



The Association of British Drivers

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Press Release – ABD London Region

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The Truth About the Latest Speed Hump Scheme in Ealing

When the London Borough of Ealing issued their public consultation leaflet about the proposed traffic calming scheme in the Mount Avenue – Birkdale Road area they justified it by saying that there had been 2 serious and 17 slight accidents in the last three years. But this was factually incorrect and grossly misleading. The real facts are:

- Five of the accidents (including one of the serious ones) were not within the area of the new scheme (ie. within the proposed 20 mph zone). Most of those five were actually on Hanger Lane where Hillcrest Road joins it, but that junction and Hillcrest Road have already been treated with traffic calming measures so there is no likely benefit from the new proposals.
- Six of the accidents were in roads (such as Brunswick Road) which have already been treated with speed humps, and no new humps are proposed, so again there is no likely benefit from the scheme and it would be wrong to include those in any calculation of likely accident savings.
- The only other serious accident took place on the pedestrian crossing at "The Parade" (the junction with Madeley Road/Mountfield Road). The proposed measures are unlikely to have any impact on accidents at that location.

If you include the last accident mentioned above (being as optimistic as possible), that effectively means there was one serious accident and 7 slight accidents in three years that are potentially being treated by these measures. That is very different to the original claim.

In addition, the cost/benefit of this scheme, which the council claims as £263,000 in the first year, is in reality nowhere near that figure. In fact, on any reasonable calculation this must be one of the least cost effective road safety schemes ever considered for installation, as normally a good scheme returns the investment in less than a year. But this scheme will not on those accident figures (assuming that serious urban accidents cost £183,000, slight accidents cost £18,000 as per DfT recommendations and some proportion of them are saved).

Note that it is exceedingly unlikely that 60% of the accidents will be saved as council staff claimed – look at the continuing accidents in Brunswick Road to see how ineffective speed hump measures can be.

The Brentham Society have looked at similar schemes elsewhere in Ealing, and they say *"that the Council's Road Safety Plan2 shows that: of the 6 zones introduced since 2003 the number of accidents has reduced in 2 areas, stayed approximately the same in 2 and has increased in 2. Based on these facts Ealing Council appears to be wasting our money."*

A spreadsheet with more details of the accidents in the area is available from the ABD if you need it.

Both the London Ambulance Service (LAS) and the London Fire Service have opposed this scheme. The latter noted that speed humps add to their response times. The comment from Claire Henderson, Duty Station Officer of the LAS was: *"I have grave concerns that any further speed humps/cushions will have a dramatic effect to our service. Firstly, our responses to our patients in that area will be increased due to ambulance crews needing to slow considerably to travel over humps/cushions so as not to damage the vehicle or equipment within it. This potentially can mean the difference between life and death of a patient who requires immediate medical attention as seconds count. Secondly that the effect of traveling over these humps/cushions when transporting patients causes severe discomfort and pain."*

These comments reinforce what the ABD has said about this scheme – namely that it is unnecessary when other London boroughs devise alternative traffic calming schemes without speed humps that are just as good at reducing accidents and are generally more cost effective. The plans should be extensively revised before they are implemented, or scrapped altogether.

For further information, please contact:

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About The Association of British Drivers (ABD)

The ABD is the leading independent organisation which represents the interests of private motorists in the United Kingdom. We campaign to protect the rights of individual road users and believe that road transport is a beneficial and essential element in the UK transport infrastructure. We oppose excessive taxation of motorists and are against tolls and road usage charging. We also campaign for more enlightened road safety policies. The Association is a "not for profit" voluntary organisation which is financially supported primarily by its individual members. More information on the ABD is available from our web site at www.abd.org.uk