

Agenda Item No:

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: ALL
REPORT TITLE: Review of School Run Policy and the Issue of Dispensation Permits (CENV/2007/41) – Options for consultation	

REPORT OF: Director of Culture & Environment	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Culture & Environment Scrutiny Committee Executive (Environment) Sub Group	DATE 6 th February 2007 15 th February 2007

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report is the second in the process of reviewing the school run policy of the Council that was begun in October 2006. It follows the reports to the C&E Scrutiny Committee on the 8th November 2006 and to the Executive (Environment) Sub-Group on 21st November 2006. The policy of reducing parking dispensation permits is now in the fourth year of its six-year programme, with 40% of permits remaining and the current policy will lead to 20% permits in September 2007 and no permits from September 2008.

This report outlines the options for consultation and the consultation process. The School Travel Consultation Steering Group discussed the options for the issue of dispensation permits and their comments are outlined in this report. The results of the consultation will be reported to the Culture & Environment Scrutiny Committee and the Sub-Group in May. The Executive (Environment) Sub on 17th May 2007 will consider if and how the policy is changed.

Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information

1. Research by Ian Arrowsmith, Transport Policy Adviser at the DfES for the Education & Inspections Bill at TfL conference, January 11th 2007 (DfES, 2006)
2. School Travel Strategies and Plans: Case Studies Report, (DfT, 2004)
3. Every Child Matters: Change for Children, (DfES 2004)
4. National Healthy Schools Programme: National Audit, (DfES, 2007)

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RECOMMENDATION

The Culture & Environment Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

1. Comment on the parking dispensation options for consultation set out in Section 5
2. Comment on the consultation process in Section 6

The Executive (Environment) Sub Group is recommended to:

1. Agree the parking dispensation options for consultation set out in Section 5
2. Agree the consultation proposed in Section 6

Signed by Director/Assistant Director:

Date:

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Camden began its review of the School Run Policy in September. This is the second, consultation on policy options, stage of the 3-stage review process that will be completed in May 2007 to allow time to implement the agreed policy in time for the new school year. From the outset it was considered important that the School Travel Consultation Steering Group (STCSG) and the Culture & Environment Scrutiny Panel were closely involved in the review process. The final decision on, if and how the policy is changed, will be taken by the Executive (Environment) Sub-Group in May 2007.
- 1.2 The purpose of the review is to collect evidence to assess if the policy has been meeting its primary objective to reduce traffic and if further implementation along its current trajectory is likely to do so in future. As part of this process, the STCSG have been presented with evidence on the performance of the current policy so far at its last meeting on 8th December 2006, alongside a discussion on five different policy options. The STCSG did not recommend rejection or particular endorsement of any of the five options.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to:
- To consider the implications of evidence collected so far for each of the five policy options
 - Feed back views of the STCSG specifically on these policy options and comment on their implications
 - Describe how each option might work under different scenarios and set out the advantages and disadvantages associated with each scenario
 - Present a draft consultation paper together with recommendations on who should be consulted and how.
- 1.4 In the Hampstead and Belsize areas, up to 50% of cars on some roads in the morning peak are travelling to school (compared to a national average of 20%), making the area one of the worst affected by the school run in the whole of the UK. This is due to a high concentration of schools in the area (32 in NW3 educating approximately 7,500 pupils). 23 out of 32 schools are in the independent and 5 from the voluntary-aided sector. In both cases pupil catchments are less likely to be local. According to latest travel data, collected in December 2006, the average percentages of primary school roll coming by car in the dispensation scheme in NW3 are 55 for independent and 23 per cent for voluntary-aided schools, equivalent to 4,564 vehicles visiting the area in the morning and afternoon. Currently Camden's parking dispensation scheme provides permits to facilitate 3,354 visits to schools and nurseries in NW3 by car every day.
- 1.5 The effects of these high levels of traffic are well known –
- Impacts on climate change and air pollution
 - Congested streets
 - Increased danger for children walking and cycling and a missed opportunity to learn road safety skills for those driven to school
 - Less exercise for children driven to school with impacts on alertness and concentration
 - Less welcome journeys for children who cite long distance journeys as one of their least favourite aspects of school travel and the bicycle as their favoured mode (DfES, 2006, SUSTRANS, 2004)

