

**Committee:** Cabinet Member Report

**Date:** 17 March 2021

**Agenda item:** N/A

**Wards:** Abbey

**Subject:** Proposed Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) Informal consultation  
Charles Road Area

**Lead officer:** Chris Lee, Director of Environment & Regeneration.

**Lead member:** Councillor Martin Whelton, Cabinet Member for Housing, Regeneration and the  
Climate Emergency

**Forward Plan reference number:** N/A

Contact Officer: James Geeson, email: [james.geeson@merton.gov.uk](mailto:james.geeson@merton.gov.uk)

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### **Recommendations:**

That the Cabinet Member considers the issues detailed in this report and

- A) Notes the results of the informal consultation carried out between 18<sup>th</sup> January and 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021 on the proposals, as shown in the Newsletter in Appendix 1, to introduce a LTN aimed at removing rat running along Shelton Rd / Charles Road by introducing a non-physical road closure on Charles Road at its junction with Rutlish Road.
- B) Agrees to abandon the proposed measures in light of the local community's response to the informal consultation.
- C) Agrees to exercise his discretion not to hold a public inquiry on the consultation process.

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 This report presents the results of the informal consultation carried on the Council's proposals to introduce a LTN with proposed traffic measures, aimed at removing rat running and to encourage safe walking and cycling within the Charles Road Area.

1.2 It seeks approval to abandon the proposed measures.

## **2. DETAILS**

- 2.1 In response to a green recovery, DfT / TfL provided funding (subject to a bid process) to boroughs to consider, consult and implement LTNs on identified routes. These routes were identified by some residents and / or were previously known to be popular rat runs particularly during the peak periods.
- 2.2 A low traffic neighbourhood (LTN) is considered within a residential area, bordered by main roads (places where buses, lorries, non-local traffic should be), where "through" motor vehicle traffic could be discouraged or removed. Strategic road closures (bollards or planters) or banned movements prevent through traffic whilst maintaining access.
- 2.3 As part of the LTN programme, the Council was successful in its bid to DfT in securing funding to design, consult and implement a series of banned movements, designed to decrease if not remove rat running whilst maintaining access at all times.

## **3. INFORMAL CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 The informal consultation on the proposals to introduce some LTNs within the Charles Road area was carried out between the 18<sup>th</sup> January and 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021. The consultation area, as shown on the plan in Appendix 2, was agreed with the Ward Councillors.
- 3.2 A total of 45 properties were consulted via a newsletter posted to all those included within the consultation area. The newsletter detailed the reason for the consultation; the proposed measures, and location plans. A copy of the newsletter with the plan is attached in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The newsletter included a webpage link on the Council's website that contains further information about the proposals with an online questionnaire (e-form) based on the following questions:
  - To what extent do you agree or disagree that rat-running, (drivers using the road to cut through the area), is a problem on your road?
  - Do you support the proposed measures to restrict vehicle movement on Charles Road at its junction with Rutlish Road?
- 3.4 The consultation resulted in a total of 165 completed questionnaires. This includes properties outside the consultation area. To ensure correct analysis of these results, all blanks; duplicates; multiple returns from single properties have been removed, resulting in 133 returns.
- 3.5 Of the 133 respondents from both within and outside the consultation area, 64.7% do not agree that there is a problem with rat-running, compared to 33.8% who do agree, with 1.5% who are unsure.
- 3.6 The number of properties within the consultation area is 45, and 14 residents completed the online questionnaire representing a response rate of 31.1%. This response rate is considered to be average for this type of informal consultation.
- 3.7 Of those within the consultation area who responded, 57.1% do agree that there is a problem with rat-running in their road, compared to 42.9% who do not agree there is a problem, and none were unsure.

3.8 The response to 'Do you support the following measures to restrict vehicular movement on your local roads' are as follows:

Table 1:

	Do you support the proposed measures to restrict vehicle movement on Charles Road at its junction with Rutlish Road?
Agree	4 (28.6%)
Disagree	9 (64.3%)
Unsure	1 (7.1%)

A detailed breakdown of these results on a road-by-road basis is attached in Appendix 3.

3.9 In summary, the results show that the majority of those who responded, do feel that there is rat-running problem in the area, although an overwhelming majority do not support the actual proposed measures.

3.10 The most common theme of the comments received on the proposals is that the proposed measures will displace traffic into the surrounding roads, increasing traffic congestion, creating longer journeys with a negative impact on air quality.

3.11 The list of comments received from the general area are detailed in Appendix 4. Comments from residents beyond this area have been excluded for the purpose of this analysis, but have been acknowledged.

3.12 The local Ward Councillors have been fully engaged during the consultation process. The results of the consultation and officer's recommendations were presented to the Ward Councillors prior to preparing this report. Comments received from the ward councillors, are detailed in Appendix 5.

#### **4. OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION**

4.1 Based on the feedback received during the informal consultation and the lack of support for the proposed measures, it is recommended that the proposed measures are not progressed.

#### **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

5.1 To proceed with the next stage which is a statutory consultation. This, however, would be contrary to the overwhelming objections received thus far and it is extremely unlikely that there would be a change in opinion during the statutory consultation.

5.2 To implement the proposed measures under an experimental Order to allow residents to experience the proposals before making an informed judgement. This however, would be contrary to the overwhelming objections received thus far and will result in loss of confidence in the Council and its established consultation process.

