

## NON-KEY EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

<b>LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN</b>	<b>WARDS:</b> Gospel Oak
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b> Designation of Roderick Road, NW3 as a Play Street	
<b>REPORT OF:</b> Head of Transport Strategy	
<b>FOR SUBMISSION TO:</b> Director of Place Management	<b>DATE</b> 4 July 2019
<b>SUMMARY OF REPORT</b> <p>This report seeks approval for the proposal to prohibit traffic through Roderick Road for the street to be used by children for play (Play Street). This would be designated by Section 29 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984. It is proposed that the Play Street would take place on the second Sunday of every month from 3pm to 6pm. The Play Streets Scheme links to Our Camden Plan, specifically the clean, vibrant and sustainable objective and using all resources at our disposal to improve air quality in the borough. Decreasing traffic on the Play Street, even for a short time, will have a positive impact on the air quality.</p> <p><b>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information</b></p> <p>No documents that require listing were used in the preparation of this report.</p> <p><b>Contact Officer:</b> Michelle Jamieson, Transport Strategy, London Borough of Camden, 5th Floor, 5 Pancras Square, LONDON N1C 4AG Tel: 020 7974 5537 Email: Michelle.Jamieson@camden.gov.uk</p>	
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b> <p>That the Director of Place Management approves, subject to compliance with relevant statutory requirements, the following measure:</p> <p>The closure of Roderick Road, from the junction with Mansfield Road to the junction with Savernake Road, as a “Play Street”. This would take place on the second Sunday of every month from 3pm to 6pm.</p>	

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "L. McFride" followed by a small dash.

Date: 4 July 2019

## 1. CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

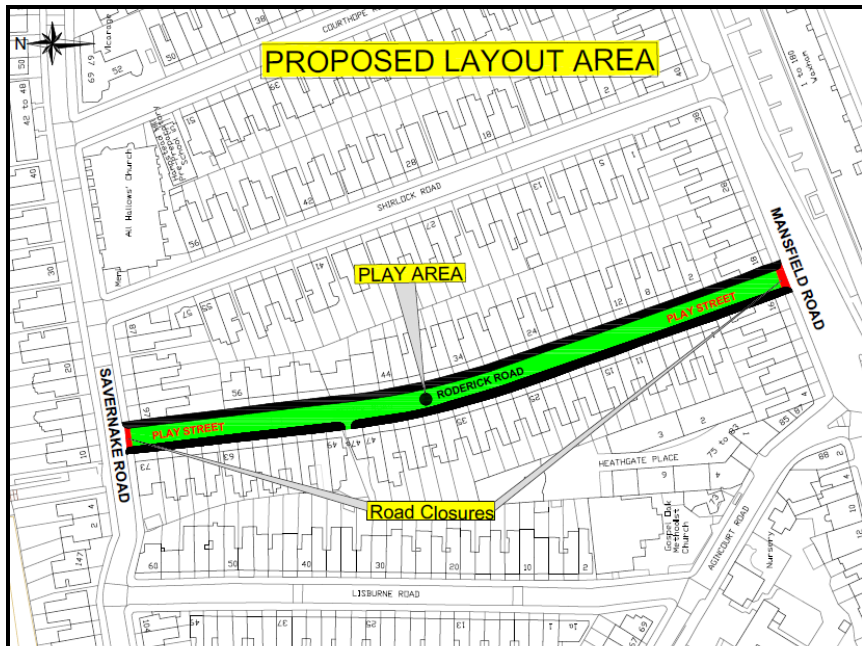
- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the proposal to prohibit traffic through Roderick Road, from the junction with Mansfield Road to the junction with Savernake Road, for the street to be used as a Play Street. This would be designated by Section 29 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984, on the second Sunday of every month between 3pm and 6pm.