- Heightened neighbourhood tensions between residents and school run drivers.
- 1.6 Camden is committed to working within the national and regional policy framework to deliver reductions in school run traffic. This is in accordance with the Council's Green Transport Strategy. The Camden school travel strategy is set out in more detail in the Local Implementation Plan 2007-08.
- 1.7 There are two strands to Camden's school travel strategy reflecting Borough contrasts in journey to school patterns. First, in 2002 all schools were invited to join its Parking Dispensation Scheme (PDS). Out of 84 in the Borough 36 primary schools take part, including 22 out of 24 independent primary schools. Under the terms of the policy schools receive an allocation of dispensation permits entitling driver escorts to 15 minutes grace-period parking in residents' bays or on single yellow lines on condition that the school produce a travel plan. The travel plan consults with pupils, parents and staff to assess the potential for modal shift in the school. The travel plan sets SMART targets to manage and reduce traffic generated by the school and includes measures to meet them. The travel plan is given impetus as each school's allocation of parking dispensations falls by 20 per cent a year down to zero by 2008-9. The current allocation for 2006/07 is 40 per cent of the 2004 level.
- 1.8 As part of the second strand all schools outside the PDS are encouraged to develop travel plans as a way of meeting the DfES "Every Child Matters Agenda" in particular for children to "Be safe" and "Be Healthy" (DfES, 2004). Strong links have been made with Children, Schools and Families Services. Camden's School Travel Plan Officer sits on the Children's Safeguarding Board and as part of the Healthy Schools Programme, schools must have or be working towards having a school travel plan (HSI, 2006).

2 DELIVERY OF SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANS

- 2.1 The table below sets out how many travel plans have been delivered according to school type, whether the plan has been delivered as part of Camden's parking dispensation scheme, and how many meet the DfES standard. As part of its commitment to increasing the number of DfES approved plans, and as an indicator of how seriously engaged schools were in promoting alternative means of transport, on 3rd February 2006 the STCSG requested that schools in the dispensation scheme bring their plans up to the new standard by December 2006. The tables indicate whether they are on track to do this.

Table 2.1 School Travel Plan Progress in Camden			
Year	Total Number of STPs* Produced	Number meeting DfES standard	Potential Number of STPs
2002/03	0	0	154
2003/04	81	12	154
2004/05	89	19	154
2005/06	98	29	154
2006/07	107	39	154

*includes stand-alone nursery schools, which are not part of the DfES target (70 schools).

- 2.2 As the table above shows, the policy has been relatively successful in ensuring basic compliance with the need to produce a travel plan. There has also been some success in developing alternatives to car use including movement on the setting up

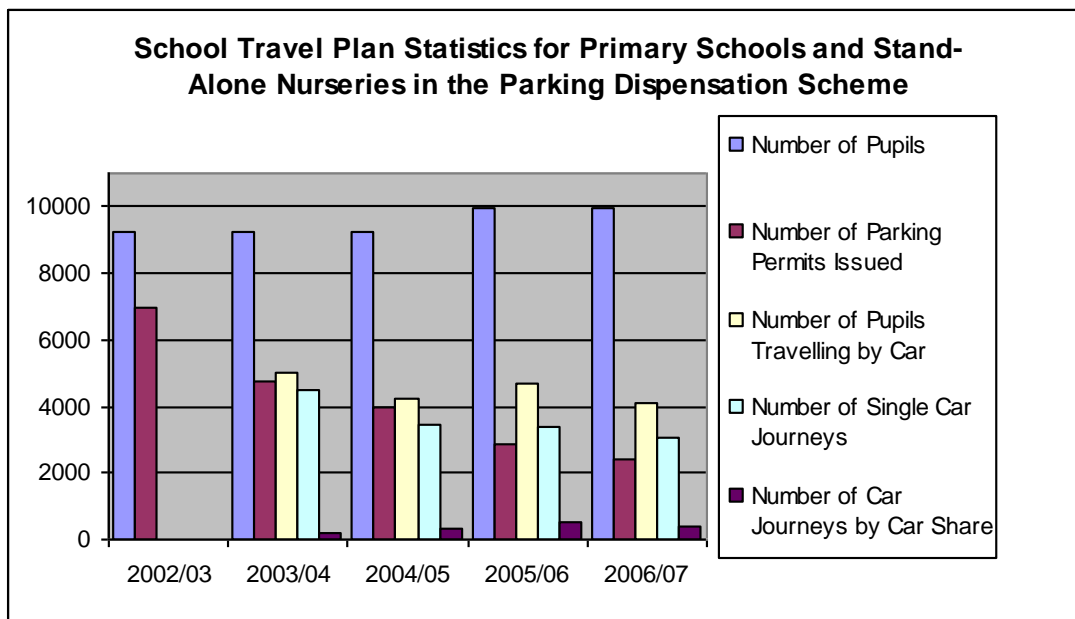
of school minibuses and car share initiatives with more pro-active parents and school management teams. Examples include:

- St Mary's Hampstead uses two PlusBus vehicles prior to their main rounds potentially cutting 24 school run journeys by car
- At St Anthony's School, a Head Teacher has been working with Camden Transport Services to deliver children from Islington to the school each day.
- There are existing bus programmes at Southbank International where nearly half of all children come by bus
- Northbridge House safely delivers 8% for Junior School (15 out of 185), 3% for nursery school (7 out of 212) and 36% for Lower/upper/senior school (185 out of 435) percent of pupils to school every day by subsidised coach (according to Autumn 2006 data results)
- Use of CityNeighbours website to put parents in touch with each other for car share arrangements. Between 2004 and 2006 levels of car sharing increased by 35 per cent. However, this could also be due to a smaller sample size being submitted in Autumn 2006/07 (only 25 schools responded out of 36 in the dispensation scheme).

2.3 There is no doubt that some schools are starting to 'break the mould', investing time and effort in tackling their school run impact and seizing a business opportunity into the bargain. However, the majority of schools in the PDS have produced a basic travel plan that is modest in what can be achieved to reduce traffic. Of the latest round of 25 travel plans submitted in response to the request by the STCSG, 3 meet (or with minor amendments are likely to meet) DfES criteria, 8 identify evidence-based proposals for modal shift, and 11 did not submit a draft plan despite the STCSG's request.

3 CHANGES IN TRAFFIC LEVELS AND POLLUTION

3.1 As part of the draft travel plans that were submitted each included results of an up-to-date travel survey, which is set out below. 70 per cent of parking permits issued to state schools and 84 per cent issued to independent schools are in NW3.



- 3.2 In the first year (2002/03) of the parking dispensation scheme, journey to school data was not available and schools received over 7,000 permits. Baseline journey to school data was monitored for the second year (2003/04) and the number of permits issued was based on information submitted. Between 2003 and 2004, the number of pupils coming by car fell by 15 per cent, although this increased during the third year by 11 per cent nearly wiping out the reduction (2004/05). According to updated school roll data this may be due to larger numbers of pupils attending schools. An additional 700 pupils were recorded between 2002 and 2005 in all schools and nurseries in the parking dispensation scheme – an increase of 7 per cent. Despite rising school rolls however, the latest data results for Autumn Term 2006/07 show that there has been another drop in the number of car journeys of 11 per cent amongst 25 out of 36 schools that submitted their travel data.
- 3.3 Further evidence will be available for the Culture & Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting on 6 February and Executive (Environment) Sub Meeting on 15th February 2006 including:
- Independent Traffic Data
 - Air Quality Data
 - Parking Survey Data

