



Highways Committee 9 February 2011

Report from the Head of Transportation

For decision

Wards Affected: Sudbury

Petition for the Review of One Way system Maybank Avenue

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report informs the Committee of a petition seeking a review of traffic arrangements at the junction of Harrow Road and Maybank Avenue. The petitioners are concerned about the impact of the arrangement on (vehicle) journey times for residents and visitors to the Maybank Avenue, Rosebank Avenue, Fernbank Avenue area.

The report outlines the results of a review of the situation which concludes that (i) the current arrangement is successfully addressing the previous road safety issues that previously existed at the junction, and (ii) that no practicable alternative arrangements (that would address both the safety risk and concerns over journey times) have been identified.

The report concludes that the situation should continue to be monitored but that no changes should be made, to the arrangement introduced during 2008, at this time.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Committee notes the contents of the petition and the review of the implemented scheme.
- 2.2 That Committee agrees that the situation should continue to be monitored but that no changes should be made to the existing arrangements at the Harrow Road/Maybank Avenue junction at this time.

3.0 The petition

- 3.1 The petition received by the Council via Councillor Mary Daly, requests the reconsideration of the existing short section of one way working at the junction

of Maybank Avenue with Harrow Road. The petition has been verified to be in accordance with Standing Orders.

- 3.2 The full wording of the petition is included in Appendix 1 however it is summarised below:

“Local area map showing the detour that local residents must undertake to get to Maybank Ave. after the Council decided to stop drivers turning straight into the ‘banks’ from harrow Road.

.. if we get enough requests, officers at Brent Council have agreed to reconsider their decision.

☐ I oppose the decision

☐ I do not oppose the decision”

The petition included 79 signatures. Approximately one quarter of those signatories (21 signatories) indicated that they ‘do not’ oppose the decision.

The petition is in a slightly unconventional format and the tick box arrangement may have caused some confusion. A number of residents attempted to clarify this with comments.

Notwithstanding the above, it is clear that a number of residents of the “Banks” area are concerned about (vehicle) journey times they face because of the traffic arrangements at the Harrow Road/Maybanks Avenue/Elms Avenue junction and are seeking to have those elements, particularly the one-way working elements, reviewed with a view to having the arrangement revised.

4.0 Background

- 4.1 Currently there is a central median island along Harrow Road at its junction with Maybank Avenue and Elms Lane. The central island incorporates a toucan crossing.

At either end of the central island “U” turns are banned.

In addition there are short lengths of one-way working in both Maybank Avenue (one-way northbound onto Harrow Road) and Elms Lane (one-way southbound onto Harrow Road) at the junction.

The effect of this arrangement is that (i) North-south (and visa-versa) “rat-running” along Elms Lane and Maybanks Avenue to/from Greenford Road and Whitton Avenue East is prevented, (ii) vehicle movements and conflicts across the junction are limited and (iii) residents in the Maybanks Avenue, Fernbank Avenue, Rosebank Avenue area seeking to make vehicle journeys frequently face longer journey times than would be the case if the current traffic arrangements were not in place.

- 4.2 The introduction of the one-way arrangement was subsequent to the introduction of the central median island - which had been introduced to

address significant road accidents associated with traffic movements at the junction (particularly conflicts associated with vehicles crossing Harrow Road from Elms Lane to Maybanks Avenue (and visa versa)).

Despite the central median island and a U-turn ban being in place on Harrow Road, rat-running (from Maybanks Avenue to Elms Lane and visa versa) continued to occur. The Council received a high number of complaints from residents reporting vehicles making illegal U-turning movements on Harrow Road, vehicles making turning movements utilising private driveways and driving along the footway in order to make this north-south (and south-north) movement.

4.3 Those turning movements were observed and linked to a number of personal injury accidents along Harrow Road. Although at that time the Metropolitan Police were responsible for enforcement against moving traffic violations, such as U-turn bans, it was recognised that their resources to enforce such activities was limited.

4.4 In response to local concerns and the road accident risk, officers developed an “exit only onto Harrow Road” scheme. This comprised the introduction of short lengths of one-way working for both Maybank Avenue and Elms Lane which precluded drivers turning into either road from Harrow Road. The objective of the scheme was to reduce the extent of the rat-run, U-turning, other antisocial activity and reduce accidents.

