

**What area would be covered by a TCPR? – and what is the definition of ‘local’ traffic?**

**Q1. Would you be looking at the same area as the proposed LTN for this [TCPR scheme]?**

A1. We have recently had it confirmed that it is the established policy of Merton Council and Transport for London that the existing main roads surrounding East Hillside (Church Rd, Arthur Rd, Village High Street, Wimbledon Hill Road and Alexandra Road) must continue to fulfil their function as distributor roads. It is only between these main roads that measures could be taken to restrict through traffic. Consistent with this policy, our Group is focussed on promoting discussion on how to prevent residential roads evolving unnoticed into distributor roads.

Given that our Group’s focus is the area bounded by the distributor roads that surround East Hillside, then it follows that we would support a TCPR scheme being implemented on all those streets that are wholly contained within those distributor roads (i.e. excluding the cul-de-sacs which have direct entry/exit onto the distributor roads).

Having said that, an LTN has already been implemented in Worcester Road, Compton Road, and Alwyne Road by virtue of the physical barrier across Worcester Road at its junction with Woodside. If that barrier remains, and we know of no plans to remove it, then it would seem that little useful purpose would be served by including these streets in a wider TCPR scheme in East Hillside.

We also note that the South Fulham TCPR scheme is being extended to adjacent areas on the other side of surrounding distributor roads, and it may well be that some, but not all, areas adjacent to East Hillside would benefit from having a TCPR scheme as well. Lancaster Road and Lancaster Gardens already have an LTN by virtue of there being prohibited entry from the High Street. Similarly, Mansell Road and Raymond Road have an LTN by virtue of the modal filter placed across Mansell Road at its junction with Wimbledon Hill Road. But Ridgway Place, for example, which we understand experiences rat-running by through traffic, may very well benefit by having access controlled by ANPR cameras. And the Vineyard Hill Road/Dora Road/Kenilworth Avenue/Strathearn Road area may also benefit from a TCPR scheme. Obviously, we have no objection to TCPR schemes being introduced in such places. But our focus remains East Hillside.

**Q2. It would be good to confirm just what is classified as 'local' traffic.**

and

**Removing a significant proportion of through traffic would be a major improvement, but Wimbledon/Merton is such a large area that many drivers who are rat-running start and finish their journeys within the "permitted" area. It seems to me that, for example, if you are travelling from Coombe to Gap Road, the rules which apply to residents of, say, Esher should equally apply to you, so you cannot access the rat-run. Can the permitted area be narrowly defined?**

A2. Defining what is, and what is not, ‘local’ is a matter of choice, and is probably a question to be answered when undertaking the final detailed design of a TCPR scheme. From a practical point of view, we understand that ‘local’ may be defined by reference to the post code at the address to which a vehicle is registered, and so may be adjusted according to choice.

In South Fulham ‘local’ was defined as being traffic registered to an address in the borough, and, although Hammersmith & Fulham is a geographically smaller borough than Merton, we think that

would be a good starting point. So, we propose that, in the event a TCPR scheme is introduced in East Hillside, then all vehicles registered to a residential address in Merton should have an automatic permit to drive through the area. This policy, however, should be kept under review and, if necessary, amended in the light of experience.

### Traffic speeds

**Q3. Speed - the recent installation of 20mph limit signs in the Belvederes (and some time ago in St Mary's Road) is welcome but of course of little benefit with no enforcement regime. As a result, a significant proportion of both rat-runners (from near and far) and legitimate permitted traffic will drive as fast as the roads permit - so it is not uncommon to see/hear traffic passing on Wimbledon Hill Road at 50mph - and in the Belvederes (where there are no - or ineffectual -speed humps) at similar speeds. Can the technology be configured to tackle this issue as well?**

and

**As we live on Belvedere Grove, there are two major impacts: number of cars, but also the speed many drive past our house, ignoring the 20mph limit. So even before the implementation of such a scheme like the one in Fulham is considered, we would strongly advocate a speed camera to get motorists sticking to the limit.**

A3. The ANPR cameras in the South Fulham TCPR scheme are not speed cameras.

With TCPR schemes, cameras are located at the 'control points' near the centre of the restricted area so as to capture through-traffic. These locations may not be appropriate for capturing speeding traffic, even if they performed this function, which they do not.