4 SCHOOL TRAVEL CONSULTATION STEERING GROUP

- 4.1 The STCSG at its meeting on 8th December received evidence available to date and did not add or take away any of the five options discussed as part of the last report presented to the Executive (Environment) Sub Group on the 21st November. The group however, discussed linking the number of parking dispensations issued to the quality of transport infrastructure available. According to this argument, Camden should acknowledge that parents had the right to send their child to whichever school they wanted whether it involved using a car or not. If the local authority wanted to deal with the resulting traffic it would not be possible to abolish parking permits without studying options to improve bus, cycle and walking routes first. It would also be necessary to get schools to improve their travel plans before embarking on further reductions.
- 4.2 The Chair of the STCSG asked members to follow up with any further ideas after the 8th December meeting. Following the meeting there has been a vigorous exchange of e-mails in which the following point was made. The argument was that it might superficially seem attractive to link permit reductions to the availability of infrastructure. However, *“(This view) stems from an implied assumption that many parents are locked into a position in which the location of their home in relation to their school ... is fixed, having been decided upon by other people or institutions. For nearly four years prospective parents seeking a place in the school of their choice, have been informed of Camden’s policy of withdrawing all the permits over a staged 5-year cycle. It is therefore highly inappropriate for these parents to now claim that Camden should not continue implementing this policy unless alternatives to the car (which may incur costs on the public purse which the Council could find difficulty in affording) are provided.”*
- 4.3 Camden issues guidance to schools supporting the implementation of policy. The guidance recommends, in the first instance, that permits are not issued to new starters – an outcome that would entrench car-based journey patterns early on and cause resentment once a permit had been removed in subsequent years.

- 4.4 As part of the School Run Policy Review the officers looked into how schools were following this guidance, in particular whether:
- Schools were allocating permits to new starters
 - Informing new parents of Camden's policy
 - Promoting alternative modes of travel
- 4.5 Of the 10 responses received from schools in the Parking Dispensation Scheme, 8 confirmed that they issued permits to new starters with 1 not saying either way. 8 schools had mentioned Camden's policy to reduce permits. 8 schools supplied information on alternative travel options to the school via a STP notice board, school website or school prospectus or other correspondence or publicity such as letters to parents etc.
- 4.6 It is encouraging that schools are advertising alternative means of travel. However, by issuing permits to new starters and informing parents that they will later be taken away, schools are inadvertently sowing resentment and making it more difficult to discourage parents from driving to school later on when travel patterns have become habitual.
- 4.7 Another issue raised at the last STCSG meeting was how a new policy would affect nurseries in the dispensation scheme. The case had been made at a previous STCSG meeting that nurseries were a special case. More specifically nursery-aged children:
- Could not often get onto buses with their children because there was limited buggy space (2 per bus) and these were often not available during the morning peak
 - Could not use the tube because children were often scared to do so and overcrowding was a barrier
 - Could not walk long distances, particularly in cold, rainy weather
 - Car sharing was difficult due to the need to provide car seats for young children and dropping children off without parking the car could be traumatic as youngsters needed their parent to settle them in
 - Cycling was a non-starter, unless the parent felt sufficiently confident and could use a child seat on the back of a bicycle. This would only serve one child.
- 4.8 It might be considered more difficult to travel long distances with younger children on public transport, although it is difficult to square this with how parents elsewhere cope without permits. The crucial question should be to ask if parents have the option of walking to nurseries that are within reasonable walking distance. Evidence from nearly 70,000 travel to school observations made in Somerset shows that 800 metres is an 'observed' walking distance of the nursery-age group usually in a buggy accompanied by the parent. In Camden there is a nursery within walking distance of every part of Camden. The wide availability of nurseries in different localities is likely to be a reason why the majority of nurseries are not in the parking dispensation scheme.
- 4.9 One item raised at the STCSG was that permit times should be increased to allow parents to park further away from the school. This would help to reduce school gate congestion, giving parents more time to park further away and give their children a healthy walk. Whilst this option seems attractive there are a number of issues that need to be addressed:

- First, while school run parking would be dispersed over a larger area this will increase the amount of kerbside space taken up by people parking over a longer time. Any localised reduction in parking stress would be compensated by the increased length of time that school run drivers could park
- There would also be a likely increase in the number of school run drivers as driving would become relatively more attractive
- Overall there would be reduced opportunities to park for residents and their visitors. It would equally, while the dispensation scheme continues, reduce kerb space for other parents
- It is also arguable whether parents would use the permit to park further away from the school and walk. Despite promoting the concept of 'park and stride' with schools so that children get benefits from walking from surrounding car parks like Jack Straw's Castle, East Heath and the O2 centre, less than 2 per cent of children at independent and one per cent at state schools take advantage of this opportunity
- The value of each permit would also increase, raising the incentives for theft and abuse
- It would also be more difficult for parking attendants to enforce the rules of the dispensation scheme as each vehicle would need to be observed over a longer period before being in contravention. Parking attendants would be unlikely to wait for this period in one place before issuing a ticket.