In November 2007 consultation on the proposals was undertaken. Almost 4000 households, in both Brent and Ealing, were consulted. A return rate of 15% was achieved. 55% of those returning questionnaires were in support of the scheme and 35% opposed the one way system.

The scheme was implemented during 2008. The issue of restricted (vehicular) access into the area and the impact on journey decisions and times was considered before the scheme was implemented. It was accepted that access into the local area would be restricted. It was also recognised that emergency services access would be slightly delayed by the process of removing bollards.

4.5 The scheme has been the subject of two earlier petitions:

Shortly following the scheme introduction, a petition was received from residents of Maybank Avenue requesting the extension of the one way system along the entire length of Maybank Avenue to further reduce congestion/conflict problems.

This Committee considered that petition in July 2008 and decided not to comply with the request because of concerns about the increased difficulty of access to Fernbank Avenue, Rosebank Avenue and Maybank Avenue and the potential negative impact it would have on Greenford Road a principal road within the London Borough of Harrow.

In January 2009 another petition was received with 13 signatories. It requested removal of the one way arrangement - raising issues related to increased crime associated with the introduction of the scheme. This petition was dealt with by officers because it contained less than 50 registered electors' signatures.

An investigation into the matter identified that there had been increased crime rates in the area as a whole, not just on Maybank Avenue, but that this was unrelated to the scheme. The Police's Brent Borough Intelligence Unit have advised that the rise in crime rates after 2008 may be accounted for by a prolific offender who moved into the area and was responsible for a large amount of offences in the vicinity. No changes to the traffic arrangement were made.

5.0 Scheme review

Following receipt of the petition and earlier meetings with a ward member, officers have undertaken a review of the scheme as a whole, including the one-way working elements, and the opportunities to revise it in a way that would address concerns about restricted vehicular access, journey choices and journey times.

A fundamental constraint relates to road safety. Any changes must not compromise road safety – either at the Harrow Road/Maybanks Avenue/Elms Lane junction or within the wider area.

As may be expected, there has been a significant reduction in the volume of through traffic on Maybank Avenue. In April 2007 there were 161 veh/hr in the morning peak and 399 veh/hr in the evening peak exiting Maybank Avenue at the junction with Harrow Road. The scheme subsequently banned the entry movement at this junction where there were previously recorded 315 veh/hr in the morning peak and 154 veh/hr in the evening peak.

By comparison, in June 2008, a maximum peak hour bidirectional flow of 133 vehicles along Maybanks Avenue was recorded, with fewer than 100 vehicles per hour for most of the rest of the day. 85%ile speeds were measured at 31mph eastbound and 25mph westbound.

The accident data for the three years (2005-7) preceding the scheme showed an average of 4 personal injury accidents (pia) per year at the junction. However following implementation of the scheme there has been one pia in 2009 and 2 pia in the 9 months of data available from 2010 giving an annual average of 1.8 pia, a reduction of 54%.

There have been no recent significant changes to traffic arrangements or controls or patterns in this part of the Borough. As a result, officers are of the view that, were the arrangements at the junction to be removed entirely, it would be extremely likely that traffic patterns and movements there, and in nearby streets, would return to the levels and patterns that existed prior to the introduction of the current arrangements.

5.2 Alternative arrangements

As part of the review a number of alternative arrangements have been considered. These would have been considered at the time that the current arrangements were being developed but the petition justifies a re-consideration of the options discussed below. All the options discussed would include the removal of the one-way working arrangements.

- The re-introduction of a simple cross-road arrangement with give-way or stop lines and traffic calming (raised table or similar)

This would address concerns about access but would not address the fundamental problem of, chiefly, uncontrolled movements across the junction. Even with the introduction of traffic calming, officers are of the view that there would be a high risk of a return to the high levels of accidents that pre-dated the scheme and hence this option should not be pursued.

- The introduction of traffic signals at the junction.

