

PARKSIDE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Response to Call-In of Belvedere Drive and Belvedere Grove Width Restrictions
Review
September 2016

The Parkside Residents' Association ("PRA") agrees with the decision dated 16 September 2016 by the Cabinet Member to accept the Officer's recommendation contained in the Report dated 5 September ("the Report"). Our reasons are:

1. The PRA supports an open network.

The PRA's membership area includes Burghley, Marryat and Calonne roads all of which carry heavy volumes of traffic. Our residents recognise that similar problems exist in other roads around the Village; there is a small network of roads collectively carrying heavy volumes of traffic making both local and through journeys. Our residents also support the principle that if possible, through traffic and, especially, heavy lorries and large commercial vehicles should be discouraged from using residential roads as short cuts. However, the PRA has consistently opposed restrictions such as closures and banned turns which address volume issues in one road/area if the effect is simply to displace traffic and put unfair pressure onto nearby roads/areas which remain open.

2. The experimental measures have not met their stated objectives.

We did not object to the principle of the introduction of width restrictions in Belvedere Drive and Belvedere Grove as they were experimental measures which fell short of closure; we were prepared to wait and see if their effect might be to discourage through traffic from using the wider local area altogether and confine heavy lorries etc. to the local distributor network. We note however from the Report that the measures have caused some displacement of traffic generally onto other local residential roads. It is also self-evident that larger vehicles unable to get through the narrow restrictors in the Belvederes will have been forced to use other routes instead but there is no evidence in the Report that their displacement has been confined to the local distributor network as was hoped. In these respects it appears that the experimental measures have not met the objectives for which they were introduced. The Report also confirms residents' experience that development traffic in the Village area is high; in our view there would appear to be little prospect of a material reduction in that traffic for the foreseeable future given the number of construction projects in only their earliest stages. In that context residents are unlikely to welcome the continuation of measures whose effect is to exclude that traffic from one area if it is at the expense of other areas.

3. The design and location of the installations were unsuitable and resented by drivers.

The summary in the Report of the practical difficulties arising from the design and location of the width restrictions confirms the experience of local drivers; the restrictions were excessively narrow and came to be strongly resented, damage to vehicles was a regular occurrence as were disputes between drivers. Residents noted that in Belvedere Grove, trees often affected the visibility of priority signs and parking spaces were retained which allowed vehicles to park so close to the restriction entry that they confused approaching drivers and compromised queuing

traffic. In Belvedere Drive the priority working and retained parking created queues onto Wimbledon Hill Road. Whilst it may be possible to make further adjustments to overcome these specific problems, the need for parking spaces for both residents and visitors to the Village should be a priority and the options for better locations for width restrictions elsewhere in these two roads are limited. It is hard to envisage any alternative restrictions which are capable of materially influencing the choice of traffic routes whilst also avoiding the unacceptable effects of displacement.

4. The issue has had intensive investigation but there is little appetite for further experimentation.

The principle remains that local drivers want and expect to be able to use the Belvedere area and surrounding Village roads as part of the local network. We believe there is little appetite within the wider local community for yet more options and experiments within the Belvedere area. Although there is perhaps a better understanding within the community of the problems in that area, it is felt that those problems have been given their fair share of attention. For this reason we believe that the proposal for an effective embargo on further investigation into this matter for 24 months is not unreasonable, especially in the context of the Council's current funding position. It does not follow that the substantial investment already made in the surveys and investigations conducted thus far will be wasted if nothing further is done at this stage. If the problems persist and escalate then the understanding and experience gained from the outcomes thus far will inform any further investigations for which funding may be available. In that context the suggestion noted in the Cabinet Member's decision for investigation, subject to availability of funding, into a 20mph zone around the Village is something which residents in the area regularly raise and we believe would be widely supported.

Mrs S Cooke
Chairman
Parkside Residents' Association

3 October 2016

Wimbledon East Hillside Residents Association (WEHRA)

The WEHRA Committee has met and discussed your request. WEHRA does not wish to take part, as the subject of traffic flow in Wimbledon is so complex, and we have yet to see a comprehensive plan worth implementing. The experimental bollards that were installed served two roads adjoining our area, diverting traffic to us.

Would you please advise the Panel that in a few years' time, Crossrail 2 construction will take a very heavy toll on our ten residential roads (from Alexandra northward, between Wimbledon Hill and Leopold Roads) and the council will need to provide a plan for relief, when engineering works begin.

Leigh Terrafranca, on behalf of WEHRA

8 October 2016

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