#### **6. TIMETABLE**

6.1 A newsletter detailing the results of the informal consultation and Cabinet Member decision will be distributed to all the consultees soon after a Cabinet Member decision is made.

## **7. FINANCIAL RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The cost of design and consultation are covered by the LSP funding provided by DfT during T2 phase.

## **8. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The Traffic Management Orders would be made under Section 6 and Section 45 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended). The Council is required by the Local Authorities Traffic Order (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 to give notice of its intention to make a Traffic Order (by publishing a draft traffic order). These regulations also require the Council to consider any representations received as a result of publishing the draft order.
- 8.2 The Council has discretion as to whether or not to hold a public inquiry before deciding whether or not to make a traffic management order or to modify the published draft order. A public inquiry should be held where it would provide further information, which would assist the Council in reaching a decision.
- 8.3 The Council's powers to make Traffic Management Orders arise mainly under sections 6, 45, 46, 122 and 124 and schedules 1 and 9 of the RTRA 1984.

## **9. HUMAN RIGHTS & EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHENSION IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The Council carries out careful consultation to ensure that all road users are given a fair opportunity to air their views and express their needs.
- 9.2 The design of the scheme includes special consideration for the needs of people with blue badges, local residents, businesses without any prejudice toward charitable and religious facilities.
- 9.3 The needs of commuters are given consideration but generally carry less weight than those of residents and local businesses.
- 9.4 Bodies representing motorists, including commuters are included in the statutory consultation required for draft traffic management and similar orders published in the local paper and London Gazette

## **10. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 N/A

## **11. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 The risk of not acting in line with the majority feedback received would lead to a high level of objections, dissatisfaction and loss of confidence in the Council.
- 11.2 The risk of not doing anything would be that rat running would continue; however, although residents acknowledge that rat running is a problem, there is no support for the proposed measures.

## **12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 N/A

### **13. APPENDICES**

13.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report.

- Appendix 1** - Informal Newsletter and plan
- Appendix 2** - Consultation area plan
- Appendix 3** - Results of consultation road-by-road
- Appendix 4** - Comments
- Appendix 5** - Councillor Comments



# LOW TRAFFIC NEIGHBOURHOOD (LTN)

CHARLES ROAD AREA – INFORMAL CONSULTATION



Issue: 18th January 2021

## Proposal

As part of Merton's LTN programme, we have been successful in obtaining funding for the introduction of a LTN, aimed at removing rat running and to encourage safe walking and cycling within your local area.

The proposal include a non-physical road closure in Charles Road at its junction with Rutlish Road, with planter boxes narrowing the carriageway to warn motorists.

An Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera will enforce the proposed measures. Access for the emergency services, authorised service vehicles and cycles will not be affected. Please see plan overleaf.

## LET US KNOW YOUR VIEWS

### Consultation

To determine the level of support, we are undertaking an informal consultation between 18<sup>th</sup> January and 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021. The decision on whether or not to proceed with the next step, which would involve a statutory consultation on the proposals, will be subject to the responses received during this consultation. We would ask that you submit your questionnaire online using this link by no later than **5<sup>th</sup> February 2021**.

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/traffic-management/low-traffic-neighbourhoods>

If however you are unable to complete the questionnaire on line and require a paper copy, please contact Traffic & Highways on 020 8545 3700, providing your full mailing address and quoting *LTN-Abbey Area*.

### \*Please note - only one vote per address\*

We regret that due to the number of responses received during an informal consultation, it will not be possible to reply to each respondent. We welcome your comments on this proposal, which will be noted and included within the proposed measures where appropriate.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

The results of the consultation along with officers' recommendations will be shared with all Ward Councillors and presented to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing and Climate Change for a decision. Once a decision is made you will be informed accordingly.

Based on this consultation feedback, the Council may consider the following:

- To abandon the scheme.
- To Proceed to a 21 day statutory consultation prior to possible implementation.
- To Implement the proposal under an Experimental Traffic Management Order.
  - *This allows the Council to implement the restrictions during the statutory consultation period.*
  - *It allows the Council to assess and monitor the restriction and its impact.*
  - *It will enable residents and other road users to experience the restrictions thereby allowing them to make informed comments during the first 6 months of the statutory consultation after implementation.*

*At the end of the Experimental Traffic Management Order, depending on the feedback received, the Council may choose to abandon the scheme, modify it or to make it permanent*

