

## Meeting about traffic in Camden held at 15 Lower Camden Place, Thursday 26 January 2017

Present:

Richard Samuel (chairing)	(richard.samuell@btinternet.com)
Brian Sherriff	Sara Keane
Nigel Sherwen	Tracey Dean-Chalkley
Julie Platt	Tim Locke
Elizabeth Sherriff	Caroline Groom
Susan Doshi	Mary Caron-Courtney
Jane Franke	

The discussion was wide-ranging and covered many issues that residents were concerned about in the Camden area. Summary of topics discussed:

**Rat running, volume of traffic and pollution** were identified as the major problems and it was pointed out that Camden Road is the back-up road of choice for East-West travel in Bath. Congestion on London Road forces people on to Camden Road. This is exacerbated every time there are road works on London Road as more people discover Camden, then don't return to London Road afterwards for their commuting.

A number of staff travelling to the **RUH** use Camden Road, often using a circuitous route through Swainswick, partly because the bus services are inadequate. If and when Eastern Park & Ride is built, we should push for a frequent bus service from the P&R to the hospital. When the Min relocates to the RUH there will be new building on the RUH site: a good opportunity to argue for a Green Travel Plan, designed to reduce car usage into the development.

There may be some data held by RUH about transport to work: contact them?

We don't know exactly where vehicles are coming from, and where they are going. If we could establish the patterns, that would give us a clearer idea of how to tackle the problem, eg by lobbying for more appropriate and suitable bus routes. BUT a survey would be costly and hard to organize.

**Lower Hedgemoad:** the junction with Lansdown Road is a major problem, with cars backing out into Lansdown Road as the road is too narrow to accommodate two cars passing one another. The double yellow lines next to the wall are faint and often obscured by leaves, so cars park illegally, making the situation worse.

There was general agreement that it would be good to remove the parking bays that are not within Zone 15, and replace them with double yellow lines. We could also ask the council to erect a sign to indicate that cars going **into** Hedgemoad from Lansdown have priority over those going the other way. Maybe have a yellow box there as well?

Cllr Clarke argued against this at the AGM on grounds of cost: Traffic Regulation Order required, which costs £5000. But if a number of changes were done at the same time, this would be more cost-efficient.

**Buses** were discussed, with a number of people commenting that hold-ups had got much worse since the number of buses had increased, even though there was agreement that bus use had gone up considerably (confirmed by First), which should bring car numbers down to some extent. Drivers often refuse to give way to buses but this is partly because there are certain pinch points on bends in the road where it is difficult to see ahead. These need to be addressed, perhaps by removing a few parking spaces that obscure sightlines. This wouldn't be popular with many residents as parking is already difficult.

Some possible solutions (not all unanimously agreed but can be discussed further): lobby for slimmer and cleaner buses; improve the 'pinch points' and thus the sightlines so that cars are more inclined to

give way to buses; a few 'pull-in' bays along Camden Road so that cars can pull over to let the buses through; chicanes at a couple of points in the road, narrowing the road, with arrow signs indicating priority in one direction only.

**HGVs:** 7.5 tonne weight limit signs at both ends of Camden Rd. possible?

### **Speeding**

This is a major problem, in Hedgemoor, Camden Road and increasingly Belgrave Crescent. Agreement that we need more measures to reduced speeding, and a unanimous decision that two permanent speed screens would be a good idea – one in Camden Crescent and the other around Stanley Villas/Prospect Place. Some people were willing to be trained as Community Speed Watch volunteers. Volume of traffic and speed data is available from time to time from B&NES.

A lot of discussion about **speed cushions**. The spacing between the speed cushions is wrong in Camden Rd as some have been removed, so cars speed up in between the cushions. There is an argument for more, and more effective speed cushions or tables, but some people argued against this as they are noisy, and increase pollution. To be discussed further.

### **Pavement parking and bollards to reduce it**

The meeting was generally in agreement that vehicles parking up on the pavement eg to do deliveries, was undesirable although some people felt that it was necessary for residents sometimes. So more bollards would be controversial – especially as wide vehicles such as buses or lorries sometimes have to mount the pavement to allow another vehicle to get through. To be discussed further.

### **Air pollution**

We know that NOx has increased by 35 per cent in four years in Camden. There is currently only one tiny test tube outside 6 Lower Camden Place – at the wrong level and obscured by a lamp post. We need more effective pollution monitoring. The council wants to increase air pollution monitoring and there is money in the budget for it. Would be good ammunition for us if we had better information.

### **Alternatives to driving through Camden**

Opportunity to improve cycling along London Road is coming up – Sustrans has an online survey running at the moment. Need to put pressure on council. Ongoing issues about better bus routes and reducing fares. Contact First?

### **Some suggestions that were raised but not felt to be priorities, or possibilities, at least at the moment:**

Angled parking – already suggested to council but rejected

Encouragement for people to use the E-car scheme, which would necessitate removing a parking space – felt to be less relevant than issues about people using the road as a cut-through

Tapered residential parking charges for different sized vehicles – more of a Bath-wide issue than a Camden issue

More one-way streets – argument against this is that it can increase speeding – and it causes major disruption while it's being introduced (eg Widcombe Parade)

Direct action eg demonstrations – some people very much in favour, others dubious. Need to raise awareness and get a critical mass of people engaged.

### **Summary**

We need to change people's perceptions of Camden and give it a more 'residential' feel – people currently think of it just as a cut-through to work. Red tarmac to differentiate it from other streets; 'safe streets' signs. Other cities have done this – we could research it.

Written document needed, to put to the council when we have firmed up our plans. Aim for May? Patrick-Anketell Jones to be involved – it would be good to get him on board, as he is a Camden Road resident and long-term councilor – with a budget!

The following proposals seemed to have majority support:

- Improved speed bumps Camden Road
- Interactive speed signage at both ends of Camden Road
- Badging the area as 'Residential'
- Build out at the ends of some parking bays
- More bollards to protect pavements but loading bays to enable people to load/unload
- Improvements to Lower/Upper Hedgemoor including some speed bumps (locations to be discussed), one way section at Lansdown Rd end and priority sign
- Contact RUH about Green Travel Plan/car share scheme
- Approach First about cleaner/slimmer buses

Everyone was asked to spread the word to neighbours, and also to take photos of snarl ups, vehicles on pavements etc. and email to Richard.

**MANY THANKS to everyone who came to the meeting.**