

PETITIONS, TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS & LOCAL ISSUES

Report of the District Manager

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of the current status of petitions, to advise members of any objections to traffic regulation orders and to inform the Panel of any other local issues of importance.

2. PETITIONS RECEIVED

- 2.1 No new petitions for the Joint Member Panel to consider have been received.

3. PETITIONS UPDATE

Petition – Courtlands Drive / A411 Hempstead Road junction

- 3.1 In June 2010 a petition was received from the residents in the Nascot Ward in respect of the Courtlands Drive junction with Hempstead Road.
- 3.2 The lead petitioner states in a covering letter dated 11th June 2010 that the residents are seeking an improved traffic flow at the junction. The petition has in excess of 100 signatures.
- 3.3 It was agreed with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the JMP together with the County Member for the Nascot Ward that in order to give the petition full consideration that the petition be discussed outside the JMP meeting.
- 3.4 The petition was presented at a meeting held at Herts Highways Local Area Office on the evening of the 26th July. The County Member, Nascot Ward Councillors, Traffic Police, Watford Councils Arboriculturist, The Watford District Manager and Lead Assistant District Manager were all present at the meeting.
- 3.5 The lead petitioner presented a detailed plan of the junction and offered a number of junction improvement suggestions. These included reducing the current footpath width in order to introduce a filter lane for vehicles turning left out of Courtlands Drive and a dedicated lane for vehicles wishing to turn right from Courtlands

Drive. The petitioner also requested that the visibility at the junction be improved and that the road markings be refreshed.

3.6 **RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.7 Officers agreed to undertake the cutting back of the trees and hedges to improve visibility and to refresh the keep clear and junction markings. These works have been carried-out and funded from the Local Category 2 budget.
- 3.8 In order for Members to fully consider the petition it was agreed that officers would provide Members with a cost of undertaking a 24 hour video survey of the junction. The survey would provide evidence of queue lengths in Courtlands Drive and pick up all vehicle, cyclist and pedestrian movements. The survey would also include analyses of the vehicle movements.
- 3.9 The estimated survey costs are £1,100.
- 3.10 Members agreed to fund the cost of a video survey from the Discretionary Fund, subject to confirmation of budgets. The survey was carried out on Wed 9th March 2011.
- 3.11 The survey data and video evidence were reported to the lead petitioner in April, and the survey data was also distributed to officers and local member attending the original petition meeting in July 2010.
- 3.12 The survey data revealed the maximum queue of vehicles waiting to turn out of Courtlands Drive was nine during the period 8.30-9.00am, and during the evening peak period of 5.00-5.30pm the maximum queue was seven vehicles.
- 3.13 The lead petitioner has prepared his own report and circulated it in May 2011 to those attending the original petition meeting. The report acknowledges large scale junction treatments such as traffic signal control and a roundabout do not provide a net benefit to Watford travellers and are not a priority for funding in the current period of austerity.
- 3.14 Officers are currently clarifying details of the report with the petitioner and reviewing suggestions within the petitioners report. The suggestions include local widening of the junction to increase throughput, and revoking the no right turn into and out of Ridge Lane as a means of reducing pressure at the Courtlands Drive junction.
- 3.15 Once investigations are completed, officers will report back to the lead petitioner and those attending the original petition meeting. This panel will also be informed of any feasible solutions and how they are to be funded.

- 3.16 Petition for permanent pedestrian crossing on Horseshoe Lane near northerly junction with Boundary Way.
- 3.17 In October 2010, a petition of 164 signatures was received from the residents of Boundary Way in the Woodside Ward.
- 3.18 The Lead petitioner explained in a covering letter the signatories are seeking a permanent pedestrian crossing on Horseshoe Lane near the northerly junction with Boundary Way to replace the school crossing patrol service which ceased 2 years ago. An accident involving a cyclist crossing the road here has heightened their concerns.
- 3.19 Many of the petitioners have children who attend Alban Wood Primary and Nursery school located the other side of Horseshoe Lane via Newhouse Crescent and The Brow.
- 3.20 At the November 2010 Joint Member Panel, members requested officers report on the junction issues for the January 2011 Panel.
- 3.21 Analyses of accident statistics for the latest 5 years of data reveal there have been no injury accidents along the stretch of Horseshoe Lane adjacent to Boundary Way.
- 3.22 There is a controlled toucan crossing outside Frances Coombe Academy which is some 120metres from the southern junction with Boundary Way and 270metres from the northern junction with Boundary Way and 290metres from where petitioners would like a new pedestrian crossing. Whilst this toucan provides a safe crossing point across Horseshoe Lane, the journey distance to Alban Wood School for those coming from northerly part of Boundary Way would increase by 320metres (from 550metres using the preferred crossing point to 870metres). Pedestrians coming from the southerly part would presumably prefer to use the existing toucan crossing as it is the shortest route.
- 3.23 A site inspection of the requested crossing position reveals there is enough footway space to locate a controlled crossing, though intervisibility between vehicles and pedestrians appears to be compromised by on street parking which would need to be subject to waiting restrictions. There is a temporary bus stop in close proximity to the requested crossing position. A feasibility study should be undertaken to check compliance with national design standards and the implications for the surrounding highway network and street furniture.
- 3.24 The school crossing patrol department have indicated to petitioners there are unlikely to be enough children on the Boundary Way estate to justify reinstating a school crossing patrol. The petitioners feel the

