

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Sola Odusina](#)
Subject: Request to address the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee, 11/11/24
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Dear Mr. Odusina,

I would like to address the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee on this Monday (11th November), under item 4 of the agenda (deputations).

Summary

As a parent of children at Brookfield Primary School, I would like to speak in support of the Dartmouth Park Healthy Neighbourhood Scheme. I am aware of a campaign to delay and undermine the consultation process, which I believe is motivated by a resistance to the inconvenience of a minority of residents. On behalf of a group of parents (and other residents), I would like to make a case in favour of the project proceeding on schedule, which we believe is much needed on the grounds of public safety, health and wellbeing.

Prepared Remarks

I'm here today in support of the Dartmouth Park Healthy Neighbourhood scheme and the co-design phase, which has provided ample (and well advertised) opportunity for feedback. I'm speaking on behalf of a group of parents at Brookfield Primary School, including some PTA committee members, myself included, but we won't claim to represent all parents, as I know there are some who would not agree 100%.

There certainly isn't unanimity within the neighbourhood, either for or against changes, but there are some facts which are undeniable. And from these facts I think there are some conclusions which are clearly evident.

The first I want to mention, is that the majority of people in the neighbourhood do not own or even have access to a car.

Second, 80% of primary school children in the area walk to school and 75% of secondary school children either walk or take the bus.

Taking these two points together, it is clear that - with a few occasional exceptions - any consideration towards drivers is to the benefit of a minority of people at the expense of the quality of life of everyone else.

Thirdly, the area which has the highest concentration of car ownership is Holly Lodge Estate, which is already a mini low traffic neighbourhood. So it's not very

fair to say the rest of the neighbourhood can't have the same.

Then finally, it's abundantly clear that there are several residential streets, not designated as major routes, with a level of through traffic for which they have not been designed, often going at inappropriate speeds, with no regard for pedestrians.

This is deadly in two ways, it risks accidents and creates pollution, which is a leading cause of early death.

And it's become worse since satnav came along, as it routes people through these rat runs if it saves a few minutes.

So something needs to be done. That something probably goes even further than what has been proposed to date. And really the only way is going to be to make it slower to travel through the area by car. Including the boundary roads, with the exception of the A400, which I think we have to say is fair game to through traffic, as that's what A-roads are for.

Now, you'll hear later from another group which has organised a campaign to delay and completely redesign the proposals, which will, in effect, kick the scheme into the long grass, by creating a new mountain work for the council.

On the surface, their arguments might sound reasonable and they will point to all the people who signed their petition. Unfortunately this petition has attracted the attention of people from far outside the neighbourhood, who are motivated by an ideological opposition to traffic restrictions, including at least one person who is the admin of several ULEZ sabotage groups on Facebook.

So I don't think the petition can be said to be representative of local opinion. Whilst there certainly is some local opposition; privately many of those people will admit their main concern is that the proposals will make car travel less convenient for them. What I say to them is I'm sorry but that's kind of the point. It needs to be less convenient or it won't work.

Kind Regards,
Graeme Blyth

