

Residents Committee

14 June 2017

Surbiton Crescent Traffic Management Order and Traffic Assessment

Report by Director of Place

Call-in deadline 28 June 2017

Purpose

To consider formal objections to the Experimental Traffic Management Order (TMO-P236) and the outcomes of a traffic assessment for the trial traffic restrictions of Surbiton Crescent.

Recommendations of the Portfolio Holder for Residents Services

To **Resolve** that -

1. the formal objections received in response to the publication of the Experimental Traffic Management Order (TMO-P236) as set out in paragraphs 19-22 are noted;
2. the results of the Surbiton Crescent trial traffic restrictions assessment, as set out in paragraph 8-13 are noted; and
3. the Committee consider how to proceed with the trial traffic restrictions in light of the formal objections received to the Experimental Traffic Management Order (TMO-P236), and the traffic assessment results.

Key Points

- A. Surbiton Crescent is a key link in the RBK's Go Cycle Programme; it forms part of both the Surbiton to Kingston and Kingston to Tolworth routes and also facilitates a connection to the Portsmouth Road scheme. A trial scheme to restrict traffic using Surbiton Crescent as a through-route was put in place in September 2016. The purpose of the scheme was to reduce traffic volumes sufficiently to allow cyclists to safely share the road with the remaining traffic. The reason for conducting a trial was to allow a assessment of the actual traffic impacts of the scheme to be undertaken. The trial restrictions were introduced under an Experimental Traffic Management Order (TMO) that came into effect on 22 August 2016 (the Experimental Order).
- B. Traffic surveys were carried out in February 2017. The results were compared with data collected before the restrictions were implemented. The analysis found:
 - Traffic volumes in Surbiton Crescent reduced by half (from 377 to 185 vehicles per hour).
 - Most of the displaced traffic has re-assigned to Surbiton Road and the northernmost section of Maple Road, which as A and B roads are more suitable for through-traffic and continue to operate within capacity.
 - There has been no significant increase in traffic volumes on adjacent residential roads.
 - Traffic speeds in Surbiton Crescent have reduced by 15%, and the average speed is now 19mph.
 - There has been no significant impact on bus journey times.
- C. There were 19 formal objections to the Experimental TMO and responses are provided in *Annex 1 (Enclosure 1 to Annex 4)*.

- D. Should the TMO be made permanent this will allow a permanent road layout to be implemented, which is likely to improve motorist compliance levels. Further consultation on the details of a permanent layout can be undertaken although there is minimal scope for amending the regulatory signs due to very prescriptive national regulations.
- E. Enforcement through the issuing of Penalty Charge Notices began on 14 November 2016 by means of the operation of fixed traffic cameras.

Context

1. The Mayor of London's Mini-Holland initiative is a £100 million investment administered by Transport for London (TfL). In December 2013 the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK) submitted a bid to the Mayor's Cycling fund setting out "a cycling vision for everyone" to encourage and stimulate more sustainable travel including cycling. In March 2014, RBK was one of three boroughs selected to receive programme funding. TfL has allocated £32.7 million for the RBK Mini-Holland programme. This allocation is subject to approval from TfL, and is earmarked solely for the delivery of the Mini-Holland programme, so cannot be used for other purposes. The current London Mayor has extended the programme with a greater emphasis on creating healthy streets.
2. Surbiton Crescent is a direct link in the Surbiton to Kingston scheme in the Go Cycle network. It also forms a key link in the Kingston to Tolworth Go Cycle scheme - it connects with Avenue Elmers thereby enabling cyclists to avoid the steep and busy Surbiton Hill Road. In addition it also creates an important connection to the Portsmouth Road scheme via Palace Road. The other elements of the Surbiton to Kingston Go Cycle scheme were approved at the Residents Committee on 14 September 2016.
3. The traffic management technique often known as 'filtered permeability' is increasingly employed in London to reduce traffic levels in local roads by removing through-traffic that has no destination in the immediate area. The initial design work carried out for the Surbiton to Kingston Go Cycle scheme concluded that this technique could be appropriate for Surbiton Crescent. Current design standards for cycling in London state that on roads with lower traffic volumes and speeds a 'quietway' approach can be adopted where cyclists can travel with motor vehicles in the general traffic lanes. Reducing traffic levels in Surbiton Crescent through 'filtered permeability' would enable this design approach to be used rather than segregated lanes that would necessitate extensive removal of parking bays.