5 PARKING DISPENSATION OPTIONS

5.1 In considering each of the options officers recommend that they are measured against the following criteria:

- Environmental effectiveness
- How the policy sits within Camden's sustainable development policy framework for parking (LB Camden, 2006)
- Technical and administrative feasibility
- Equity issues between parents and between schools

5.2 The five options are as follows:

Option One – To continue reducing permits to zero by September 2008 (excluding those with temporary special mobility needs who are not either in receipt of a statement or in receipt of the Disabled Blue Badge) in line with current policy.

Option Two – To hold the total number of permits at the current level of 40 per cent of the original 2004 allocation

Option Three – To stop issuing any permits in July 2007 (excluding those with temporary mobility needs not covered by the Disabled Blue Badge Scheme) and so accelerate the reduction

Option Four – To reduce permits to a level of 20 per cent of the original allocation in September 2007, but not to carry out any further reductions thereafter

Option Five – To issue a limited number of parking permit scratch cards to parents through the school.

5.3 **Options One and Three** are both proposing to abolish parking dispensations and are considered together with additional commentary on the implications of

accelerating the abolition of permits. **Options Two and Four** hold back a level of permits and likewise are considered together. **Option Five** refers to the *type* of permit being issued and could therefore work alongside the other four options. However, given the fact that **Options Two and Four** extend the scheme, **Option Five** would be more relevant to these options as a long-term measure.

5.4 The advantages and disadvantages of each option are set out below.

Option One	
Continue reducing permits to zero by September 2008 (excluding those with temporary special mobility needs who are not either in receipt of a statement or in receipt of the Disabled Blue Badge) in line with current policy.	
<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings school run drivers into a sustainable development policy framework the same as all other drivers in Camden including those travelling to 26 state primary schools and 88 nurseries not presently in the parking dispensation scheme. • Does not open up challenges by other groups including a possible 26 state primary schools and 88 nurseries that could make a case for special parking privileges • When a permit is available, parents have a disincentive to consider alternative modes of travel. • There are 500 pay and display bays in CA-H and CA-B zones, enough to accommodate just 20 per cent of the cars that currently drive to the area twice a day. Inevitably driving to school would be more difficult which would lead to greater consideration of walking, cycling or using public transport to get to school. • No cost incurred by the Council to administer the parking dispensation The PDS costs the Borough approximately £10,500 per year. Greater incentive to invest time and effort in the school travel plan to help parents find practical alternatives to the private car. • Schools do travel plans because they see benefit in doing them per se, not just to get permits which wastes the schools' and officers' time. • Camden's policy is seen as consistent and principled by members of the community, particularly school children who, according to one teaching 	<p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camden would lose an incentive for schools to comply with basic requirements for data collection and school travel plan completion although the benefits of this are not always clear cut. • Given the limited provision of pay and display in NW3 schools would have to facilitate a huge modal shift to non-motorised transport which has not been witnessed to date. This could prove too high a mountain to climb. • Alternatively, or in likely addition, parents would take more risks to avoid a ticket • It is also the case that some schools would re-locate to be nearer their longer distance catchment. • There would be an increased likelihood of "cat and mouse" behaviour with parking wardens which might counteract the increased safety secured through less cars on the road (parents looking out for wardens rather than children crossing).

<p>representative on the STCSG, are expecting the Council to reduce car use and protect the environment by not issuing dispensations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier for Parking Attendants to enforce as it will be clearer if a vehicle is parked in contravention. • Schools not in the difficult position of giving a permit to one parent and not one to another or spending administrative time on issuing permits. 	
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Option Three	
Accelerating the decline in permits so that they are abolished by September 2007 Additional advantages and disadvantages	
<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the permit system is already divisive reducing permits to a smaller number will make it more divisive still. • If schools have not tried to restrict permits to those who were working their way through the school then it might be preferable to eradicate them sooner in order to prevent new starters receiving them in 2007-08 leading to more resistance to permit abolition. • Reduced costs to schools and the council brought forward 	<p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council could be accused of 'moving the goalposts' if more responsible schools were scheduling minibus improvements, for example in line with the present reduction programme abolishing permits in 2008-09. • Reduces time for parents, Camden and TfL to work together to find alternative means of transport through the travel plan.