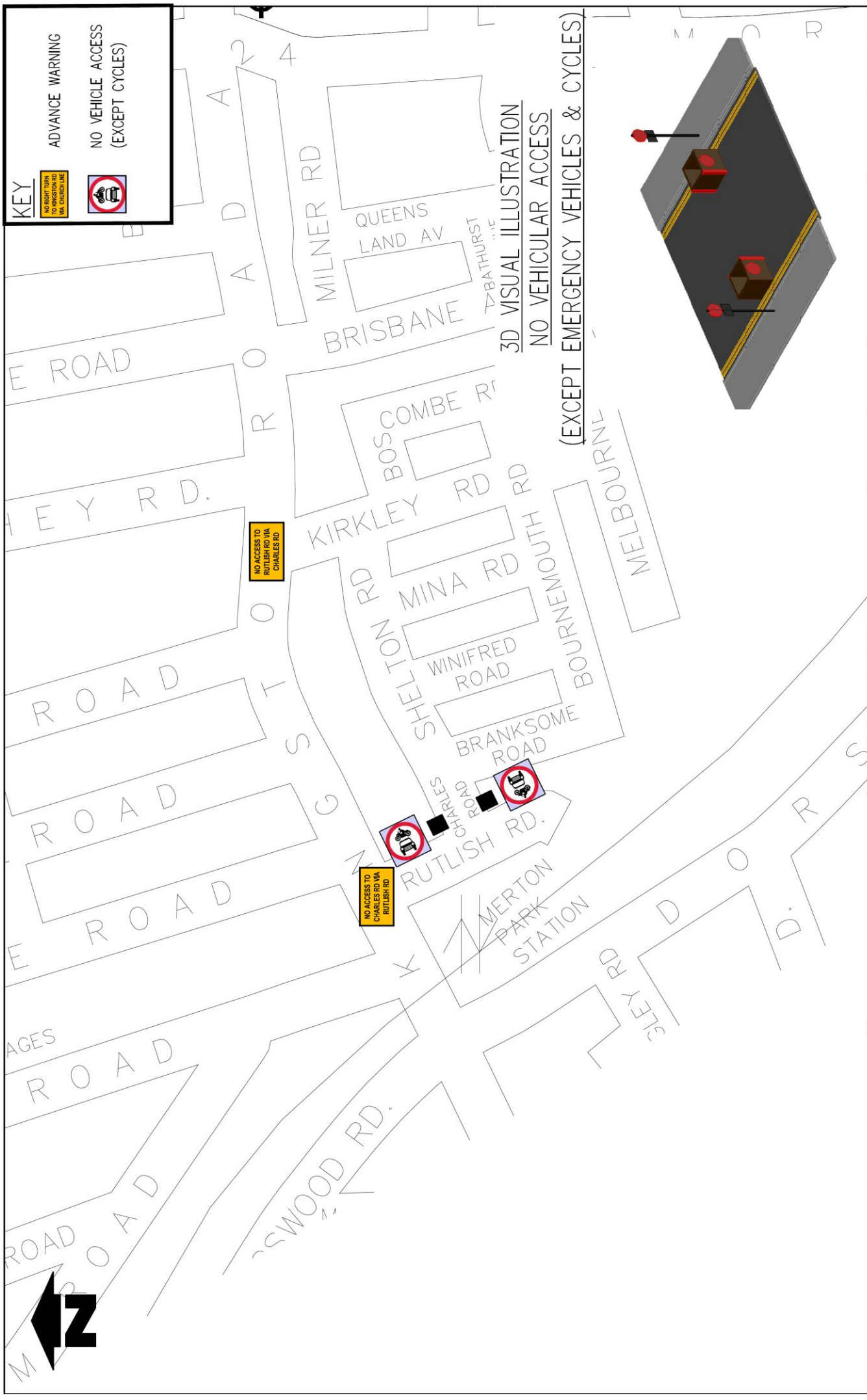
For all updates and additional information, please refer to the website.

<https://www.merton.gov.uk/streets-parking-transport/covid-19-transport-projects>

### ABBEY WARD COUNCILLORS (contact details of Ward Councillors are provided for information purposes only)

Cllr Nigel Benbow [nigel.benbow@merton.gov.uk](mailto:nigel.benbow@merton.gov.uk)  
Cllr Ben Butler [ben.butler@merton.gov.uk](mailto:ben.butler@merton.gov.uk)  
Cllr Eleanor Stringer [eleanor.stringer@merton.gov.uk](mailto:eleanor.stringer@merton.gov.uk)

Cllr Rebecca Lanning - Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health. [rebecca.lanning@merton.gov.uk](mailto:rebecca.lanning@merton.gov.uk)  
Cllr Martin Whelton Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Housing & Climate Change. [martin.whelton@merton.gov.uk](mailto:martin.whelton@merton.gov.uk)



**KEY**

NO RIGHT TURN TO KINGSTON RD VIA CHURCH LANE

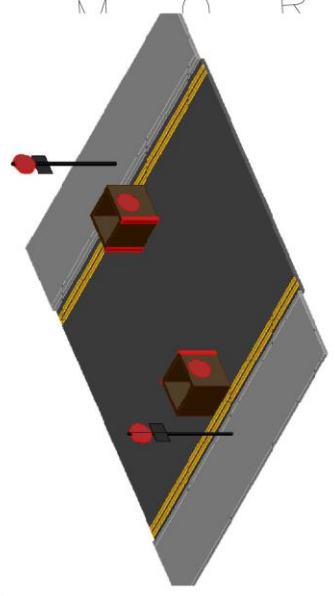
ADVANCE WARNING

NO VEHICLE ACCESS (EXCEPT CYCLES)

NO ACCESS TO RUTLISH RD VIA CHARLES RD

NO ACCESS TO CHARLES RD VIA RUTLISH RD

3D VISUAL ILLUSTRATION  
NO VEHICULAR ACCESS  
(EXCEPT EMERGENCY VEHICLES & CYCLES)



