

**MINUTES OF THE HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2006 at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT: Councillor D Brown (Chair), Councillor V Brown (Vice Chair) and Councillors Blackman (alternate for Colwill) and Wharton.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Van Colle.

Councillors Butt, Dunwell, Mendoza, J Moher, R Moher and Sneddon also attended.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

None

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2006**

RESOLVED:-

that the minutes of the meeting of the Highways Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2006 be received and approved as an accurate record.

3. **Matters Arising**

None

4. **Deputations**

Members agreed to a request from Tony Antoniou to hear a deputation in respect of the proposed bus lane on Dudden Hill Lane. Mr Antoniou stated that a proper risk assessment had not been undertaken during consideration of the bus lane and he felt Dudden Hill Lane was too narrow for such a scheme. He cited difficulties in making right turns by the bridge, hindrance of traffic movement and obstruction caused by broken down vehicles as possible problems as a result of the bus lane. In addition, local businesses would suffer as customers would not be able to park on the road and the safety of children attending a nearby school, the elderly and disabled would be compromised when attempted to cross the road. He also stated that a new estate being built in St Raphaels would create more traffic and therefore exacerbate the problems caused by the bus lane.

Councillor Sneddon, speaking in support of Mr Antoniou as his Ward Councillor, requested that the concerns raised by the deputation be considered during any future consultation with regard to the scheme as he felt that safety issues and the impact on traffic had not been duly assessed. In particular, he felt it was important to consult route users in addition to local residents and he enquired whether this issue could be discussed at the next meeting of the Willesden Area Consultative Forum.

In response to the issues raised, Richard Pearson (Director of Transportation) advised that increasing the role of buses as a transport

provider was central to the Mayor of London and Transport for London (TfL) policy and therefore increasing the number of bus lanes was necessary to support such an initiative. In acknowledging the issues raised regarding consultation, Richard Pearson confirmed that business along the road and local residents had been consulted about the proposals and efforts had also been made to obtain the views of route users, although there had been difficulties in gathering a large number of views from this group. He advised that because of the tight timescale in which funding from TfL was available, there would be insufficient time for the bus lane proposals to be discussed at the next Willesden Area Consultative Forum. Richard Pearson advised Members that consultation was still ongoing, and that if there were significant objections, it was possible the scheme could be reconsidered or altered.

Hossein Amir-Hosseini (Transportation Officer) advised the Committee that under the proposals, loading and unloading could take place between 10.00am and 4.00pm each day as the bus lane scheme would not be operational during these hours. In reply to a query from Councillor Sneddon, Hossein Amir-Hosseini confirmed that the web link to the Council's online questionnaire consultation of the scheme was not currently working, although action would be taken to restore this facility as soon as possible.

Councillor Blackman highlighted the concerns made by Ward Councillors and residents and felt that further consideration and revision of the scheme was needed if it was to be implemented. The Chair reiterated that consultation was still ongoing and that there would be a thorough analysis of the resulting feedback before a final decision was made.

## 5. **Petitions**

The Committee noted that the following petitions had been received containing in excess of 50 signatures.

### (a) **Request for Introduction of a Width Restriction for Valley Drive**

This petition submitted by residents of the Valley Farm Residents' Association requested that:

"We the residents of Valley Farm Residents Association area petition the Members of the Highways Committee to provide a width restriction on Valley Drive to prevent the passage of heavy goods through the estate."

Julia Day, representing the petitioners, stated that the entrance to Kingsbury Roundabout was frequently jammed with traffic from both directions along Kingsbury Road which prevented access to residents' homes along the side roads. Ms Day stated that as a result of the traffic jams, many vehicles, including heavy goods

vehicles (HGVs), were using Valley Drive as a rat run to avoid the congestion. In addition, commuters were parking along Valley Drive which disrupted traffic flow along this road. She asserted that HGVs frequently drove down Valley Drive, despite the 7.5 tonnes weight restriction in operation, usually in early morning causing considerable noise disturbance to residents. Members heard that a number of minor accidents had also occurred, although not all were reported to the police and that many vehicles were travelling at excessive speed. Ms Day requested that width restrictions be implemented to prevent HGVs from accessing Valley Drive. She also requested that enforcement action be taken to prevent vehicles involved in the construction of the Fitness Centre at the junction of Valley Drive and Kingsbury Road from accessing Valley Drive. In reply to a query from Members, Ms Day confirmed that the petitioners were requesting a width restriction at the Kingsbury Road end of Valley Drive.

