

- Traffic Calming on Hospital Lane - Consultation with Residents

This Research was Designed, Undertaken and Analysed
by:



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“Traffic comes down the lane at a very fast speed”.

“I’m in favour of a lower speed limit as I want the lane to remain accessible”.

“Reducing the speed limit will allow pedestrians and children more time to cross the road”.

“The lane is convenient. I wouldn’t like to see access to cars denied but the speed limit is too high and needs to be brought down”.

“There is no room for people to walk down the lane. There should be a footpath constructed to the side”.

“You don’t know what is coming down the lane. It’s twisty and the bushes are overgrown”.

Area Residents talking about Hospital Lane

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Section One

Introducing the Research

Hospital Lane is a busy road straddling the wards of Lemington and Newburn in Newcastle upon Tyne. (See Figure 1). The road has a 60 mph national speed limit, however, it is frequently used by pedestrians travelling with young children to Newburn Manor Primary school to the north west of the road. This research set out to ask residents to consider three possible traffic calming measures on Hospital Lane:

- A reduction of the speed limit from the current limit of 60 mph to 20 mph.
- The closure of Hospital Lane at one end.
- The introduction of a one way system.

The Aims of the Research

The aims of this research were thus:

- To contact a statistically valid sample of residents in the streets which are adjacent to Hospital Lane. The map attached as Figure 1 shows the area in which Hospital Lane is situated.
- To statistically measure levels of preference relating to traffic calming measures, exploring the rationale behind opinions, together with potentially alternative solutions.

The Objectives of the Research

Objectively, the intention of the research was to:

- Quantify support for/opposition to each of the three traffic calming measures being investigated for Hospital Lane, detailing the rationale behind opinion, together with alternative/accompanying solutions.

The Research Methodology

Information was collected during May and June 2007 using a face to face questionnaire, administered by a research interviewer throughout the identified catchment area. 180 interviews were completed, yielding a statistically robust and valid sample from which to draw conclusions. A copy of this questionnaire is available on request (see cover page for contact details).

This report is divided into three sections to facilitate easy reading, and findings throughout are presented using a selection of tables and quotes. Important and interesting findings can be found in boxes like this:

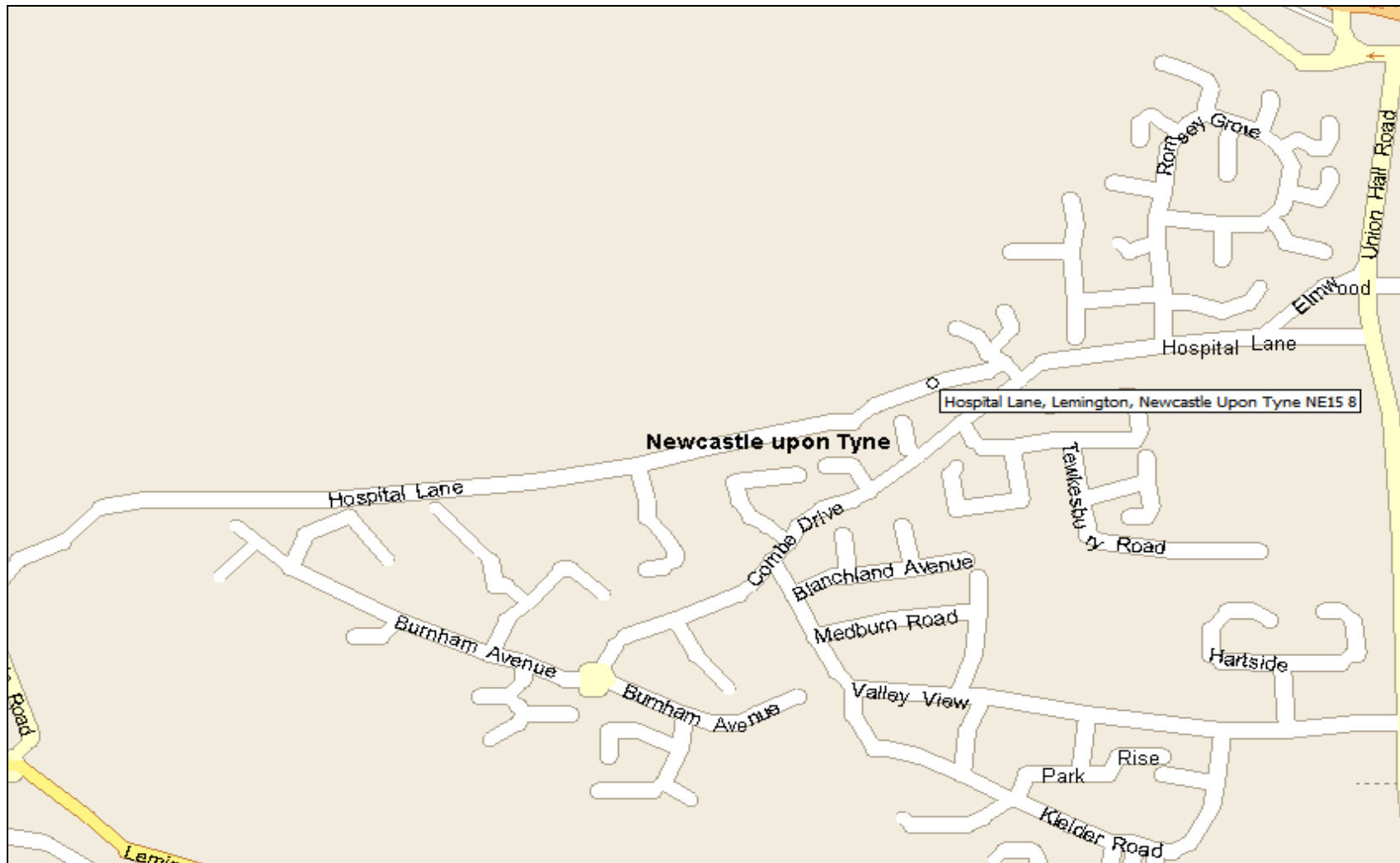
- **Important and interesting findings can be found in boxes like this.**