It follows that, after removing through-traffic, it may still be necessary to take action to reduce traffic speeds. A range of minor measures could be introduced to calm traffic and give greater priority to pedestrians and cyclists. These measures could include road narrowing, 'build-outs', pedestrian crossings, cycle lane priority, and no longer requiring vehicles to park on pavements. It is useful to know that the South Fulham scheme generates a financial surplus (see below): a similar surplus in East Hillside could pay for these improvements.

### Traffic displacement

**Q4. John [Galsworthy] said that overall traffic counts had fallen significantly - does he have any comparative data for Putney and Battersea bridges to see whether the traffic just moved bridges?**

A4. We have checked this with John and he confirms that Putney and Battersea Bridges have experienced no increase in traffic. He also points out that Hammersmith Bridge is closed, and Wandsworth and Vauxhall Bridges currently have reduced capacity due to road works.

## Use of RingGo

**Q5. How well has RingGo coped with this? - we have had some major issues with them in the past with non-recognition of number plates - are they past these problems now? Also how user friendly is RingGo per se for the more elderly?**

A5. John Galsworthy states:

*“RingGo ... has coped well and have been quick to make changes to their software where needed. The harder piece is getting residents to own the fact they are in control of the virtual gate and the RingGo app is their personal key.”*

We would add a couple of observations:

- We do not know of any data on how user-friendly the elderly find RingGo relative to any other app.
- Using RingGo to obtain an access permit is less critical than using it for a parking permit, as vehicular access is always available to any property without a permit – albeit by taking a specific route. There is an alternative to using RingGo – which is not the case with parking.

## Finance

**Q6. Do you have any idea what the costs would be and would the Council be prepared to instal and maintain the system?**

A6. We think it is important to exercise a degree of caution about financial issues until professional traffic engineers have developed an outline TCPR scheme for East Hillside and determined the likely level of costs and revenues. This will depend on many factors such as the number of cameras required, the volume of traffic, and the estimated levels of compliance. One TCPR scheme is unlikely to have the same financial model as another. We have, however, asked John Galsworthy about the financing of the South Fulham TCPR and received the following reply:

*“Final costs and income are not finalised, but the signage costs are relatively low, the cameras/monitors are rented and data costs are pay as you go. The prices are commercially sensitive so I can’t give you those. As it stands the scheme is running a £40k surplus, but that will be reinvested in future improvements to bring it cost neutral. The parking account funded the initial works so there was no additional money the council had to find to start the scheme. There is always a level of non-compliance with camera enforcement of around 1%, this should be enough to pay for the ongoing scheme costs.”*

Set-up costs therefore, appear low and it is instructive that the South Fulham scheme was introduced without recourse to any additional money. It is good to see that the scheme generates surplus funds that are to be reinvested in future improvements.

We also note that the LTNs that Merton introduced in 2020 and which had physical rather than virtual blocks (such as planters) are being changed to ANPR cameras in 2021.

In these circumstances, and subject to a detailed financial appraisal, it is difficult to think of any logical reason why the Council would not be prepared to instal and maintain a TCPR scheme in East Hillside.

**Q7. I have concerns that Merton Council will look upon this as another cash cow for the borough as they have done with the parking permits etc. Are they willing to guarantee that they will not charge for named visitors etc.?**

A7. The point is that, if 'local' is defined as being a resident of Merton, then it follows that charges would be levied only on drivers from outside Merton. No Merton Councillor is going to have to face angry constituents being required to pay charges imposed by Merton Council. This is quite unlike the situation with parking permits. In these circumstances your interest in a 'guarantee' may not be relevant.

#### **Traffic data**

**Q8. It was great to discover that detailed traffic data exists - do you know if Merton Council has this data or is prepared to purchase it? The point about having so many Uber drivers was particularly interesting.**

A8. We do not know whether Merton has the data or would be prepared to purchase it: this question would have to be addressed to the Council.

#### **Councillors' attendance; way forward**

**Q9. Were any of the Councillors on the call? Also what do you think next steps are?**

A9. We have had confirmation that Councillors Williams, Holden, Simpson, Latif, and Barlow attended the webinar. Councillor Howard was invited but was unable to attend.

Paul McGarry, Head of Future Merton (an officer of Merton Council) also attended the webinar.

We have requested Councillors to make contact with Merton Council on our behalf, explain our keen interest in a TCPR scheme for East Hillside, and to ask that relevant professional officers engage with our Group to investigate the feasibility of such a scheme. We understand that such a request is in preparation but it is not yet finalised.