Councillor J Moher supported Ms Day's comments that there was a problem with HGVs travelling along Valley Drive and he felt that more action was needed to prevent such vehicles from accessing the road. He suggested that further consultation with residents was required and a more extensive survey should be undertaken as the previous one had been conducted at limited periods during the day. He also echoed Ms Day's comments concerning commuter parking disrupting traffic flow and supported her request to prevent vehicles involved in nearby construction works from accessing Valley Drive, citing the construction of a Tesco Express as another site that might be accessed via Valley Drive. Councillor J Moher commented that skip lorries just below the 7.5 tonnes restriction were of particular annoyance to residents and he suggested that the weight restriction for this road should be reviewed. He requested that the issues raised be reconsidered at the earliest opportunity.

Councillor R Moher also indicated her support for the petitioners' requests and stressed that the on-street parking was a considerable impediment on traffic flow. She added once opened, visitors to the Fitness Centre would exacerbate the existing traffic problems and cause additional strain on parking spaces.

Decisions relating to this petition were agreed under the 'Petition – Request for Width Restriction on Valley Drive' report.

(b) **Wembley Hill Road/Preston Road/Forty Avenue/East Lane Junction Petition (3<sup>rd</sup> August 2006)**

This petition submitted by Councillor Dunwell on behalf of the Queensbury Area Residents Association (Preston Road/Broadway branch) made several requests including provision of on-pavement parking, service road with traffic calming measures, additional

parking spaces, loading bays, free 1 or 2 hour parking scheme, a reduction in double yellow lines and sensible use of out of peak single yellow parking.

Representing the petitioners, Councillor Dunwell stated that the petition suggested an alternative parking scheme to the one proposed. He commented that the scheme suggested by the petitioners would better serve the needs of an area that was well used by shoppers. Members heard that the petition contained in excess of 900 signatures and Councillor Dunwell stated that he understood a report would be prepared on this issue at a future meeting of the Committee.

In response, Hossein Amir-Hosseini confirmed that a meeting had taken place with Councillor Dunwell to discuss the issues raised and that a feasibility study of the petitioner's requests would be brought before a future meeting of the Committee. He advised Members that there could be high costs involved in constructing a service road, although this suggestion would also be considered.

RESOLVED:-

that the contents of the petition be noted

(c) **Request for a Controlled Parking Zone Scheme to be Introduced to Yewfield Road, Franklin Road and Cobbold Road**

This petition stated the following:-

"This is to certify that we the undersigned residents of Yewfield, Franklin and Cobbold Roads are in favour of a Controlled Parking Zone in the above streets."

RESOLVED:-

that the contents of the petition be noted

(d) **Against Proposals for the Introduction of Waiting Restrictions in Hay Lane**

This petition stated that:-

"We the undersigned object to the proposal to introduce waiting restrictions on south of Hay Lane between junction of Buck Lane and outside 24 (Church Hall) as it will impact significantly on our ability to attend services at St Sebastian and St Pancras Church."

Father Williamson, representing the petitioners, requested that parking spaces be made available on the south side of Hay Lane

and on wasteland near the church. He stated that the proposed double yellow lines would present difficulties for his congregation as both young and older people needed to be able to park close to the church. He asked that if the requests were not feasible, that enforcement of the waiting restrictions be relaxed for church functions and activities. In reply to a query from Members, Father Williamson stated that he would be willing for the waste land to be used for parking by other visitors during hours outside church activities.

Councillor J Moher expressed surprise that the double yellow lines had been proposed at such an early stage, as he felt the relocation of a nearby bus stop further up the road because of traffic speed also required consideration before any decision was made. He felt that the double yellow lines were inappropriate as many older people used this stretch of Hay Lane and needed to be able to park near to facilities.

Hossein Amir-Hosseini advised Members that officers had meet with Father Williamson and that it had since been decided not to proceed with yellow lines at this stage whilst other options were considered, including those suggested by petitioners who along with ward councillors would be consulted about possible schemes. Members heard that funding implications would need to be considered. Hossein Amir-Hosseini also advised that an alternative location for the bus stop was yet to be identified and consultation with London Buses would take place to find a suitable place.

