelope provided by 19 December 2014.

Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

1. Are you responding as a… (please select one answer only)

☐ Resident ☐ Business ☐ Both

2. Are you in favour of replacing the existing one way restriction with a physical road closure?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Please provide any further comments in the box below

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Thank you for filling in this questionnaire. Please return your questionnaire in the prepaid envelope provided to:
Highways Service, Ealing Council, 1st Floor Perceval House,
14/16 Uxbridge Road, Ealing W5 2HL.

We need your comments by 19 December 2014.

Thank you for your help.