## 2. PROPOSALS AND REASONS

- 2.1 The Play Streets scheme is an initiative set up by the charity London Play and the Department for Health. The aim of the Play Streets scheme is to reclaim road space in order to allow children to play in a safe environment. The scheme supports children's needs for informal play, physical activity, learning and development. London Borough of Camden currently has 11 Play Streets across the borough. Based on the positive feedback we receive from residents, these have proven to be successful.
- 2.2 Play Streets address problems of danger from vehicular traffic. They also give parents' confidence in allowing children to play outside. It enables local residents to close their streets for play on a regular basis. Children are provided with an opportunity to play on a traffic free street safely, whilst creating community cohesion for wider residents and local groups. Local access is given to drivers when the Play Street is in operation.
- 2.3 Camden's Transport Strategy objectives, including improving air quality and reducing vehicular congestion, are being met through the Play Streets Scheme. The timed closure acts as a deterrent for vehicles using the street and promotes the use of sustainable forms of transport. It also helps to deliver Objective 2 in the Camden Transport Strategy, which includes a commitment by the Council to develop a programme of traffic restrictions. These are both permanent and timed, which include Play Streets.
- 2.4 London Borough of Camden has received an application for a Play Street on Roderick Road. This includes a document signed by 73 local residents, which expresses their initial support, or objection to the proposal for Roderick Road to be designated as a Play Street.
- 2.5 In agreement with a local resident who submitted the petition and an application to the Council, the proposal is to close Roderick Road, from the junction with Mansfield Road to the junction with Savernake Road. The application is attached in **Appendices 1-4** for internal observation, but will not be made publicly available for reasons of data protection. The closure would take place on the second Sunday of every month between 3pm and 6pm.
- 2.6 The operation of the road closures will be undertaken by local residents via the use of freestanding 'road closed' signs, in addition to advance warning signs. The Council will provide the signs to residents, and these will be stored locally. Parking bays will not be suspended and marshals will allow for the

entry and exit of vehicles that need access to properties within the closure area.

## 2.7 Map of the proposed closure area:



## 3. OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- 3.1 The options available are to go ahead with the proposals described above, or to do nothing. In light of the level of support for the scheme as well as its contributing to meeting the objectives of the Camden Transport Strategy, Officers recommend progressing the scheme as set out in this report.

## 4. WHAT ARE THE KEY IMPACTS/RISKS? HOW WILL THEY BE ADDRESSED?

- 4.1 Key positive impacts of Play Streets Schemes are strengthening communities and encouraging physical activity amongst children.
- 4.2 Attendees of the Play Street will be aware that there are parked cars in the closed section, and that not all residents will be attending the events. There is a small risk of property or cars being damaged during the Play Street, due to accidents that may potentially occur. Pages 1 and 2 of the application form are the terms and conditions, which the applicants sign and agree to. The terms and conditions advise that the resident who organises the Play Street takes out Public Liability Insurance. This would also cover the risk of personal injury during a Play Street. The application form, with terms and conditions is attached in **Appendix 5**. The signed application agreeing to these for the Roderick Road Play Street is attached in **Appendix 3**, but is not for public view due to data protection.

## 5. LINKS TO THE CAMDEN PLAN

- 5.1 The Play Streets scheme links to Our Camden Plan, as it brings people together to get things done. The residents organise the Play Street, bringing residents together who may not have met or communicated previously. One of the themes in Our Camden Plan is to give young people the best start in life. Play Streets contribute to this by allowing children to play near their homes in a traffic free environment at certain times. As Play Streets are community led they also build on the strengths of local people and grow the capability of communities to achieve their ambitions.

## 6. CONSULTATION/ENGAGEMENT

- 6.1 A community led consultation was carried out from October-December 2018. Volunteers went 'door knocking' with a signature sheet, or they hand delivered a letter in petition form explaining the Play Street. 156 households were contacted, 79 of which responded. 73 signatures were received in support of the application, whilst 6 objected to the idea.
- 6.2 Following the resident led consultation/petition, the Council carried out a wider public consultation from 21 May to 10 June 2019. This was sent to all properties along Roderick Road, and Mansfield Road that will be affected by the closure. Ward Councillors and relevant statutory groups were also consulted. The consultation was posted online on the We Are Camden website. All consultees were asked if they agreed with the proposal to designate Roderick Road as a Play Street. The detailed proposals are described in the consultation letter in **Appendix 6** of this report.
- 6.3 A total of 51 residents responded to the public consultation, 36 (71%) stated that they supported the proposed Play Street, and 15 (28%) respondents stated they were opposed to the idea.
- 6.4 **Consultation comments** – A total of 23 comments were received. The concerns/issues raised in the comments were: access to properties for visitors/carers/residents, Hampstead Heath being close to Roderick Road therefore questioning the need for a Play Street, and concerns about increased issues with parking on surrounding streets. A selection of the comments received, along with the Officers' response, is below:
- One resident commented that this area is fortunate to have gardens where children can play safely on Roderick Road. The resident noted this location is next to Hampstead Heath where there are play facilities available for the children. Therefore a Play Street, in the resident's view, is unnecessary and it would be more appropriate for children who don't have the facilities they have. Also this restricts access for people with vehicles (disabled) as well of the likelihood of children coming from other streets disturbing residents.
  - Another resident commented that the North end of Roderick Road is approximately 50 meters from Hampstead Heath, containing 880 Acres of open grass land, playgrounds and woods. The resident questioned why

anyone would anyone prefer their children to play in a street instead, stating that the cost and inconvenience cannot be justified.

