

LONDON BOROUGH OF RICHMOND UPON THAMES

DATE: 12 January 2012

REPORT OF: Cabinet Member for Highways and Street Scene

LEAD OFFICER: Aurang Zeb – Head of Highways and Transport

SUBJECT: Borough-wide review of School Keep Clear Markings

WARDS: All

KEY DECISION?: NO

IF YES, IN FORWARD PLAN?: N/A

For general release

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To report the results of a recent borough-wide consultation with all schools regarding a review of 'school keep clear' markings and associated signage outside school entrances. The report details the existing enforcement issues in relation to the existing markings and signage and recommends the action to be taken to ensure that all markings and signage comply with current regulations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.2 In Richmond, most of the schools, particularly the nurseries and primary schools, are located in densely populated residential areas where on-street parking is at a premium. This report seeks to make the existing school keep clear markings and signage compliant with current regulations, whilst still permitting parking during holiday periods.

2. RECOMMENDATION

To approve the advertisement of a Traffic Management Order TMO under Section 6 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 for changes to existing School Keep Clear timings and markings as detailed in paragraph 4.3 - 4.5 of this report and listed in Appendix C.

3. DETAIL

- 3.1 For a number of years, it has been good practice to introduce School Keep Clear Markings outside of school entrance to remove parking during key school times. This no parking area ensures that sight lines for both

pedestrians and motorists are kept clear and reduces the risk of conflict at times when pedestrian movements are high.

- 3.2 The majority of schools across the borough benefit from at least one of these markings, with some schools having at least three covering all pedestrian entrances. A number of schools do not have these markings, but benefit from other safety measures outside the entrance such as a zebra crossing with associated zig-zag markings,
- 3.3 When these markings were first introduced, Councils were permitted to state the use of 'term time only' on signage to enable parking to continue during school holiday times. Many of the markings in the borough apply during 0800-0930 and 1430-1600 Monday to Friday, term times only, and these timings are shown on the adjacent signage.
- 3.4 Since the publication of The Traffic Sign Regulations and General Directions 2002 (TSRGD 2002), the use of 'term time' is no longer valid and School Keep Clear markings are required to be enforced throughout the year, unless dates are specifically outlined on the signage. In this borough most of the schools, particularly the nurseries and primary schools, are located in densely populated residential areas where on-street parking is at a premium and most of the properties do not have access to private off-street parking. Prior to 2002, the use of 'Term Time' afforded a degree of relief to the local residents by allowing parking on the school outside the term time, some three plus months in a typical calendar year. By removing 'term-time' from the signage, this benefit will be removed.
- 3.5 Given that the signage showing 'term time' is no longer permitted under the TSRGD 2002, it is no longer possible to enforce these markings as they are non compliant. It has therefore been necessary to review all markings currently on site with a view to amending existing signage to ensure compliance.
- 3.6 It should also be noted that the TSRGD 2002 provides minimum and maximum lengths for permitted School Keep Clear markings. If the marking is outside the permitted tolerances for the minimum and maximum length (10% and 15% respectively), the marking is non compliant and cannot be enforced. The review therefore included an assessment of both signage and marking length for all schools.
- 3.7 Given that schools have differing holiday times, especially around Easter and half term periods, it is not considered feasible to provide specific dates on signage as they would have to be tailored to meet individual school holiday periods.
- 3.8 There are a number of options which have been considered for the signage.

Option 1 – to standardise all signs to operate throughout the year. This will make the existing sign enforceable but would however remove all parking throughout the year, impacting on local residents.

Option 2 - install 'flap-type' signs which would be padlocked closed during the main holiday periods.

Option 3 – to detail periods on the actual signs when the marking would not be enforced.

The Option Assessment Matrix (Appendix D) outlines the impacts of each option, and places Option 3 as the most appropriate and effective, in line with the changes in legislation.

- 3.9 The initial intention was for the revised markings to operate 0800-1000 and 1500-1700, Monday to Friday, with the sign closed during the three key holiday periods, Easter, summer and Christmas. This option was presented to all borough schools by means of a consultation letter.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 In November 2011, all schools in the borough, regardless of whether they had markings already, were consulted on the proposed timings and operation of the ‘flap’ sign. A copy of the consultation letter is shown in Appendix A.

- 4.2 Of the 76 schools, colleges and special units consulted, 16 written responses were received. The summary of responses with officer comments are shown in Appendix B. The key points made were:

- The timings don’t reflect our start/finish times.
- The marking is required throughout the day to cover lunch time sessions and before/after school clubs
- Enforcement is required all year to cover day nurseries, holiday clubs and other activities undertaken at the school.
- Schools have differing holiday periods and the Council will have difficulty ensuring that the sign is covered only when necessary for individual schools, the management of the sign should be undertaken by the school.
- The flap-type sign will be too costly for the Council to maintain.
- Requests for new markings or extension to existing markings.

- 4.3 Based on the responses received and the apparent need for flexibility between different schools, it is recommended that two different timing batches are advertised. These timings are detailed below and reflect the wishes of those schools who responded to the consultation. The schools and recommended timing ‘batch’ are detailed in Appendix C.

Batch A	Batch B
0800-0930 & 1430-1630 Monday to Friday	0800 – 1700 Monday to Friday
41 schools	9 schools

- 4.4 After careful consideration and based on the comments received from the consultation, it is no longer recommended to progress with the ‘flap-type’ sign. This sign will require significant financial support to ensure its successful operation. It is therefore now proposed to include key holiday periods when enforcement will not be undertaken, these will include the whole of August, Christmas week and public and bank holidays. This would allow the sign to be visible at all times but would offer some parking to residents during key

holiday periods. These exemptions would be included on all signs. It should be noted however that this additional wording will have an impact on the overall size of the sign. A sample layout is shown in Appendix E.

- 4.5 The table in Appendix C also details those schools where the existing markings are un-enforceable. These markings will be removed and replaced with correct markings, in a number of cases this will result in two shorter length markings being introduced. If the existing length of marking has to be extended to ensure compliance, residents will be consulted.
- 4.6 As a result of the consultation, a number of schools have also requested new or extended markings. These are also detailed in Appendix C and marked as Batch C. Ward Councillors will be consulted prior to undertaking an informal consultation with residents. These restrictions would be included into the main Traffic Regulation Order following consultation.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Capital

- 5.1 The total cost is estimated at £50,000 and will be met from the 2011/12 TFL LIP allocation.

Revenue

- 5.2 There is no ongoing revenue cost resulting from this proposal.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS/CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 This scheme is recommended to ensure the safety of pedestrians and school children around school entrances across the borough.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

There is considered no risk as a result of this proposal.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT/CONSIDERATIONS

By allowing parking during the key school holiday periods, parking is provided to residents greatly assisting those who may be less able of walking long distances.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

If these changes are not made, the existing signage (and in a number of cases the road markings) are not compliant with current regulations and are not enforceable. The issuing of a Penalty Charge Notice in these cases could result in a legal challenge.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed changes mainly relate to existing markings and signage and thus there are considered to be no negative environmental implications arising from this report.

11. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

- Review of all markings undertaken during October 2011, including detailed plans.
- School responses.
- TSRGD 2002

12. CONTACTS

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