**Notes**  
Do not scale from this drawing

**Revisions**

Rev	Description	Drawn	By	Date	Checked	By	Date	Appr	By	Date

**PROJECT**  
COVID-19  
TEMP SAFETY MEASURES

**TITLE**  
LTN MEASURES  
CHARLES ROAD AREA

**Client**  
Merton Civic Centre  
Merton Survey  
SM4 5DX  
www.merton.gov.uk

**Drawn By**  
Z400-02-05-06

**Revision**

**Classification**  
CONSTRUCTION

**Scale**  
1:2500

**Organisation**  
Sustainable Communities  
environment & regeneration

**Future Merton**

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**Author**  
Date

**Checked by**  
Date

**Approved by**  
Date







GLADSTONE ROAD

CHARLES ROAD

SHELTON ROAD

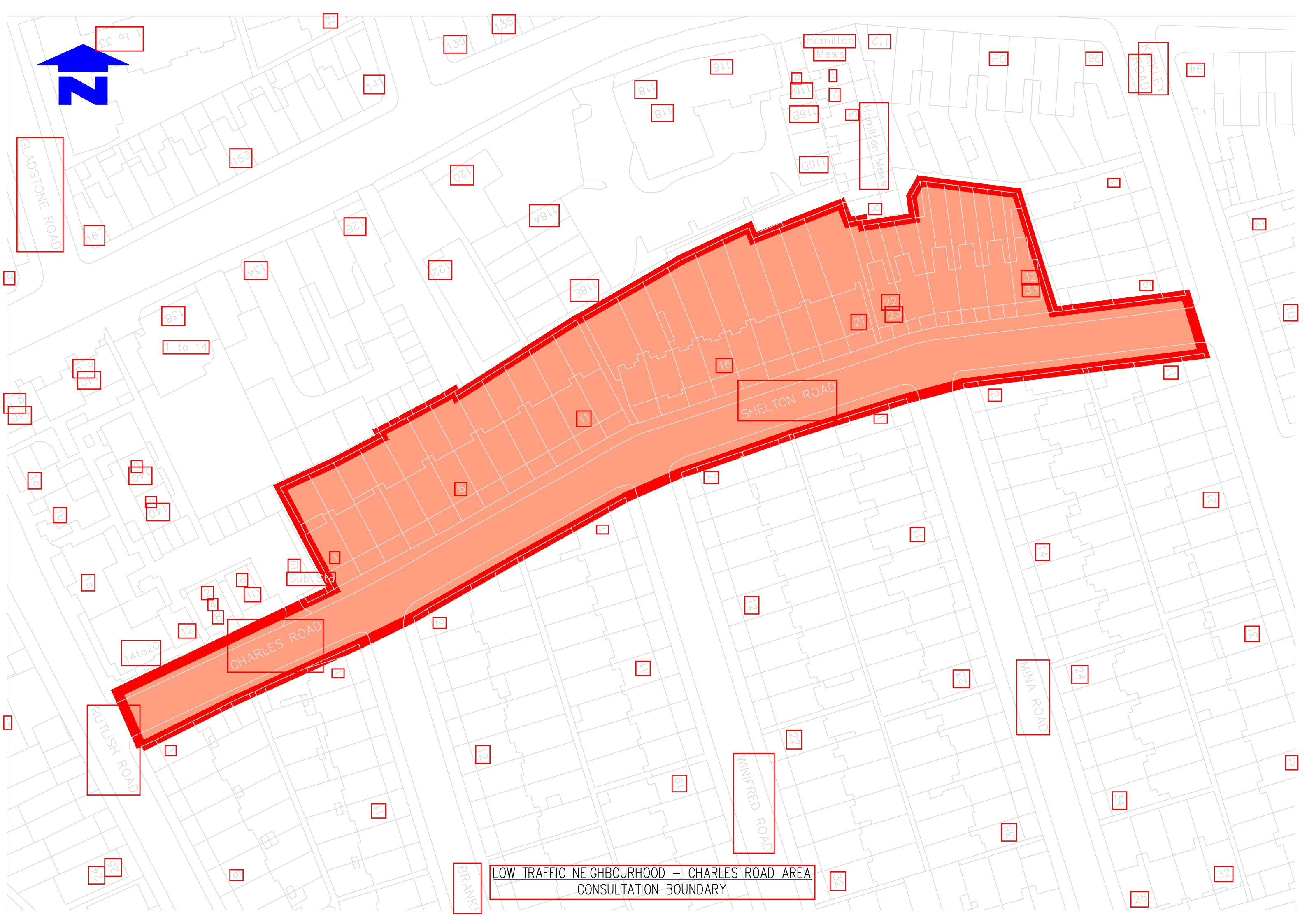
RUTLISH ROAD

MINIFRED ROAD

MINA ROAD

BRANKY

LOW TRAFFIC NEIGHBOURHOOD – CHARLES ROAD AREA  
CONSULTATION BOUNDARY





**LTN - CHARLES ROAD AREA - CONSULTATION RESULTS - WITHIN NEWSLETTER POSTAL AREA**

				Q4. - To what extent do you agree or disagree that rat-running, drivers using the road to cut through the area, is a problem on your road?						Q5. - Do you support the proposed measures to restrict vehicle movement on Charles Road at its junction with Rutlish Road?					
	No. Prop	Total Resp	Resp Rate	Agree		Disagree		Unsure		Yes		No		Unsure	
Charles Road	11	0	0.0%	0	#DIV/0!	0	#DIV/0!	0	#DIV/0!	0	#DIV/0!	0	#DIV/0!	0	#DIV/0!
Shelton Road	34	14	41.2%	8	57.1%	6	42.9%	0	0.0%	4	28.6%	9	64.3%	1	7.1%
			#DIV/0!		#DIV/0!		#DIV/0!		#DIV/0!		#DIV/0!		#DIV/0!		#DIV/0!
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>31.1%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>57.1%</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>42.9%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>64.3%</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7.1%</b>