This would address concerns about access and would remove vehicle conflicts at the junction (and resultant accidents). However, even with appropriate signal phasing, it would facilitate the north-south rat-running through the area which presents it's own road safety and environmental issues. More importantly, the number of vehicular movements would not justify the introduction of signals and the investment required at a time when TfL (who are responsible for signals in London) are seeking to reduce the use of signals. Officers are of the view that this would not be a sensible way forward.

- The introduction of a mini-roundabout

Again, this would address concerns about access. However it would not wholly address the issue of traffic conflicts and would probably encourage rat-running. It would probably require the existing pedestrian crossing facility to be re-located. Officers are of the view that this would not be a sensible way forward.

- The removal of the one-way arrangements but with improved enforcement of the banned "U" turn arrangements

Since the scheme was introduced, the Council has taken new powers to enforce against "moving traffic contraventions" using CCTV. The existing one-way arrangements could be removed alongside the use of these powers to address the "U-turning" that caused earlier concerns.

Again, this would address concerns about access. It would also reduce the possibility of rat-running returning. However, officers are of the view that this would simply shift the U turning movements to locations away from the junction (for example – motorists could make u turns in driveways of nearby Brewery Gardens or further along Harrow Road) where enforcement was not possible or practicable and the real risks of accidents that existed prior the introduction of the current arrangements would remain. Additionally officers

could not guarantee enforcement that resources could be continuously allocated to this location to the detriment of other locations in the Borough. Consequently officers have concluded that this would not be an appropriate solution.

Conclusion

In summary, officers have reviewed the situation, the concerns of the petitioners and the options for changing the junction arrangements. The current arrangements have been successful at addressing the accident problem that existed at the junction – before the scheme was originally introduced and before the one-way working was introduced.

Officers have been unable to identify a practicable way forward that would address residents concerns about vehicle access and journey times that would not present a significant risk to road safety at the junction itself and in the wider network.

Accordingly, officers are recommending that the situation should continue to be monitored but that no changes should be made at this time.

6.0 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report and its recommendations.

7.0 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report and its recommendations.

8.0 Other implications

None identified.

Background Papers

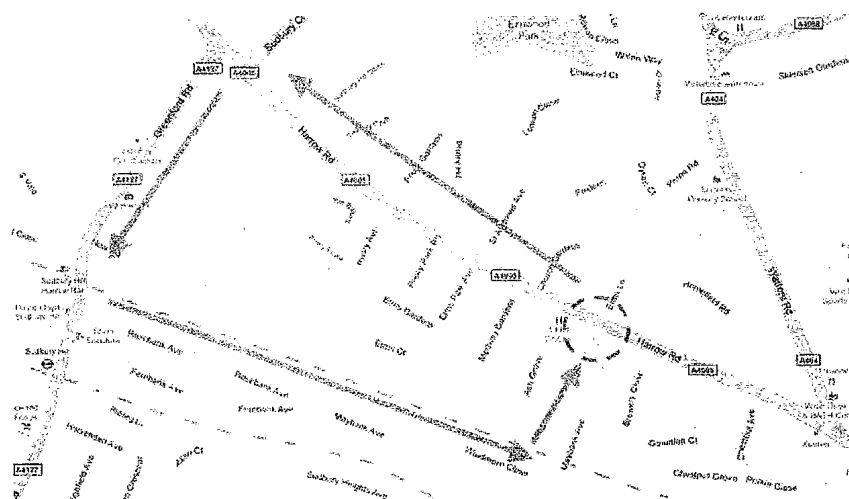
None

Contact Officers

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'Banks Campaign'



Local area map showing the detour that local residents must undertake to get to Maybank Ave. after the Council decided to stop drivers turning straight into the 'banks' from harrow Road

My job is to be your voice, so it's essential I know what you think about this decision taken by the previous Lib Dem and Tory administration. Please complete this form, fold it along the lines shown and return it by post to the address shown. Remember, if we get enough requests, officers at Brent Council have agreed to reconsider their decision.

☐ I oppose the decision

☒ I do not oppose the decision

YOUR DETAILS

We need these to keep you informed of developments and ensure your views count.

Name.....

Telephone.....

Address.....

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Postcode.....

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