number who are crossing and would cross here is substantial. A pedestrian count should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity to gauge level of usage.

- 3.25 At the Jan 2011 panel, members agreed to fund a pedestrian count out of Discretionary budget for 2010/11. The survey was carried out on Wednesday 16th Feb 2011 between 7am and 7pm.
- 3.26 The survey revealed 171 pedestrians crossed at or within 2 metres of the existing tactile area. 51 of the 171 were children. The peak hours when the greatest number of pedestrians crossed were 8 - 9am when 40 crossed and 3 - 4pm when 44 crossed.
- 3.27 A speed and volume count near the crossing point was carried out from 9th to 15th February 2011. The 85thile traffic speeds were 34-36mph. The 2 way flows measured during the peak hours were approx 700 which averages out to one vehicle every 5-6 seconds.
- 3.28 The survey results were discussed at the Officers Steering Group on 11th March 2011. It was discussed that as speeds were excessive and peak hour flows were high enough to afford little opportunity to cross, provision of a pedestrian crossing would improve the quality of life for residents and help to reduce traffic speeds in the absence of the traffic calming scheme designed in the early 2000s which never went ahead due to lack of funding. Officers agreed funding should be sought for a feasibility study to establish if a feasible pedestrian crossing can be found. Officers agreed to submit a CS99 to apply for £4000 of S106 funds from the Alban Wood school development.
- 3.29 Funding has been found for the feasibility study, which at the time of writing this report, is nearing completion. An update of the findings so far are contained in the IWP progress report (See Item 10 Appendix C of the agenda)

4. OBJECTIONS TO TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS

- 4.1 There are none to report

5. LOCAL ISSUES – Woodmere Avenue Width Restriction Scheme

- 5.1 This scheme, to strengthen the existing width restriction, was constructed with funds from the 2010/11 Discretionary Budget.
- 5.2 Since the scheme was open to traffic on 28th February 2011, a considerable number of vehicles have collided with the restriction, resulting in a number of complaints, and sustained media interest.

- 5.3 A briefing note is contained as Appendix A, which covers the background to the scheme, correspondence received, and suggests a way forward.

6. LOCAL ISSUES – Radlett Road / Eastfield Avenue Thames Water Flood Alleviation Scheme

- 6.1 In 2007 residents were advised by Thames Water that early in 2008 they were proposing to construct new sewers in Balmoral Road, Radlett Road, Eastfield Avenue and along the footpath between Eastfield Avenue and Radlett Road, together with a storage tank and associated chambers to be constructed in Knutsford Playing Fields. Thames Water quote that the reason for this was that existing sewers are not large enough to cope with rainwater run off during storm events, and residents in these areas have suffered significant flooding.
- 6.2 However a letter dated 30 June 2008 was sent by Thames Water to residents (see Appendix B) advising them that it would not be possible to progress this work until the next investment period which runs from 2010 to 2015. Since then there have been indications that Thames Water do not believe there are sufficient households being affected by flooding to justify inclusion of the scheme in this investment period and there are concerns that this will be postponed again.
- 6.3 In addition to the flooding in residential areas, the River Colne and areas around have been suffering severe problems with sewage leaks for which Thames Water have accepted responsibility.
- 6.4 It is hoped that the JMP will accept the suggestion of the local member that this matter is referred to the Mayor with a request that she makes contact with John Wood, in his capacity of HCC Director of Environment in order that influence is brought to bear on OFWAT and Thames Water to ensure that the project is definitely progressed as soon as possible and definitely in the next investment period.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Members are requested to note the information and provide any comments to the District Manager.

8. CONTACT OFFICERS

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District Manager

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