About you - 2 Address	Your views - 4 Agree scheme	Your views - 5 Support for LTN	Your views - 6 Comments or representations
Kirkley Road	Agree	No	I think the closure of Charles Road is likely to displace the rat run traffic down Kirkley Road rather than stopping the problem itself. It will make it harder to turn onto/off Kirkley road.
Kirkley Road	Disagree	No	I live on Kirkley Road, which is already busy with relatively fast-moving traffic driving through to all the local roads here. We are also on the corner of Shelton Road, so are directly affected by vehicles driving through to avoid the traffic on Kingston Road. Of course people take this route - all residents here do! If Charles/Rutlish were blocked to traffic, it would create a great deal more traffic on Kirkley Road; there would be large queues at our narrow end of the road onto the Kingston Road. Additionally, there is a blind spot turning out left of Shelton onto Kirkley, which would lead to a lot of doubtless very irate drivers needing to reverse out of the way - and possibly driving into the parked cars there. I have young children and already have to be extremely cautious crossing our road every day on our way to nursery, Pelham Primary School, or anywhere else. Please do not block off the junction to traffic at Charles Road and Rutlish Road. You would not be encouraging anyone to walk or cycle. You would simply be creating a large problem in Kirkley Road that would make the lives of residents there quite unpleasant, and possibly making the road quite dangerous for all the local children who cross it daily. Thank you for your time.
Kirkley Road	Disagree	No	I am broadly in favour of reducing non-resident traffic in the grid, however blocking access at Charles/Rutlish would increase traffic on Kirkley, particularly at the junction with Kingston Road where the box junction is in place, but also at the corner with Shelton. There are many families with children on Kirkley, and this would increase pollution levels and risk of accidents. I would consider a proposal to limit access to residents, delivery and emergency services etc. Reducing the number of parking permits for Dominos delivery drivers would also help to reduce traffic; it seems that most of the parking spaces at the top of Kirkley are taken up by their vehicles...
Kirkley Road	Disagree	No	For residents like me it is the obvious way to get on to Kingston Road. It is something I do in the morning on my way to work (7.30am). I do acknowledge that in the evenings cars will turn off Kingston on to Kirkley, then Shelton and Charles to avoid jams on Kingston but it is unfair to penalise residents.

Kirkley Road	Disagree	No	There are currently only 3 roads (Charles Road, Kirkley Road and Brisbane Avenue) serving the whole south wimbledon area. Cutting off Charles Road makes the least sense. I don't agree with cutting off the road, but if we had to choose one, we should cut off Kirkley road which geographically is situated in the middle of Charles Road and Brisbane Av. Additionally, cutting off Charles Road would inevitably mean more traffic on Kirkley Road. The biggest problem with this is that the junction of kirkley road and Kingston road is quite narrow and kingston road can be congested. It is currently very helpful to be able to choose Charles Road or Kirkley Road to leave home or come home depending on the traffic.
Kirkley Road	Strongly disagree	No	Who dreamed this nonsense up? And do they live anywhere near Kirkley Road or have they just decided to foist it on us to annoy us? Rat running through Old Merton Park is just not an issue. Believe me, if it was, we'd complain. From what little information I can get out of this consultation paper, it seems designed purely to cause annoyance to the residents. And what of the effect upon Kirkley Road residents like myself if this goes ahead? It looks as though all residents of Mina Road, Winifred Road, Melbourne Road, Bournemouth Road AND Branksome Road will now have to use Kirkley Road to access Kingston Road. This will bring not only noise disturbance but create pollution as traffic backs up trying to get onto Kingston Road. Seriously, I would like to know who dreamed this up. I can guarantee they don't live in Abbey Ward.
Kirkley Road	Agree	No	Whilst I agree that there is some rat running via Rutlish, my concern is that preventing access there will divert more traffic to my road, Kirkley. Kirkley already suffers from speeding drivers and the chaos at the junction with Kingstön road caused by dominos drivers.
Kirkley Road	Strongly disagree	No	The closure of Charles Rd will add mean that we can only access our road from the terribly congested Kingston rd. Kirkley road will also be the main access point to our area so more residents will be using our road. All our local roads are narrow so congestion will be worse not better. Rat running is not a major issue in our area. The only through traffic is other residents.
Kirkley Road	Agree	No	Whilst I welcome this proposal I believe all of the residents of old Merton park should be allowed access. This should include Milner Brisbane ave Queensland rd Bathurst rd and Melbourne road.
Kirkley Road	Disagree	No	The proposal to close access to Charles Road will divert all traffic onto Kirkley Road (from the grid of nearby roads) as this will be the only access and egress to such roads. This will cause significant congestion and problems with cars and delivery vehicles etc trying to get off and onto Kingston Road, which is already severely congested with normal traffic flows/patterns. Residents on Kirkley Road will also face additional disruption and difficulty in crossing the road with children. Because of all the parked cars (on both sides of Kirkley Road), including numerous vehicles from local delivery businesses (eg dry cleaner, Dominos etc), cars cannot pass each other at the moment. This will only get worse. The proposed measure is in our opinion unnecessary and will cause significant additional problems and pollution with waiting vehicles unable to pass. We believe that the introduction of speed bumps (as used on nearby roads such as Russell Rd) would be more appropriate.