Trial Traffic Restriction Scheme

4. Traffic restrictions were implemented in Surbiton Crescent in September 2016 on a trial basis with the aim of reducing traffic volumes on Surbiton Crescent. The scheme was introduced as a trial so as to allow RBK and other interested parties to observe and assess the actual traffic impacts before the Council decides if a permanent scheme is appropriate.
5. The trial scheme was introduced on 5 September 2016 under the Experimental Order which was made on 22 August 2016. The order (TMO-P236) has a maximum duration of 18 months *and a copy of it is included in Annex 2 (not included in this pack)*. The Order requires any objections to be made within 6 months of the making of the Order.

6. The trial scheme restricts general motor traffic entering the northern end of Surbiton Crescent, in the section between Anglesea Road and Surbiton Road. There are exemptions for buses, taxis (from the south side only), cyclists and for access to properties in the restricted section.
7. To ensure effective enforcement of the restrictions imposed by the Experimental Order, two traffic cameras were installed and, following a period when warning notices were issued, the Council began issuing PCN's on 14 November 2016. Road signs for the scheme have been in accordance with prescriptive, national regulations at all times.

Traffic Assessment

8. One of the key concerns prior to the trial scheme being introduced was the potential impact on residential roads adjacent to Surbiton Crescent. Traffic surveys were commissioned to collect data about traffic flows in and around Surbiton Crescent both before and after the trial restrictions were introduced. In addition to existing traffic data from October 2015 two sets of surveys were undertaken during school term time:
 - a 'before' survey in the week commencing 6 June 2016 prior to the trial traffic restrictions being implemented, and
 - an 'after' survey in the week commencing 6 February 2017 after the trial traffic restrictions were implemented.
9. The surveys show that traffic flow in Surbiton Crescent (as measured at a point between Palace Road and Uxbridge Road) has been halved and that there has been a minimal impact on other roads. The table below shows the changes in traffic volumes in the key residential roads affected by the trial scheme. Traffic flows are combined direction, average hourly flow between 7a.m. and 7p.m. Monday to Friday.

	'Before' Volume (vehicles / hour)	'After' Volume (vehicles / hour)
Surbiton Crescent	377	185
Anglesea Road	38	39
Palace Road	97	83
Uxbridge Road	54	51

10. The majority of traffic that used to use Surbiton Crescent has diverted to Surbiton Road (the A240, categorised as an 'A' Road on the Principal Road Network) and Maple Road (the northernmost section between Surbiton Crescent and Surbiton Road, categorised as a 'B' road) as anticipated by the traffic modelling work carried out prior to the trial being implemented. These strategic roads are better suited to cater for through-traffic and key junctions are controlled with traffic signals. Traffic on Surbiton Road has increased by an average of 187 vehicles per hour. Traffic signal timings at the signalised junctions on Maple Road and Surbiton Road have been optimised during the trial, based on actual traffic flows, to manage the new traffic patterns with minimum delay and have accommodated the additional traffic volumes within their peak capacity.

11. Speed data was also collected and the surveys show a notable speed reduction in Surbiton Crescent of about 15%. The 85th percentile speed (i.e. the speed which 85% of vehicles do not exceed) has reduced from 27.6 mph to 23.4 mph. The average speed has reduced to 19 mph. Average traffic speeds in Palace Road, Uxbridge Road and Anglesea Road, all of which have speed humps, remain below 20 mph.
12. Information on bus journey times through Surbiton Crescent has been provided by TfL through their iBus data. This is on-board bus data that tracks speed and journey time along the route. Comparing the March 2016 data with March 2017 data it can be seen that there has been negligible change in average bus journey time. Average northbound bus speeds have remained at 21 km/hr and average southbound at 25 km/hr.
13. The reduced traffic flows in Surbiton Crescent, down to a daytime average of 185 vehicles /hour, and the average speed reduced to below 20 mph make the road safer for all road users, especially cyclists and pedestrians. The combination of lower traffic volumes and reduced speeds mean that it is considered safe for cyclists to share the road with general traffic.