Notes

- A map showing Hospital Lane is included overleaf as Figure 1.1.
- All percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole figure and may therefore not total 100.
- Percentages have also been calculated excluding missing responses.
- Grateful acknowledgements are extended to all residents who participated in the research.



Figure1.1



Section Two

The Findings of the Research

The Gender of Respondents

51% of respondents were female, with 49% male. (See Table 2.1).

Table 2.1

Gender	% of respondents
Female	51
Male	49

- **51% of residents were female, with 49% male.**

The Age of Respondents

Respondents of all ages were interviewed, with an age span from 16 to 83. (See Table 2.2).

Table 2.2

Age	% of respondents
16-24	7
25-39	30
40-49	16
50-64	27
65-74	12
75 and over	8

- **Adult residents of all ages were interviewed, with 7% aged 16-24; 46% aged 25-49; 27% aged 50-64 and 20% aged 65 or over.**

Streets of Residence

Interviews were completed with residents of 28 streets close to Hospital Lane. (See Table 2.3).

Table 2.3

Street	
Alderburgh Avenue	Jade Close
Allerdean Close	Medburn Road
Alviston Close	Nile Close
Apple Close	Orchard Rise
Berwick Close	Pangbourne Close
Blanchland Avenue	Patina Close
Brancepeth Close	Resida Close
Bridgewater Close	Romsey Grove
Burnham Avenue	Sage Close
Camelford Court	Shamrock Close
Celadon Close	Sourthfork
Cobalt Close	Tewkesbury Road
Combe Drive	Valley View
Hamsterly Crescent	Warrenmill Close

- Interviews were completed with residents of 28 streets close to Hospital Lane.

The Frequency of Use of Hospital Lane

Almost 90% of those interviewed said that they used Hospital Lane to drive down; over half (51%) used Hospital Lane to walk down and around 11% used Hospital Lane to cycle down. (See Table 2.4).

Table 2.4

Response	% of respondents drive down	% of respondents walk down	% of respondents cycle down
Frequently	38	15	3
Occasionally	49	36	8
Never	13	49	89

- Almost 90% of residents use Hospital Lane to drive down. 51% walk down Hospital Lane and 11% cycle down Hospital Lane.

Days and Times of Use of Hospital Lane by Pedestrians

A third of all residents interviewed (33%) walked down Hospital Lane either every day or most days. However, others used it on a variety of specific or random days. Whilst the majority of pedestrians used Hospital Lane at various times throughout the day, over 20% specified afternoons or evenings as the most common times of use.

Walking Down Hospital Lane with Children

21% of respondents walked down Hospital Lane with children. (See Table 2.5).

Table 2.5

Response	% of respondents
Yes	21
No	79

- **21% of respondents walked down Hospital Lane with children.**

Feelings of Safety as a Pedestrian

Just 21% of residents who used Hospital Lane as a pedestrian said that they felt safe doing so. In contrast, three times as many (63%) felt unsafe using Hospital Lane as a pedestrian. (See Table 2.6).

Table 2.6

Response	% of pedestrians
Very safe	4
Fairly safe	17
Neither	15
Fairly unsafe	32
Very unsafe	31

It is notable that older residents are more likely to feel unsafe (61%) than their younger counterparts (53%).