Kirkley Road	Disagree	No	I am opposed to this proposal for the following reasons: - Accessing Kirkley Road from Kingston road will become a nightmare. Traffic will queue off Kingston Road to enter Kirkley Road (since it would be the principal access point for the majority of roads in the Old Merton Park grid) and cars trying to exit Kirkley Road will prevent cars entering as there is room for one way traffic only between vehicles parked on both sides of the road. - The issues residents already experience entering and exiting Kirkley Road will be exacerbated, given that several vehicles will be trying to join traffic on Kingston Road and will have to queue during busy periods. This could impact vehicles trying to enter Kirkley Road from Kingston Road, and also vehicles having to queue when trying to enter Kirkley Road from Shelton Road. - There is only room for single lane traffic on Kirkley Road - Turning into and from the junction of Kirkley and Shelton Roads is already an issue especially for larger vehicles (trucks and other delivery vehicles frequently have to manoeuvre several times before they can turn, potentially damaging stationary vehicles as we ourselves have witnessed). - We strongly believe that road humps on Shelton Road are a significantly better solution, if there is a perceived problem with Shelton Road being used as a rat run. From a more personal point of view with a house at the junction of Kirkley and Shelton Roads we are concerned about a build up of traffic outside our property on what is currently a quiet residential road.
Mina Road	Strongly disagree	No	I think that this a totally pointless exercise in this particular case. The only outcome will be to inconvenience the residents of the streets that lead off Charles and Shelton Roads. There is no 'rat run', all roads in this 'toast rack' merely lead back into Kingston Road. Furthermore, there is no access to the A 219 as it is blocked, in effect creating a closed loop. I have lived in Mina Road for 15+years and have seen absolutely no evidence of this being used as a 'rat run'. The only people using Charles Road are either residents or delivery/service vehicles, there is absolutely no reason or point in anybody else using it. Anybody looking at the map can see that this is a total waste of expenditure to solve a non-existent problem and a serious hindrance to the proper enjoyment and use of the residents!
Mina Road	Strongly disagree	No	We have lived in Mina Road for nearly 30 years and have no evidence of significant rat running since the Saab garage closed in Milner Road. Most local roads are used by locals and all road intersections in our area can be congested, so restricting Charles Road as proposed will only shift traffic onto another local road to access the A298. Instead of these sort of ideas, can the Council please use our council tax money fill in all potholes in our streets and seal them so they don't reappear.
Mina Road	Disagree	No	I have several concerns - 1) Residence returning to the area, would have to do so via Kirkley Road - which is just outside the fire station. Yes, there is a box junction there, but would just block more traffic near emergency services 2) Kingston Road is always congested anyway, why create more congestion for drivers now funneling down only one entry point to Old Merton Park 3) You also use "encouraging walking and cycling" as a reason, which is ludicrous as local residence already walk and cycle for short journeys, this would make no difference. 4) Kirkley Road would have increase traffic and traffic noise, impacting those residence more than the residence at the other end of Old Merton Park 5) Local residence more likely to get "caught out" and fined than "non residence" This is a ridiculous idea, that has the feel of "making more money" from traffic fines.
Rutlish Road	Strongly disagree	No	This seems unnecessary There are never more than two cars waiting to exit Rutlish Road even in the rush hour



Rutlish Road	Agree	Unsure	Live at end of cul-de-sac and often use this route to get home; residents on Rutlish should be exempt from any enforcement. Sometimes cars don't stop and give way at end of Charles Road so narrowing junction / stopping right turns would make it safer Keep Clear signs on Kingston Road at the end of Rutlish need to be repainted to help stop backup caused by north bound traffic turning right
Rutlish Road	Disagree	No	Hello. I having been living on Rutlish Road for the last 8 years. Firstly I received no information about the consultation from the council. Isn't that against the rules? My neighbour informed me about it and then I had to google it. I strongly oppose this scheme for the following reasons a) Almost every resident living on Rutlish Road parks on the street and parking is always a struggle. Plus there are businesses on Rutlish road such as Waterfall car recovery services and Rutlish Auto garage that use Rutlish Road to park. Sometimes there are big recovery trucks parked illegally across 3 parking bays. This adds to parking difficulties. Other visitors to nearby shops on Kingston road also park on Rutlish Road. Due to parking pressures on Rutlish Road many of us residents have no choice sometimes but to use Charles road to park entering directly from Rutlish Road. Charles road intersection with Rutlish Road usually has empty parking spaces b) Since Kingston road is always jammed with traffic especially going from South Wimbledon to tram tracks, in order to avoid getting stuck in traffic instead of taking left on Rutlish road from kingston road we residents of Rutlish road and also other neighbouring streets take the earlier left from Kirkley road and then reach our homes via Shelton and Charles roads. c) We have seen very few instances of non residents travelling on kingston road using the detour via Charles road. Hence if we place a barrier between Rutlish road and Charles road residents of Rutlish road will be severely impacted in terms of their ability to park. We will have to spend additional time sitting in traffic on Kingston road trying to access our homes and our street which will only reduce our welfare and increase pollution in the area. The Rutlish road businesses especially the flatbed rescue trucks who use Charles road intersection with Rutlish road to make u-turns will now try to do this on Rutlish road itself with potentially unsafe results.
Rutlish Road	Strongly disagree	No	As a resident of Rutlish Road, we are sometimes forced to park on Charles Road due to the lack of spaces on Rutlish Road (this is due to the council issuing parking permits to new developments on our road despite assurances these would be car free). Closing the junction with Charles Road would be very frustrating as we wouldn't know if we needed to park on Charles Road until we had already driven up Rutlish Road, we would then have to turnaround and get to Charles Road via Kingston Road which is often very busy. This is a poor suggestion by Merton Council and should not go ahead.
Rutlish Road	Disagree	No	I am concerned with regard to parking. When the social housing was built in Rutlish Road we were advised that there would be no parking permits issued to residents of these homes. This was not implemented and a considerable number of permits have been issued, the numbers of which will be known to you. What concerns me is will I be able to still park in Charles Road by turning from Rutlish as very often it is necessary. Not sure what a non physical barrier is. I actually do not believe there are huge amounts of vehicles 'rat running'. Furthermore, who is going to maintain the planters? The planters at the end of Rutlish Road always have good display of weeds - very often dried out. Somebody did try and introduce some plants but plants need water and boxes need to be tidy. Thank you for your attention.