Proposal and Options

14. Based on the traffic assessment results above the scheme can be made permanent as it achieves its goals of creating a quiet and safer route for cycling and walking with minimal traffic impact on other road users.
15. It is expected that a permanent road layout would further improve compliance levels through inclusion of the following measures:
 - Permanent traffic islands
The temporary red and white barriers would be replaced with permanent traffic islands, which should improve the visual deterrent to non-exempt motorists.
 - Illumination of signs
A permanent scheme would allow cabling for sign posts to be installed and for the restriction signs to be illuminated during the hours of darkness. While this is not required under the regulations, it should assist with enforcement of the restrictions.
 - Directional Signs
Additional directional signage could be added in advance of the restriction, although care is required to avoid introducing unnecessary street clutter.
 - Sat Nav
Companies supplying in-car satellite navigation will be informed of the permanent restriction, through TfL, which will enable them to update their systems. Google has recently updated its street map to indicate that the northern end of Surbiton Crescent is restricted.
16. Dependent upon the outcome of the decision on how to proceed with the trial, further consideration can be given to the use and operation of the two traffic cameras. A number of options are open to the Council, including:
 - remove the cameras
 - keep the cameras in situ and continue enforcing
 - retain the cameras as a visual deterrent

Should the cameras be removed there would be the option of reinstatement either on a temporary or permanent basis should the need arise.

Enforcement

17. The initial contravention levels for the trial scheme were high, despite RBK issuing over 5,000 warning letters in the period before PCNs began to be issued. However, the number of contraventions has since declined significantly.
18. During the course of the trial scheme there have been challenges to PCNs through London's independent adjudication process. To date (30th May 2017) there have been 334 decisions of which 255 have found in RBK's favour (76%). This is considered to be an unusually high 'success rate'

Formal Objections to the Experimental Order

19. A total of 19 formal objections have been received in response to the Experimental Order. The full transcript of each objection can be viewed at *Annex 3 (Enclosure 2 to Annex 4)*. Several of the comments received cannot be classified as objections to the Experimental Order itself since they relate to other subjects. Nevertheless these comments have been recorded and responded to in *Annex 1 (Enclosure 1 to Annex 4)*. The comments have been grouped by similar themes and an RBK response has been provided to address each issue. The identity of the complainant has been withheld to comply with the Data Protection Act. Below is a summary of the top three themes received in the formal objections along with an RBK response:

20. Increased Traffic in surrounding roads

Amongst the 19 formal objections, 15 objectors expressed concerns about increased traffic in the surrounding areas, particularly in Maple Road, Surbiton Road, Palace Road and Anglesea Road. A number of objections mentioned that the increased traffic has had a negative impact on pollution, particularly as it forces cars to increase their journeys to avoid the restricted area. There were additional general comments about large coaches waiting in the restricted area, resulting in further pollution.

RBK Response:

The traffic assessment shows that there has been no significant change in traffic flows in adjacent residential roads, this is outlined further in paragraph 9.

Traffic that formerly used Surbiton Crescent as a through-route has been largely re-assigned to Surbiton Road (A240) which, as an 'A road' on the Principal Road Network, is considered more suitable for this type of traffic. There has been some increase in traffic as expected in the northernmost section of Maple Road but, as above, this 'B road' is better suited to cater for this traffic. The additional distance that some vehicles need to travel by not using Surbiton Crescent is not considered to be significant.

The traffic assessment shows no significant change in overall levels of traffic and congestion and therefore there is no reason to conclude there has been any significant increase in pollution.

21. Safety concerns

12 objectors expressed concerns in relation to safety. These included suggestions that the crossing points in surrounding areas are inadequate and now more dangerous, especially for school children. Objectors also raised concerns about cars undertaking U-turns in order to avoid the restricted area and how the perceived increase in traffic on surrounding roads would cause an

increased risk to the safety of cyclists. Additional general comments included reference to waiting coaches blocking the sight line of motorists.

RBK Response:

An initial safety audit was carried out prior to the scheme being implemented, and a further road safety audit will be commissioned should the Council decide to make the scheme permanent. During the experimental period site visits have been carried out by independent consultants to assess scheme operations and safety, and no safety issues have been identified.