The Chair confirmed that a report to consider parking and bus stop location proposals would be put before a future meeting of the Committee.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (i) that the contents of the petition be noted;
- (ii) that the proposals to introduce double yellow lines on the south of Hay Lane between the junction of Buck Lane and outside 24 (Church Hall) be put on hold; and
- (iii) that alternative proposals including those suggested by the petitioners with regard to parking arrangements and options concerning relocating the bus stop be investigated and reported to a future Committee meeting.

**6. Petition – Request for Width Restriction on Valley Drive**

Peter Boddy (Team Leader, Traffic Management) presented a report to Committee that had been produced as a result of a petition received from

the Valley Farm Residents Association requesting the introduction of a width restriction on Valley Drive to prevent HGVs rat running to by-pass Kingsbury Roundabout. Peter Boddy stated that Valley Drive's width was relatively narrow at 7.8 metres and on street parking was commonplace. He advised Members that the 7.5 tonne weight restriction was the minimum that could be legally implemented and that the police had in any case estimated that 95% of skip lorries were over 7.5 tonnes. Peter Boddy stated that 2 surveys had been undertaken at times where it was anticipated rat running was most likely to occur. Whilst rat running had been observed during surveys, he advised Members that it was not in significant numbers and he reported that the accident history rate of the road was also very low. Members heard that a width restriction could impede emergency vehicles that may use Valley Drive to access the rest of the Valley Farm estate. Peter Boddy also stated that the impact of the implementation of the Kingsbury Roundabout Local Safety Scheme, which was designed to accommodate greater traffic flow, could significantly alter traffic flow patterns in Valley Drive. As a result of these observations, he advised Committee that it was not appropriate to carry out width restrictions to Valley Drive at this stage and that the situation should be reviewed after the Kingsbury Road Local Safety Scheme had been implemented. However, Peter Boddy advised Committee that restricting access to Valley Drive for lorries involved in building works could be looked at.

During discussion, Councillor Blackman enquired whether a 20 miles per hour safety scheme had been considered for Valley Drive. He suggested that rat running was a greater problem for this road than Kingsbury Road which already had a speed limit scheme in place. He felt that taking no action at this stage would delay an issue that would ultimately need to be addressed and he also commented preventing HGVs access to Valley Drive would be a reasonable measure.

Phil Rankmore (Head of Projects, Transportation) commented that vehicles involved in the Tesco Express construction would have no reason to use Valley Drive. With regard to the Fitness Centre, Members were advised that it would be difficult to identify vehicles connected with this site, although it was possible that a temporary traffic order could be used to prevent access. Phil Rankmore advised that Valley Drive was not considered a priority for a 20 miles per hour speed limit scheme due to a low accident rate compared to other roads in the borough. Richard Pearson added that there was not sufficient funding to implement safety schemes on roads where there was no evidence to suggest that they were unsafe.

The Chair felt it prudent to await assessment on the effects of the Kingsbury Roundabout Local Safety Scheme before considering any measures for Valley Drive. He requested that a report on this issue be bought before Committee after the Kingsbury Roundabout Local Safety Scheme had been implemented.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the contents and issues raised by the petition be noted;
- (ii) that the outcome of the officers' investigation of the petition be noted as detailed in section 3.0; and
- (iii) that it be agreed that no further action be taken on this matter at this stage and that the situation be reviewed after implementation of the Kingsbury Roundabout Local Safety Scheme and reported to Committee.

**7. Petition from Residents Regarding the Walking/Cycling Link Between Chamberlayne Avenue/Edison Drive and Hirst Crescent**