Rutlish Road	Strongly disagree	No	I do not support this. The volume of traffic is very low. I live on Rutlish Road and access from the east I turn off Kingston Rd into Kirkley Road and along Charles Road. I rarely encounter another vehicle. The alternative is add 10 minutes to my journey crawling along Kingston Road. If this was a rat run, there would be a constant queue of traffic to leave Rutlish Road and there never is. Similarly there is never a stream of traffic from the west turning right into Rutlish Road. Have you done traffic counts, is this evidence based? It seems so spurious, there is no issue to address here but this will cause nothing but inconvenience to residents. Strongly oppose.
Shelton Road	Strongly disagree	No	Closing Charles Road for access from Shelton Road will create a permanent chokepoint in Kirkley Road which is narrow with parked cars on both sides. Negotiating entry and exit through Kirkley Road will be hellish and it is already difficult going through now! It is essential to access Shelton Road and Old Merton Park enclave from Kingston Road from both ends to provide efficiency and allow residents to cut out traffic jams in Kingston Road.
Shelton Road	Agree	No	Restricting access to residents will cause a problem as everyone will need to go in/out by the fire station which could just cause more traffic issues. Speed bumps or allowing access for residents only both directions would be better.
Shelton Road	Agree	No	If you close access out of Shelton Rd via Charles Rd you will push all traffic down Kirkley Rd which will create huge issues..... Kirkley Rd is very narrow with parking on both sides, if that is our only access it will constantly be gridlocked, forcing traffic back into Kingston Rd, which itself is often jammed with traffic. Many children that live in the area go to Pelham Primary school and have to use/cross over Kirkley Rd, if that becomes the only access it will make this a lot more unsafe for children trying to do so. Please can you consider speed bumps being put into Shelton Rd as a far better, safer alternative.
Shelton Road	Agree	Unsure	I'm not sure what a non-physical barrier entails? I only heard about this proposed work and would like more details as to what this entails? As this will definitely affect myself and my neighbours. I would definitely not want to lose the ability to drive onto Rutlish Road from Shelton/Charles Road. Other traffic calming /slowing measures are welcome.
Shelton Road	Agree	No	If local residents are still allowed through this reduced access area. This wouldn't be too bad, but if it's only emergency vehicles and we would all need to drive up to Kirkley Road to head West on Kingston Road, this is completely and utterly ridiculous and will cause a complete nightmare. It is hard enough trying to make any turn on Kirkley onto Kingston Road in either direction at the best of times. Hence creating a massive choke point. Especially with the Domino's Pizza drivers coming and going all the time blocking the Kirkley Road junction area. I live on Shelton Road and given the choice would be happier using Rutlish Road to exit rather than Kirkley. Returning though, I never use Rutlish Road as it causes traffic to back up over the tram track.

Shelton Road	Strongly agree	Yes	I think this is a good idea under the condition there will be an information at the beginning of Kirkley Rd and Brisbane avenue: "No access to Charles rd". Also residents must have access to all the roads from all of the above mentioned roads: Rutlish, Kirkley etc. It should also apply for delivery and the emergency vehicles as well as our guests. Shelton rd is the worst road as this is the road which lots of cars use as a shortcut due to the traffic congestion on Kingston rd. Many residents in this area have small kids including myself and I know how dangerous people drive through this road. Speed bumps should be compulsory on these narrow residential streets. Additionally, access for dominos pizza cars should be reviewed as they take lots of space and park dangerously especially on corners. Also beside the fire station, it would be beneficial to install the mirror so that people coming out from the Kirkley rd can see the cars coming from the left hand side on Kingston Road.
Shelton Road	Strongly agree	Yes	Without being rude, it about bloody time!! Superb idea and well done to the person who thought of this and proposed it. Top Marks!! Regards, G.H.Anderson
Shelton Road	Strongly agree	Yes	The road should be restricted. This is a family area with lots of small children. Cars and Trucks speed up Shelton road to avoid traffic on Kingston Road. Also, there is a Car Recovery business called Waterfall that uses Shelton Road as a shortcut. This is very disruptive and dangerous.
Shelton Road	Disagree	No	I don't find that Charles Road or Shelton road is much of a rat run. I use both end of the road (Rutlish Road and Kirkley Road and sometimes Brisbane Avenue) depending on my destination. Blocking off Charles road would be a great inconvenience. All traffic would be concentrated on one road and this would inevitably create traffic jam at the peak hours.
Shelton Road	Strongly disagree	No	We live in Shelton Road and we are the people who are supposed to benefit from this proposal. We most definitely will not. Access to Shelton Road from Kingston Road from both ends is a great boon. It provides efficiency and allows us to cut out traffic jams on Kingston Road. Closing Charles Road will complicate our life greatly. We are sure that it will also affect the prices of properties in our neighbourhood, as it will diminish the attractiveness and convenience of living here. The Council has no right to do this to us. So we are completely against this proposal.
Shelton Road	Disagree	No	Rat running isn't an issue on the road, so the proposed closures amount to a significant restriction on residents for no real benefit