The main entrance to Surbiton High School is in Surbiton Crescent where reduced traffic volumes and speeds have improved the safety of crossing points. On the two roads affected by increased traffic (Maple Road and Surbiton Road) the crossing points already have controlled 'green man' signals.

The dissipation of traffic to other routes is not considered to be a significant hazard to cyclists.

As mentioned, coach parking, which is related to Surbiton high School, is a pre-existing issue that is not affected by the trial scheme.

22. Purpose

12 objectors expressed concerns about the purpose of the trial. It was felt that the trial restrictions are not enhancing the overall scheme and there were comments about the trial being implemented in isolation due to the lack of adjoining cycle lanes. There were comments about how the route runs parallel to the cycle lane on Portsmouth Road and so is not required.

Others did not understand the benefits of restricting traffic using this section of the road and felt that Surbiton Crescent is used by buses more often than private vehicles, so cyclists will still need to negotiate with buses. Objectors questioned why cyclists are allowed to pass on either side of the restricted part of the carriageway, and through it too. There were also comments that cyclists are not using the road at all.

Additional comments referenced that the Go Cycle money should be spent wisely and not wasted.

RBK Response:

Surbiton Crescent is not an isolated scheme but forms a key continuous link in the Go Cycle network. Surbiton Crescent is part of both the Surbiton to Kingston route and the Kingston to Tolworth route. Surbiton Crescent also provides a link to the Portsmouth Road Go Cycle scheme. Adjacent elements of the Go Cycle network are in different stages of design and construction but when completed will form continuous cycle routes between major borough destinations.

Based on current standards for cycling, traffic levels in Surbiton Crescent were too high prior to the introduction of the trial scheme for safe cycling in comfort. Although buses continue to use Surbiton Crescent, traffic levels have halved and speeds have reduced by 15%, improving safety for cyclists.

The layout at either end of the restricted section of Surbiton Crescent can be amended as part of the detailed design of a permanent scheme. However the current trial arrangements are not considered to undermine the scheme's main purpose.

Surbiton Crescent is expected to cater for higher volumes of cyclists in the future when the surrounding network of routes is complete.

The Mayor of London's Mini-Holland initiative is a £100 million investment administered by Transport for London (TfL). In March 2014, RBK was one of three boroughs selected to receive programme funding based on its bid and business case demonstrating, inter alia, value for money. TfL has allocated £32.7 million for the RBK Mini-Holland programme. This allocation is subject to approval from TfL on a project by project basis and is solely for the delivery of the Mini-Holland programme, so cannot be used for other purposes.

Consultation

23. The trial was included in the Surbiton to Kingston Go Cycle consultation leaflet sent to households in summer 2016 (pre-trial). 314 people provided comments on the trial, which were then categorised into themes. Of the key themes, 99 people expressed concerns about more traffic congestion in the surrounding area, 72 expressed general support while 34 expressed general opposition.
24. The Experimental Order is itself a formal consultation allowing a 6 month objection period during the trial, which allows people to base their comments on the actual impacts before the Council decides whether to give permanent effect to the Experimental Order. The responses to the Experimental Order are set out in **Annex 1** and summarised above.
25. General feedback from the public has also been welcomed and approximately 100 items of correspondence have been received since September 2016, providing various comments on the trial scheme. These comments have been analysed and categorised into themes. The main complaint, raised by 52 people, was about the issuing of PCNs. Inadequate signage was cited as an issue by 48 people and 30 mentioned insufficient information being available. The themes of the concerns mirror those expressed in the official objections to the Experimental Order as set out in detail, along with RBK responses, in *Annex 1 (Enclosure 1 to Annex 4)*.
26. The PCN process, including issuing the PCNs and dealing with subsequent appeals, generated a considerable volume of correspondence and representations. The PCN correspondence and representations have been considered by the Council during the experimental period. The main themes of these representations are similar to those made in the official objections detailed in *Annex 1 (Enclosure 1 to Annex 4)*. The volume of PCN representations has declined as the number of PCNs being issued has declined.
27. Should the Committee resolve to make the Experimental Order permanent, it could also require further consultation to be carried out on the details of a permanent road layout. It should be noted that national regulations are very prescriptive in terms of regulatory signs and highway design but there is scope to invite comment on some aspects of a permanent design.