Paul Fraser (Head of Civil Engineering, Transportation) introduced the report informing Members of the legal issues involved in closing the footpath/cycle path link further to the petition received from residents of Chamberlayne Avenue/Edison Drive. It also summarised the crime reports received and surveys and consultation undertaken since the last Highways Committee of 12<sup>th</sup> October 2006 regarding the issues raised. Paul Fraser detailed the results of crime reports from the police and the Anti-Social Behaviour team which had indicated relatively low levels of crime. A survey undertaken by Transportation officers had confirmed that there was significant use of the link in both directions. A survey of link users had shown that a large majority had indicated that they wished the link to remain open, as well as showing support for the installation of barriers to deter motorcycle users. A consultation document sent to all properties in Chamberlayne Avenue, Edison Drive and Hirst Crescent had shown majority support to close the link, with the main reason cited being to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in the area. Paul Fraser advised that it was not considered appropriate to close the link due to significant use of the link by members of the public and there being no evidence to suggest high incidences of crime. Members heard that a gating order would pose practical problems and costing issues in terms of enforcement, as well as there being safety implications for emergency vehicle access. Furthermore, such an order could be overturned in court. Paul Fraser advised that installation of CCTV would be costly and he felt that the installation of barriers as set out in Appendix 5 would be a proportionate measure.

Councillor Mendoza emphasised the importance of balancing the views of local residents as well as those of link users. He stated that anti-social behaviour and crime activity in and around the link was high compared with the rest of the ward and felt that residents' safety should be the priority concern when considering this issue. Councillor Mendoza requested that a temporary closure of the link for 3 months be undertaken and its impact assessed by the Council and the police.

Councillor Blackman stated that a further 20 responses to the consultation had been received since the publication of a report, the majority of which supported closure of the link. He asserted that most residents saw closure of the link as a priority as opposed to introducing barriers to prevent motorcycle access. Members that the Safer Neighbourhood Team had frequently been required to attend to the problems on the link and that residents had consistently highlighted concerns about anti-social and criminal behaviour at meetings with the Team. Councillor Blackman suggested that a gating order be proposed after consultation over possible hours of closure.

At the invitation of the Chair, Chief Inspector Raj of Brent Police commented on crime and anti-social behaviour in the area. Members heard that reported incidences of crime were very low in the area although he acknowledged that the Safer Neighbourhood Team had visited the link on many occasions and the police would continue to monitor the area. In reply to a query, Chief Inspector Raj indicated that the police would be interested in being consulted about possible closure times for a gating order.

In reply to a query from Members, Paul Fraser advised Committee that each gate would cost approximately £10,000 per gate, with a further £13,000 costs per annum for staff costs to lock and unlock each gate. In reply to a further query from Members, Richard Pearson stated that although an electronic locking system for the gates was possible, high costs would be involved and such a system would be vulnerable to vandalism.

Members were advised that a closure of the link would not be possible in legal terms, although a temporary gating order could be considered.

Committee then agreed to Councillor Wharton's suggestion that there be a feasibility study to look into the possibility of funding and introducing a temporary gating of the link, including consultation with the police concerning possible closure times and that the findings be reported to a future meeting of the Committee.

#### RESOLVED:-

- (i) that a feasibility study be undertaken into the possibility of funding and introducing a temporary gating of the walking/cycling link, including consultation with the police concerning possible closure times and reported to a future Committee meeting; and
- (ii) that the petitioners and other residents be advised of the Committee's decisions.



## 8. **Section 106 Schemes 2006/2007**

Peter Boddy introduced a report informing Members on proposed Traffic Management measures funded from Section 106 agreements that were to be progressed in the 2006/2007 financial year. Members were provided details of schemes and their financial implications for Neasden Lane, Harrowdene Road, Abbey Road and Kilburn High Road.

Councillor Blackman enquired whether a ban on right turn at both main junctions in Neasden Lane could be considered to ease congestion. In reply, Phil Rankmore advised Members that although this could be considered, such a measure may not help in easing congestion, especially at the Blackbird Hill end, and could be unnecessarily prohibitive. He added that pedestrian accessibility improvements were to be implemented in accordance with the requirements of the Section 106 Agreement.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) that the programme of Section 106 schemes as detailed in the report be noted;
- (ii) that it be agreed that officers proceed with the design, consultation and implementation of the schemes as detailed in the report subject to satisfactory consultation; and
- (iii) that the Director of Transportation be authorised to proceed with any necessary statutory consultation, to consider any objections or representations and either to refer objections back to this Committee where he thinks appropriate or to implement the order if there are no objections, or he considers the objections or representations are groundless or insignificant.

## 9. **Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the date of the next meeting of the Highways Committee would take place on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> January 2007 at 7.00 pm.

## 10. **Any Other Urgent Business**

None.

The meeting ended at 8.50 pm

D BROWN  
Chair