SUMMARY

In July and August 2010, residents of Coombe Lane West were consulted on the introduction of measures at Coombe Lane Flyover and Traps Lane triangle to reduce vehicle speeds and improve road safety on Coombe Lane West. The proposals would also improve facilities for cyclists in the road. This report outlines the responses received to the consultation to date.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is RECOMMENDED that

1. The proposals set out in paragraphs 7 – 14 are approved for implementation.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To allow officers to implement road safety measures on Coombe Lane West.

BACKGROUND

1. In 2007, a petition was received by the Committee requesting that the Council “review the positioning of speed cameras and general traffic management on Coombe Lane West”. A report to the July 2007 meeting of the Committee resolved to continue to monitor traffic speeds in the road and authorised the submission of a bid to Transport for London (TfL) to investigate the relocation of the traffic island near West Road and the possibility of other measures to reduce speeds in the road. As an initial response to these concerns, additional bollards with high visibility banding were installed near High Drive, mobile police enforcement was requested and carried out and a permanent Speed Indicator Device (SID) was installed in the area. It was also agreed that a residents working group (RWG) should be formed, including those who had signed the petition and representatives from Coombe Hill Schools, to discuss and develop potential schemes for the road.

2. In November 2007, Officers met with the RWG and it became apparent that concerns were not limited to the section near West Road and that residents were keen to discuss traffic and safety matters in relation to the whole road. Subsequently, funding of £50,000 was secured from TfL for the 2009/10 financial year. The funding was used to undertake discussions with the RWG and feasibility studies on options arising from these discussions as well as Officers’ own investigations. It was also used to carry out amendments to signage and renewal of road markings throughout the road in March 2010. A further £75,000 was also secured for 2010/11 to allow for further development of schemes and to consult on and implement proposed measures.
3. The residents working group is made up of 24 residents who have previously expressed an interest in issues on Coombe Lane West and chosen to include representatives from all parts of the road, and has also included representatives from Coombe Hill Schools. The group has met a total of four times since November 2007 to discuss concerns and develop ideas. Regrettably, attendance has been low – averaging 5-6 – so views cannot be described as representative, but the meetings have still provided a useful forum to discuss proposals.

PROPOSED SCHEMES

4. Several schemes emerged from these investigations and, following discussions with members of this Committee in June 2010, a final list of proposed schemes was agreed upon:

- A westbound on carriageway cycle lane between New Victoria Hospital and Coombe Bank.
- Relocation of the pedestrian refuge island near West Road, and adjustment of road markings
- Resurfacing of carriageway at the junction of Coombe Lane West/Traps Lane to remove uneven patches
- New of pedestrian refuge island near Warren Road
- Relocation of the fixed site speed camera near Coombe Hill Schools.
- Footway improvements at Wolsey Close
- Alterations to the road layout at Coombe Lane Flyover, including advisory cycle lanes and an extension to the central traffic island.
- Alterations to the road layout at the junction of the major and minor sections of Coombe Lane West (Traps Lane triangle).

It was agreed with Ward Councillors that the last two proposals required consultation with local residents, since they fundamentally alter the road layout. Residents will be informed of the other measures prior to implementation. Discussions with Coombe Hill Schools and TfL are ongoing regarding the proposed relocation of the fixed site camera.

5. All proposals not subject to consultation will be implemented this year. Detailed design work is currently being carried out on these schemes.

6. Consultation on the alterations at Coombe Lane Flyover and Coombe Lane West/Traps Lane Triangle took the form of an information letter and questionnaire sent to affected residents at the end of July. Letters were also sent to other interested groups, such as the Emergency Services and London Buses. Because the consultation period fell within the school summer holidays, the usual three week period for responses was extended to six weeks.

PROPOSALS AT COOMBE LANE FLYOVER

7. The proposals at Coombe Lane Flyover are shown in ANNEX 1. They include the extension of the central island at Beverley Way and widening of the footway at Warbank Lane to make illegal turns more difficult, and the addition of advisory cycle lanes in both directions through the junction. This area has seen 12 accidents involving personal injury in the last three years, the fourth highest of any site in the Borough. Many of these accidents have involved cyclists and/or illegal ‘u turn’ movements and the measures have been designed specifically to target these issues.
8. A total of 26 properties were consulted, including all properties in Warbank Lane and all directly affected properties on Coombe Lane West. A total of 10 responses have been received, representing 38.5% response rate with 8 replies in favour and 0 against the proposals. Two “don’t knows” were also received. The Police replied and stated “where a minimum width of 1.5 metres cannot safely be provided for an advisory cycle lane can not be provide they recommend removing the outer lane markings and just providing the green surface dressing alone.”

9. In addition to questionnaire responses, further comments were also received from several respondents. A summary of these comments will be reported to the Committee on the night of the meeting.

PROPOSALS AT COOMBE LANE WEST/TRAPS LANE TRIANGLE

10. Proposed changes at Coombe Lane West/Traps Lane Triangle are shown in ANNEX 2. They include a realignment of the approach to the junction to improve sight lines and forward visibility for vehicles turning right from the link road into the main carriageway of Coombe Lane West, and new road markings to reduce the speed of vehicles turning left from the main carriageway into the link road.

11. The layout of this junction has been a longstanding issue, and although few accidents have been recorded at this location, the current arrangements make turning right from the link road a hazardous manoeuvre because drivers are not aligned square to the junction, so cannot easily see vehicles coming from the right. By widening the carriageway, space could be created to allow vehicles to get square and improve sightlines. A traffic island would be added to help guide vehicles into the right position. Additionally, we propose to introduce hatch markings outside Nos. 150 and 152, to decrease the speed of vehicles marking the turn from the main carriageway to the section linking to Traps Lane, as many vehicles have been observed treating this turn as a continuation of the main carriageway of the road and not reducing speed at all. The markings would help emphasise the junction and encourage vehicles to reduce their speed. If hatching alone is not successful, this area could be kerbed to physically prevent excessive speed.

12. A total of 6 properties were consulted, including which included all directly affected properties on Coombe Lane West. A total of 3 responses have been received, representing 50%, with 2 in favour and 1 against the proposals. The police commented that they “agree with the suggestion in the consultation letter, that the hatched marking on the west-bound approach to the fork in Coombe Lane West will not be successful. Drivers will not go around the cross hatching but will take a straight line across it. Not only will the desired deflection not be achieved but the road markings will soon be worn away by constant trafficking.”

13. In addition to questionnaire responses, further comments were also received from several respondents. A summary of these comments will be reported to the Committee on the night of the meeting.

TIMESCALE

14. If the proposals are approved, implementation will be carried out during this financial year.
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

15. The recommended works can be implemented within the £75,000 allocation received for the road from TfL.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

16. The proposed measures, together with other schemes identified (listed in paragraph 3) should help reduce traffic speeds and encourage cycling in the road, and as such have a positive environmental impact.

NETWORK IMPLICATIONS (if any)

17. The removal of a dedicated left turn lane and overall reduction from two lanes to one eastbound at the junction of Coombe Lane West and Coombe Lane Flyover could be expected to have some impact on traffic flows, particularly during the AM peak. However, traffic counts taken at this junction indicate less than 10% of vehicles make a left turn manoeuvre so any impact will be limited.

Background papers: held by Liam Judge – 020 8547 5901 (author of the report), e-mail: liam.judge@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

- Traffic count survey – Coombe Lane Flyover junction
- Speed survey
- Consultation letters and questionnaires
- Consultation responses