Shelton Road	Strongly agree	Yes	I think it is an excellent idea. Shelton Rd and Charles Rd are obviously a common rat-run for traffic avoiding the queue coming up to the tramm crossing on Kingston Rd, as well as for lorries working out of the garages on Rutlish Rd. Some drivers even turn off at Brisbane Road and race around Melbourne Rd, Kirkley Rd, and on to Shelton Rd, to avoid a couple of hundred yards of traffic jam. Some of the rat-running motorists drive very fast and aggressively. We need to reclaim our streets for pedestrians and cyclists, and make it safe for children to play and exercise outdoors. The main objections will be from local residents who prioritise their own convenience as motorists over the safety and well-being of their neighbours, especially neighbours who are not so car-dependant - this is unfortunate, but the decision will have to be based on which values are more important.
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## **CLLR NIGEL BENBOW'S OPEN LETTER ON LTN PROPOSALS AT CHARLES ROAD, SOUTH WIMBLEDON:**

Public consultation is now closed.

I am calling on the Labour administration at Merton Council to halt the Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) proposal at Charles Road, South Wimbledon.

The purpose of the proposed LTN is to remove the rat-running and encourage safe walking and cycling on Charles Road and Shelton Road in South Wimbledon, but I do not feel this will work in this area, and it is a clearly an ill-thought-out plan.

### **I asked the Council how Charles Road, a small residential road, was nominated and by whom?**

At the start of the pandemic, funding was made available to Merton Council for specific active travel schemes such as LTNs. Merton Council chose Charles Road, where they felt an LTN would benefit local residents. They confirmed that some residents complained about commercial vehicles using this road (via Shelton Road) as a short cut into or out of Rutlish and Kirkley Roads. So far no evidence has been produced by the council, and I have not heard of any residents mentioning this throughout the consultation period.

### **I also asked for evidence of traffic moments via Rutlish Road, Charles Road, Shelton Road and Kirkley Road and the vice-versa route.**

The council admitted that they do not have any evidence of traffic movements in the form of traffic count data. They say they had arranged for surveys but that it has been put on hold due to the third lockdown.

Therefore the proposed Charles Road LTN is due to be introduced without any solid evidence in the form of traffic data count.

The council confirmed that they will undertake the surveys once the lockdown restrictions have been lifted. I do not believe that a small residential road should have a non-physical closure without any factual evidence being produced to support this decision. I have not once come across a resident speaking in favour of the LTN scheme at Charles Road.

The Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera to enforce the proposed measures is seen as another 'money-grab' opportunity for the Council's Labour administration. This has caused many concerns and worries to the residents, particularly those living in the Old Merton Park area.

### **I asked, will the Old Merton Park residents still be able to travel through the non-physical road closure?**

The council replied: "This proposal is a road closure enforceable by ANPR. Other than Emergency services and authorised service vehicles, no one would be exempt. This is in line with all other LTNs / banned movements/closures throughout the borough. The only reasons school streets are subject to an exemption, is because residents based on the affected road do not have any other option to gain access or leave their homes".

I think this is deeply unfair for the residents living in the Old Merton Park area. It seems to me that the Labour-run council is focused on generating income from traffic restrictions which make residents' lives more difficult during the pandemic and in financially challenging times. I oppose residents in Old Merton Park being fined for using the LTN at Charles Road, and I am concerned about the impact on their friends and families

This proposed LTN at Charles Road is, in my view, totally unnecessary and likely to be a considerable problem, cutting off vehicular access for all the residents on the Old Merton Park 'grid', leading to excess traffic at the Kirkley Road junction. That poses a problem because there is a large 'yellow boxed' markings junction directly opposite Wimbledon's London Fire Bridge Station, which could cause access issues for the emergency vehicles.

The Old Merton Park area has a quiet grid of streets and speed levels are not dangerous due to traffic using Charles Road. Removing access to this residential road without being fined will be very inconvenient for residents.

This proposal will have a 'significant adverse impact' on all residents in the Old Merton Park area. Many residents feel there isn't an issue of a 'rat-run' on Charles and Shelton Road.

There are reports across London of increased pollution levels on main roads due to LTNs, and I think would be the case in South Wimbledon.

This LTN has been hastily proposed by the Labour administration that clearly does not understand South Wimbledon. Therefore, I feel that the Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme at Charles Road is a poorly planned proposal and it is likely to cause more problems than it solves.

Cllr Nigel Benbow.

**Councillor Nigel Benbow**  
**Abbey Ward - South Wimbledon (Conservatives)**