

## **Response to Consultation on Parkhill, Lawn and Fleet Safe and Healthy Streets**

I am a local resident, having lived in Lawn Road for 34 years. I walk down Lawn Road and Fleet Road and back at least twice a day to go to South End Green and the Heath. My wife has to use a wheelchair after a major stroke and goes to the Heath via Lawn Road and Cressy Road most days; she also does an exercise walk with a carer along Lawn Road, Downside Crescent, Garnett Road, Upper Park Road and Haverstock Hill every day. I cycle into the West End most days along Lawn Road, Upper Park Road and Haverstock Hill. In summary, I am directly affected by the proposals on a daily basis.

There are two distinct proposals covered by this Consultation. The first proposal, to widen the pavements outside the Fleet Primary School with other associated changes seems sensible in principle, although I have concerns about whether the narrowing of the roadway will increase levels of pollution outside the School as traffic backs up, particularly given that the impact of the major changes that are about to be made at South End Green do not appear to have been considered at all.

The second set of proposals, to make major changes to the road network between Haverstock Hill and Fleet Road, are extremely concerning because they would actually increase the traffic passing the School on Fleet Road, increase pollution and will also make the conditions more dangerous for pedestrians, wheelchair users and cyclists than they are at present.

- **No Left Turn from Fleet Road into Parkhill Road**

Fleet Road is a main road, an important bus route and the main access to the Cressy Road Ambulance Station. I would say, judging from three 30 minute traffic counts I have made on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March and Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March, that about 30% of the traffic travelling to the west – towards Haverstock Hill - from the traffic lights controlled junction at Agincourt Road, Mansfield Road and Southampton Road along Fleet Road, currently turns left onto Parkhill Road and goes through to Haverstock Hill. The proposals would mean that instead of making that turn off Fleet Road before the School, the traffic would continue along the generally quite congested section of Fleet Road until the junction with Lawn Road. More traffic would pass through the newly narrowed section of Fleet Road outside the School causing more pollution and greater hazards to pedestrians and cyclists. Ambulances would likely be stuck in the traffic before being able to turn into Cressy Road to get to the Ambulance Station. This seems a fundamental flaw in the entire proposal.

To be clear, the increase in traffic passing the School because of the inability to turn left into Parkhill Road from Fleet Road will not be counterbalanced by a reduction in eastbound traffic that now joins Fleet Road from Lawn Road to the north of the School because at the moment traffic leaving Lawn Road onto Fleet Road to go north to South End Green, and into Cressy Road to Agincourt Road and onto Mansfield Road or Southampton Road does not pass the School. That would not continue to be the case under the proposals because the Lawn Road entry onto Fleet Road would be blocked. All eastbound traffic would have to find its way to

Parkhill Road and enter Fleet Road then passing the School before continuing to South End Green or turning into Cressy Road.

Has any traffic impact assessment been carried out? Does Camden have the baseline data showing how these junctions actually function? Have London Ambulance Service been consulted?

- **No Access from Lawn Road to Fleet Road**

The proposals mean that there is no access via Lawn Road to Fleet Road. Lawn Road will take all the traffic coming from the east towards Hampstead, Swiss Cottage and Primrose Hill because of the blocking of access to Parkhill Road. Lawn Road, approx. 9m, is much narrower than Parkhill Road, which is approx. 12m wide and built for two way traffic with parking spaces either side. Lawn Road has a significant bend, is width restricted by electric car charging points, and the route to Haverstock Hill involves pulling onto Upper Park Road before turning onto Haverstock Hill.

There is a lot of pedestrian use, particularly by the pupils of the Hasmorean Middle School who mainly walk to and from Belsize tube station along Garnett Road, Tasker Road, Lawn Road and Upper Park Road. Increased traffic on Lawn Road and Upper Park Road will inevitably make this much more hazardous.

Again, has any traffic impact assessment or pedestrian safety assessment been carried out?