Significantly, twice as many residents who use Hospital Lane with children feel unsafe doing so (80%), compared to those who use it without children (40%).

- **63% of pedestrians felt unsafe using Hospital Lane as a pedestrian. These feelings peak among older residents and, particularly, amongst those who use the lane with children.**

Reasons underpinning feelings of insecurity included the speed of traffic (35%):

“traffic is on you before you see it”

“traffic comes down the lane at a very fast speed”

and the narrowness of the road combined with the lack of a pathway (30%):

“there isn’t really a footpath to use so you have to be cautious”

“you have to keep your eyes wide open when you are walking down there”

“I tend to stick to the pathway but that runs out half way down the lane”.

Making Hospital Lane Safer

Respondents would prefer Hospital Lane to be made safer via a reduction in the speed limit from the current 60 mph to 20 mph (49%). Within this category the introduction of speed humps (27%) was most often advocated.

In contrast, the introduction of a one way system (22%) and the closure of Hospital Lane at one end (5%) were far less popular measures. Interestingly, the suggestion of widening the road was made, unprompted, by 17% of residents. (See Table 2.7).

Table 2.7

Response	% of respondents
A reduction of the speed limit from the current limit of 60 mph to 20 mph (with a particular focus on speed humps)	49
* Other methods	27
The introduction of a one way system	22
Widening of the road	17
The closure of Hospital Lane at one end	5

* Other methods included the construction of footpaths, trimming of hedges and the introduction of passing places.

Respondents' comments reflected feelings about the speed limit:

“vision on the road is poor and the speed limit is too high”

“I’m in favour of a lower speed limit as I want the lane to remain accessible”

“the lane is not suitable for 60 mph traffic... the limit should be lowered”

“reducing speed is the best option available in terms of safety and access”

“as children and pedestrians use the lane the speed limit should be lower than it is”

“reducing the speed limit will allow pedestrians and children more time to cross the road”

“the lane is convenient. I wouldn’t like to see access to cars denied but the speed limit is too high and needs to be brought down”

“the narrowness of the road is more suited to a lower speed limit”

“I think the speed should be reduced but I also think it should be enforced”

“I would like access to stay. It is the speed limit which needs to be lowered”

“I have seen accidents on Hospital Lane. It is a bendy road and the national speed limit should definitely be reduced”

the possible introduction of a one way system:

“a one way system would be better as people would know where the traffic was coming from”

“I think if you make it a one way system AND reduce the speed limit things will improve”

“as well as a one way system I’d favour speed humps”

closure of one end of Hospital Lane:

“closing Hospital Lane at one end would prevent people using the lane as a cut through. Traffic would be reduced as a result”

road widening and the construction of footpaths:

“there is no room for people to walk down the lane. There should be a footpath constructed to the side”

“I think the road is too narrow. It would benefit from being widened”

“if the road was widened it would be a safer place for those in cars and on foot”

arboreal pruning:

“there isn’t enough room for two cars to pass. Cutting the bushes back would be a start”

“you don’t know what is coming down the lane. It’s twisty and the bushes are overgrown”

“the road has poor visibility and you can’t see past the bends. The trees are overhanging and this doesn’t help”

passing places:

“I think improving the passing places on the lane would calm traffic”

restricted access, and speed reduction schemes:

“there should be restricted access to the lane to those living on Orchard estate”

“introduce zigzags or chicanes so the traffic is forced to slow down”.

- Respondents most commonly prefer Hospital Lane to be made safer by reducing the speed limit from 60 mph to 20 mph.



Section Three

Concluding the Research

- 3.1 The research informs us that:
- 3.2 180 adults aged from 16 to 83 were interviewed in the vicinity of Hospital Lane.
- 3.3 Many adult residents use Hospital Lane to drive down (87%). Furthermore, 51% use Hospital Lane as a pedestrian or as a cyclist (11%).
- 3.4 21% of adult residents walk down Hospital Lane with children.
- 3.5 63% of pedestrians feel unsafe when walking down Hospital Lane – three times as many as those who feel safe.
- 3.6 It should be noted that feeling unsafe peaks among older residents and significantly among those residents who use Hospital Lane with children.
- 3.7 49% of residents would like Hospital Lane to be made safer via a reduction of the speed limit from 60 mph to 20 mph. Within this view the suggested introduction of speed humps was often incorporated.
- 3.8 22% of respondents favoured the introduction of a one way system, 17% favoured widening of the road, whilst very little support (5%) was evident for the closure of one end of Hospital Lane.
- 3.9 The construction of footpaths, and aboreal trimming were the most frequently suggested alternative solutions to assist with the safety of Hospital Lane.