Timescale

28. If, having given consideration to the objections received, the Committee resolves to make a further Traffic Management Order giving the Experimental Order permanent effect then the next steps will be to proceed to detailed design, followed by permanent works, subject to RBK and TfL approvals. The completion

of permanent works could be completed by the Winter of 2017 depending on progress made with design and approvals.

Resource Implications

29. The conversion of the trial scheme to a permanent scheme is estimated to cost approximately £75k in the 2017/18 financial year.
30. The funding will come from TfL which has allocated £32.7 million for the RBK Mini-Holland programme. This allocation is subject to approval from TfL, and is earmarked solely for the delivery of the Mini-Holland programme, so cannot be used for other purposes. This budget forms part of the Surbiton to Kingston Go Cycle scheme.

Legal Implications

31. The Experimental Order is known as the Kingston upon Thames (Prescribed Routes) (Amendment No. 3) Experimental Traffic Order 2016 (2016 No. 50, TMO 236) (the Order) which was made in accordance with the provisions of Sections 9 and 124 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended, and The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996, the Act and the Regulations respectively.
32. The Regulations required a notice of making to be published in a local newspapers and the London Gazette. The notice specifies how any person may object to the Order for the period of 6 months from the date it came into force. This enables objections to be made over time in the light of experience of the operation of the experimental restrictions. In addition, the Council is required to deposit the Order and certain other documents, including the Order for public inspection. The Council complied with these requirements and as a result certain objections were made as detailed elsewhere in this report.
33. The Regulations also required the Council to place on or near the road such traffic signs in such positions as it considered requisite for securing that adequate information as to the effect of the order was made available for road users. The Council displayed such signs in accordance with the relevant statutory regulations and guidance.
34. The enforcement of the restrictions imposed by the Order by the use of traffic cameras and issuing PCNs resulted in numerous representations being received by the Council as part of the PCN process. The Council is not required to have regard to those representations under the procedures set out in the Regulations when deciding whether to give the Order permanent effect.

Many of those PCNs have been subject to appeals to the independent parking adjudicator, who has determined the vast majority of appeals in favour of the Council (76% as at 30 May 2017). Those determinations are not relevant to the decision whether the Order should be given permanent effect

In the light however of the volume of representations received from the public in response to the PCNs, rather than "official objections" to the Order, the report highlights, at paragraph 26, that the main themes of those representations echoed those made in the 19 "official" objections.
35. The Council now has to decide whether, in the light of the objections and representations detailed elsewhere in this report and the traffic assessments and, having regard to all the circumstances, the restrictions imposed by the Order

should be given permanent effect. If it decides they should a new traffic management order will be made for that purpose under Sections 6 and 124 of the Act and in accordance with the Regulations.

36. Any person who wishes to challenge the validity of such a permanent order may do so pursuant to Part VI of Schedule 9 to the Act.

37. The Council has a statutory responsibility under the Traffic Management Act 2004 to maintain road network operations on its strategic roads and must notify TfL of its proposals to TfL.

Risk Assessment

38. Scheme risks and issues will be identified, mitigated and managed through the relevant governance and programme management arrangements.

Equalities Impact Assessment

39. The proposed works are covered by the overarching EQIA for the Surbiton to Kingston /Kingston to Tolworth EQIA, and as such there is no need for an individual assessment to be made.

Road Network Implications

40. The Council has a statutory responsibility under the Traffic Management Act 2004 to maintain road network operations on its strategic roads and, where appropriate, must notify proposals to TfL.

41. Traffic modelling for the key signalised junctions affected by the scheme has been carried out in accordance with TfL's audit and validation processes to assess the impacts of the proposals on traffic flows. RBK will continue to develop the designs with TfL, which manages and controls the traffic signal timings, to minimise the impact on traffic.

Environmental and Air Quality Implications

42. There will be positive impacts on the environment resulting from the Go Cycle projects as they aim to create a modal shift towards less polluting forms of sustainable transport.

43. The traffic assessment shows no increase in congestion and therefore there is no reason to conclude there is any significant impact on traffic pollution levels.

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Background papers

- List of reports/documents

None