

Andrew Walker
Senior Coroner
North London Coroners Court
29 Wood Street
Barnet
EN5 4BE

Contact: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Date: 19 May 2020

Dear Sir,

Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths

Thank you for sending your Regulation 28 Report with regard to the tragic death of Sonny Parmar following a road traffic collision on East End Road at or adjacent to a pedestrian crossing near the Five Bells public house.

The matter of concern that you raise at section 5 of your Report is "That there is no limitation for the speed of the road adjacent to the curtilage of the school as is seen in other areas where traffic is slowed at times where children are arriving and leaving the school".

However:

- East End Road is subject to a 30mph speed limit; the default position for a built up area. We understand that you are referring to a reduced speed limit of 20mph within your Report and reply on that basis.
- There are no schools with a curtilage adjacent to the road on the part of East End Road near the location of the collision that led to Sonny Parmar's death.
- We also note that Sonny and his mother were at this location at about 7pm rather than at a time of day typically associated with children travelling to and from school¹.

We consider that introduction of a reduced speed limit local to this particular crossing in isolation is not appropriate given that it is only one of a series of pedestrian crossing locations in East End Road and elsewhere in the local area, all of which are situated a moderate distance from schools.

Consequently, for these reasons, and as expanded upon below, a 20mph speed limit associated with travel to and from school is not proposed by Barnet Council at this location.

The closest schools to this location are Holy Trinity CofE Primary School in Eagans Close and Archer Academy Lower School (years 7-9) in Stanley Road. However, both schools are situated some 200m -250m from East End Road and are accessed via side roads and footpaths.

The signal controlled pedestrian crossing close to the location of the fatal collision would serve some pupils walking to either of these schools via Stanley Road. This is just one of several potential walking routes from A504 East End Road to these schools. Two zebra crossings were

¹ We understand from press reports that Sonny attended The Monkey Puzzle Day Nursery on East Finchley High Road more than half a kilometre away. This offers childcare provision until 6.30pm; the time Sonny's mother stated he was collected from nursery.

also provided on East End Road in 2016/17 about 130m and 570m to the south -east of the signal controlled crossing as part of development funded measures to support the presence of the Archer Academy and intended principally to serve pupils travelling to or from Archer Academy or between Archer Academy sites. The schools are also about 250m from these crossings. Similarly, the schools are situated about 250m from the A1000 High Road so other pupils will be making use of crossing facilities on that road.

Further along East End Road (which overall is about 2.5km long with stretches of varying character) there are other schools situated 200-300m from East End Road. About 1 km away from the scene of the collision two schools do have a curtilage adjacent to the road.

It is Barnet Council's policy to introduce 20mph areas around schools that request them. The requests are principally drawn from School Travel Plans prepared by the schools. The current (or most recent) travel plans for Holy Trinity Primary School and for the Archer Academy do not request a 20mph area on East End Road.² and we consider that introduction of a school related reduced speed limit local to this particular crossing in isolation is not appropriate given that it is only one of a series of locations in East End Road and elsewhere in the local area where there are schools present at a moderate distance from the main road.

Where a 20mph speed limit is being considered the type of provision made is informed by regulations and guidance regarding the suitability of different approaches.

As identified in the Department for Transport Guidance Document "Setting local speed limits"³ "Successful 20 mph zones and 20 mph speed limits are generally self-enforcing, i.e. the existing conditions of the road together with measures such as traffic calming or signing, publicity and information as part of the scheme, lead to a mean traffic speed compliant with the speed limit. To achieve compliance there should be no expectation on the police to provide additional enforcement beyond their routine activity, unless this has been explicitly agreed".

The conditions on East End Road are such that adequate compliance with a signed 20mph speed limit cannot be expected using signage alone. Introducing a 20mph restriction that did not recognise this could be counterproductive, leading to a false sense of security among some road users.

A Member's item was raised in July 2019 by a ward councillor at the Finchley and Golders Green Area Committee⁴ in the light of the collision in East End Road that led to Sonny's death. This also recognised the occurrence of another fatal pedestrian collision earlier in 2019 in East Finchley (occurring on the High Road) and a serious collision occurring outside Martin School at another location on the High Road. The Member's item sought a 20mph speed restriction throughout the ward.

Such a request was outside the funding available to the Area Committee and was referred to the Environment Committee for consideration. Environment Committee Members considered this item at length in September 2019⁵ but ultimately voted against a motion that a report in

² Holy Trinity school has a current STP with "Gold" STARS accreditation. However the STP contains no request for provision of 20mph or other measures on East End Road.

Archer Academy does not have a current valid STP. The most recent STP produced requested pedestrian crossing provision on East End Road, which as noted in the main text were provided in 2016/17.

³ Department for Transport Circular 01/2013 para 85

⁴ <https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=712&MId=9957&Ver=4> Item 9(2)

⁵ <https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=695&MId=9907&Ver=4> item 6

relation to implementation of a 20mph speed limit throughout the ward be submitted to the committee. They unanimously approved a motion to introduce a 20mph limit adjacent to Martin School which has a curtilage adjacent to the High Road.

We note that renewal of anti-skid surfacing on the approaches to the pedestrian crossing at the scene of the collision was undertaken over the weekend 30 November to 1 December 2019 and vehicle activated signs to remind drivers of the existing 30mph speed limit have been installed in April 2020. Work has also now been programmed to remove the redundant dropped kerb and provide additional guard rail panels at this location. This has taken longer than originally anticipated, but is now programmed to commence 16 June 2020.

Most transport funding in Barnet is provided by Transport for London to support the borough's Local Implementation Plan of the Mayor's Transport Strategy.. Given the current public health emergency caused by Covid-19 this provision has been paused, with funding being focused on Covid-19 response provisions. We nevertheless expect to complete the adjustments to the dropped kerb and guardrail and will continue to monitor the location going forward.

Yours faithfully,

Handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A R Cook". A horizontal line is drawn underneath the signature.A solid black rectangular box redacting the name of the signatory.

Assistant Director, Transport and Highways, Environment