- **Impact on other roads**

Stopping westbound traffic on Parkhill Road will mean that that traffic will use Lawn Road, Upper Park Road, Garnett Road, Tasker Road and Downside Crescent to get to Haverstock Hill. This will result in displaced traffic, traffic that does not disappear, but just moves to even less suitable residential streets.

Most of the westbound traffic currently appears to go from Parkhill Road left down to Camden or turns right and then left into England's Lane at the traffic lights, which are only about 30 metres away. This works very well at the moment. If all traffic has to come out of Lawn Road/Upper Park Road and then down to the England's Lane lights, there will be large delays at the lights for vehicles turning right, with more pollution from idling vehicles.

Traffic that is going to Hampstead currently tends to turn off Lawn Road along Downside Crescent to get to Haverstock Hill. This is a shorter route. If all the traffic that now goes along Parkhill Road starts to use Downside Crescent to get to Haverstock Hill, Downside Crescent will become a very congested rat run. It is only approx. 8m wide.

Traffic that going to Swiss Cottage or to Camden from Fleet Road that is forced onto Lawn Road rather than Parkhill Road is likely to turn down Garnett Road, across Upper Park Road and right onto Parkhill Road. The distance is shorter than going

round via Lawn Road and for traffic going to Camden it also avoids the England's Lane lights. Garnett Road is a very quiet narrow street and unsuitable for this increased traffic. It is also width restricted by an electric car charging point.

Eastbound traffic using Parkhill Road will either have to turn up Tasker Road to get onto Upper Park Road and then turn up Garnett Road onto Lawn Road or continue along Parkhill Road until Garnett Road, then on to Lawn Road. Tasker Road and Garnett Road are both quiet, narrow residential roads.

Users of the Royal Free Hospital Staff car park and the parking area for the Hampstead Group Practice GP surgery enter and leave onto Lawn Road. Anyone wishing to enter the car park from the west will not be able to and will have to find their way down to Parkhill Road, presumably down the narrow Garnett Road, joining the traffic outside the School on Fleet Road, again increasing the number of vehicles passing the School, before they can turn into Lawn Road and access the car park.

Until the impact of the changes being made to South End Green is clear it is impossible to know what the effect on Fleet Road is going to be. South End Green is the terminus of two of the busiest London bus routes, the 1 and the 24 and it also serves the C11, and 46. Buses will be parked on Fleet Road and this is going to affect the traffic flows significantly. Surely a cumulative impact assessment is required.

Unless there is a traffic impact assessment and a pedestrian safety assessment covering the entire area that would be affected, and confirming that there will be no problems caused, with an assessment of the pollution levels that will result from the increased traffic on Fleet Road, it would be quite wrong to make the changes contemplated by the proposals.

- **Cycling**

The works to improve the cycle lanes on Haverstock Hill will of course lead to an increase in cycling in the area. This is already apparent. The very well used route along Mansfield Road and the link via Cressy Road to Lawn Road and onto the new lanes on Haverstock Hill will inevitably become more and more popular, providing great links for the communities on both sides of the Heath. In the light of these improvements to propose a contraflow system along Lawn Road is a very poor idea. At the moment Lawn Road does not suffer from speeding drivers because careful attention is required on what is a narrow road albeit with little traffic. Traffic speeds and congestion will increase inevitably, whilst drivers' attention decreases because of the one way system. Cyclists' safety will be impaired.

This requires a road safety audit.

- **Speed Bumps**

Speed bumps installed in Lawn Road were removed by Camden many years ago because they were found to be dangerous given the road layout. Lawn Road is not a

wide road like Parkhill Road and the bend reduces the speed of traffic very effectively.

A full safety assessment would be needed and I don't think anything like that has been carried out to date.

- **Junction Improvements**

The existing crossing points of Lawn Road and Parkhill Road seem well designed with the refuges in the middle being big enough for a wheelchair user like my wife and parents with children in buggies to feel safe. I'm sure these things can be improved of course and that would be a good step to take, but there is no linkage to the other changes which will just increase the amount of traffic at each crossing point and make crossing more dangerous.

Tom Symes