5.5 Given the high costs of administering the parking dispensation scheme in terms of permit administration, officers assume that **a charge would have to be made** if the scheme were to continue in the long term under Options Two and Four. In order to meet the objective that the policy comes within Camden's Green Transport Strategy framework, owners of a permit could be charged the current rate charged for pay and display parking plus a cost to cover administration.

Option Two	
To hold the total number of permits at the current level of 40 per cent of the original 2004 allocation.	
Option Four	
To reduce permits to a level of 20 per cent of the original allocation in September 2007, but not to carry out any further reductions thereafter.	
<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further reduction on current level of permits in the case of the 20 per cent scenario • Still an opportunity to influence schools' behaviour, in particular to secure travel plan compliance with 	<p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 or 40 per cent of the school roll receiving a permit would be an arbitrary figure. • Maintaining permits at 20 or 40 per cent would allow some parents to drive every day of the week and

<p>DfES standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining a small number of permits acknowledges that there are a very limited number of primary school journeys that are unavoidably best made by car • Schools could prioritise issuing permits to parents who shared a car with another family • Schools could be instructed NOT to issue permits to parents of vehicles above a certain engine size. Using a scratch card on an oversized vehicle would warrant a PCN. This would require a new Traffic Management Order to be drawn up. • A charge would increase the relative attractiveness of transport alternatives like a school minibus, the use of public transport, walking and cycling. 	<p>others don't, causing division and resentment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools could still use the permits to issue to new starters to facilitate a long distance journey pattern. With such a small number of permits it would then be likely that these parents would lose them later on resulting in more complaints directed at the Council. • Providing a flat 20 or 40 per cent figure would not provide an incentive for schools to reduce their demand for permits through the school travel plan beyond this amount. • Issuing 20 or 40 per cent of permits would facilitate 1,677 and 3,354 journeys twice per day by car to Hampstead and Belsize wards. • Evidence received to date shows that the majority of schools will produce a travel plan in order to secure permits rather than produce a travel plan to reduce car use. • Once a charge were made for the permits parents would be likely to see use of their car on the school journey as a 'right' rather than a 'privilege'.
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5.6 A scratch system could potentially address some of the disadvantages set out above, although it would bring other issues to deal with in its wake. Schools in the dispensation scheme could be issued with enough scratch cards for every one to have a minimum journey entitlement. A portion of the roll living within walking distance could be allocated a few scratch cards a term to acknowledge times when it was absolutely necessary to use the car. Another portion of the roll would receive enough scratch cards to allow them a 20 or 40 per cent of journey entitlement.

5.7 There would be a charge for scratch cards, which would be equivalent to what ordinary drivers paid in a pay and display bay plus an administration fee. It could be stipulated that scratch cards should not be used with high cc vehicles. Schools would organise car share arrangements to reduce demand for scratch cards. This would be advertised as a way of saving parents money. Others who did not wish to take part would be forced to consider using alternative modes of travel for at least part of the week. If schools were particularly effective in reducing demand for permits through the travel plan they could advertise 'spare' permits and accept bids from other schools to buy them. Any income could be used by the school to fund educational priorities. The Council would need to commit itself to review the number of scratch cards issued with the aim of reducing them gradually otherwise there would be little incentive for schools to work on developing alternatives to the private car.