- Another resident noted that they were uncomfortable with this proposal and asked the Council to reject it. The resident stated their dissatisfaction with the bureaucracy and time cost that this will involve, both upon the marshals and everyone else. It was also stated that there are few children in this road. The resident was particularly concerned that the marshals may not let them into the road, stating that they had no wish to have to prove they are a local resident, have no desire to be stopped, and would consider this an infringement of their rights.
- Another commented that with Hampstead Heath less than 5 minutes away, wouldn't that be a bigger better place to do this? The resident questioned why the Council keeps 'blocking' roads and making it hard for drivers to drive anywhere.
- One resident on Lisburne Road expressed concerns around parking for visitors, stating that it is currently difficult for them to park there at weekends, and the Play Street would make that worse.
- A resident on Shirlock Road liked the idea of the Play Street on Roderick Road, but was concerned that parking on nearby streets would become difficult.
- *Officer's comment – As well as allowing children to play safely, the Play Streets scheme is about bringing communities together. It fits with both the Camden Transport Strategy and Our Camden Plan policies as described in sections 2.3 and 5.1 of this report. Objective 1 in the Camden Transport Strategy is to transform our streets to enable an increase in walking and cycling. It states that the council will develop a programme of traffic restrictions, both timed and permanent including Play Streets initiatives. Temporarily closing roads fits with the policy of encouraging sustainable and active modes of transport, improving air quality and road safety. Access to properties within the closure, by vehicles at a walking pace will be allowed during operation of the Play Street. This includes carers needing to access properties. Other Play Streets in the borough do not have issues with driver/marshal conflict, and they run smoothly as far as officers are aware. Hampstead Heath is close to Roderick Road, however the residents who applied to the council for a Play Street have the view that it would be valuable. The subsequent positive response to the public consultation, and significant majority support for the scheme also shows this. Regarding parking – Roderick Road and the surrounding roads are well served by public transport, therefore visitors may be encouraged to use this, rather than driving if parking becomes difficult due to the Play Street being in operation.*

#### 6.4.1 **Positive Comments** – Two local Ward Councillors expressed support for the scheme.

A selection of comments in support of the scheme from residents are as follows:

- I am writing in support of the Public Consultation on the proposed Play Street on Roderick Road. I am welcoming of measures to improve air quality which, as a frequent cyclist, is an issue that concerns me.
- I agree and support your wish to change Roderick Road as outlined.
- I support the proposal to turn Roderick Road into a Play Street. This will not only benefit children on the street but also parents and carers to connect and build a sense of community.
- I would like more streets to be included - especially Savernake which often has cars driving very fast.
- *Officer's comment – There is currently a Healthy School Street Scheme in operation on the section of Savernake Road outside Gospel Oak School. This restricts motor vehicles entering the southernmost part of Savernake Road at school opening and closing times. That scheme is in operation under an Experimental Traffic Order and will be reviewed in January 2020. If residents would like timings extended they can express this by writing to the Transport Strategy Team, so that it can be considered in the review.*

6.4.2 One respondent asked for information on the initial application and document with signatures, requesting that all the respondents to that should have been residents of Roderick Road.

*Officer's comment – All the respondents to the initial application were residents on Roderick Road.*

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Section 29, Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 gives Councils authority to temporarily prohibit traffic on roads to be used as Playgrounds.

7.2 The Council may “make an order prohibiting or restricting the use of the road by vehicles, or by vehicles of any specified class, either generally or on particular days or during particular hours.”

7.3 The prohibition or restriction may be subject to such exceptions and conditions as to occasional use as may be specified in the order. In this case the order shall make provision for permitting reasonable access to premises situated on or adjacent to the road.

7.4 A person who uses a vehicle or causes or permits a vehicle to be used, in contravention of an order in force under this section shall be guilty of an offence.

## **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The total cost of creating the statutory Traffic Management Order, officer time and public consultation is approximately £600. The cost will be met by the Council's Local Implementation Plan Funding.

**9. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1-4: Application form pages (Part II (confidential) appendices)

Appendix 5: Terms and conditions

Appendix 6: Consultation letter

Non-Key Executive Officer Report Part II Appendix

**REPORT ENDS**