Option 5	
To introduce a limited number of parking permit scratch cards to parents throughout the school	
<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A scratch card could be marked with times of arrival so that parents could mark the exact time when they arrived. This would allow wardens to enforce the 15 minute time limit more effectively • Parents would be financially rewarded for entering into a car share arrangement • Alternatives to the car could become financially more attractive • The scheme would be seen as fairer as everyone would receive a minimum entitlement • Parents that drive would be expected to change behaviour gradually rather than one parent receiving a permit giving carte blanche entitlement to drive everyday and another never. • It would be difficult for schools to issue a permit offering a car parking facility for every day of the week to new starters • Schools that reduced their demand for permits by working on the travel plan would be financially rewarded for doing so. • Limiting scratch cards to smaller vehicles could reduce air pollution and the contribution to global warming. 	<p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scheme could give the impression that some schools could get themselves out of developing transport alternatives by buying surplus permits. This could create localised congestion around particular schools. The problem could be limited by restricting the scheme to schools in NW3. • It would be necessary to enforce strongly against those who did not use a scratch card to park and save their card for a time when a parking warden is in the vicinity. This is a potential weakness of the scheme. • It would be important that the costs of parking permits were not absorbed by the school so that each parent was aware of the per journey cost of their scratch card. • Once a charge were made for the permits parents would be likely to see use of their car on the school journey as a 'right' rather than a 'privilege'. • It would be difficult to reduce scratch cards over time even if that was the original intention of the policy. • Disallowing scratch cards being used with larger vehicles would increase the complexity of parking enforcement and rule out the possibility of using 'people carriers' for car sharing purposes. • Permits would need to remain linked to the production of a school travel plan to collect data to review the scheme, understand pupils' travel needs and promote alternatives to the private car. Schools failing to produce a DfES approved travel plan, updated every year could forfeit a portion of their permit allocation.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 It is proposed to consult on these policy options A public consultation exercise will take place for four weeks from March 2nd.

Scope

- Parents at schools in the dispensation scheme
- Children at schools in the dispensation scheme
- Teachers and staff at schools in the dispensation scheme
- Residents Associations within 500 metres of a school in the dispensation scheme
- Households within 500 metres of a school in the dispensation scheme

6.2 A consultation draft will be circulated to the consultation board on 31st January, to be agreed prior to the next meeting of the Environment Executive Sub Group on 15th February. The consultation will aim to find out:

- How families travel to school, what problems they encounter and the scope for alternative means of transport with the existing dispensation scheme.
- How residents are affected by the school run and how this has changed since the start of Camden's parking dispensation scheme.
- How schools would like to work in partnership to reduce school run traffic and what should be the strategic priorities should to achieve this.

6.3 The survey and public consultation costs will be contained within the existing Forward Planning & Projects revenue budgets for 2006/07.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 The performance of schools in developing travel plans still has considerable room for improvement but there has been some progress made by a minority of forward thinking schools. Despite an increase in pupil rolls, latest evidence collected by schools suggests modest improvements in school run traffic. Further light may be shed on these results by independent traffic and air quality data, which will be ready for the Environment Executive Sub Group meeting on 15th February 2006.

7.2 The performance of schools in reducing traffic would likely have been better still if permits were not issued to new starters entrenching patterns of long-distance car use and making it more difficult to affect modal shift later on.

7.3 Parents of nursery-aged children have fewer realistic travel alternatives than parents of older children but nursery provision is widely spread across the Borough and the majority of nurseries do not have access to parking permits.

7.4 Lengthening the times of parking dispensations to greater than 15 minutes would cause greater enforcement difficulties, spread parking stress more widely, increase opportunities for abuse and, on the strength of current evidence probably lead to few parents voluntarily parking away from the school to walk when closer spaces were available.

7.5 It is not possible yet to rule out the option of a complete abolition of parking dispensations. A scratch card system has a number of potential advantages over a yearly permit, but there are increased opportunities for the scheme to be abused in the absence of high levels of enforcement. It is also important that the number of scratch cards is not set too low or too high and that there is a commitment to reduce scratch cards over time by the permit issuing authority – Camden.

8 COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

- 8.1 The costs of the consultation will be contained within Planning Division budgets for the year.
- 8.2 There are future costs and savings dependent upon which option is chosen. Should either option 1 or 3 be chosen there would be future savings of the administration costs, within the C&E directorate starting in either 2007/08 or 2008/09. Should any of the other options be chosen there would remain costs of administration but it is assumed (section 5.5) these will be passed onto the drivers via the schools together with a new charge equating to the pay and display fee and this would generate income to the C&E directorate.

9 LEGAL COMMENTS

- 9.1 The Head of Legal Services (Acting) has no comments on this report.