
MEETING	Clifton Ward Committee
DATE	10 June 2009
PRESENT	Councillors H. Douglas, K. King and D. Scott 111 Residents Dave Carter, Head of Network Management, CYC Ruth Egan, Head of Transport Planning, CYC Jonathan Pickles, Senior Engineer, CYC Graham Titchener, Programme Manager, Cycling City York Paul Hepworth, CTC, National Cyclists' Organisation Richard Smyth, Head Teacher, St Peter's School Michael Hawtin, Neighbourhood Management Officer Mora Scaife, Neighbourhood Manager Michelle Kelly, Neighbourhood Support Worker

1. CLIFTON SPECIAL WARD COMMITTEE MEETING: TRAFFIC AND CYCLING AROUND CLIFTON GREEN AND WESTMINSTER ROAD

2. WELCOME

Chair, Cllr David Scott, welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced CYC representatives. He pointed out that the meeting was convened in response to requests by residents and provided an opportunity to ask questions about traffic in Clifton.

3. DAVE CARTER, HEAD OF NETWORK MANAGEMENT

Dave Carter, Head of Network Management, CYC, outlined the main issues under discussion. He pointed out that there have been ongoing problems with traffic on Westminster Road and that this has been exacerbated by recent events.

Among the factors contributing to the increased traffic are:

- The implementation of the cycling scheme and the resulting changes to the junction at Water End. He noted that as a result of traffic surveys changes have been made to the signal timings at the junction. Officials now feel the timings have been maximised.
- A detour put in place as a result of a burst water main during the works at Water End made motorists aware of Westminster Road as an alternative route.
- The burst water main also caused some damage to the traffic signal infrastructure. CYC accelerated a programme of works to address this and the signals are now operating at maximum reliability.
- Construction work at St Peter's has necessitated the removal of speed humps which would otherwise act as a deterrent to traffic. A true picture of the traffic increase on Westminster Road will only emerge after the humps have been reinstalled.

- In exploring solutions to the traffic increase on Westminster Road it will be necessary to identify the different kinds of traffic on the road: access traffic – for residents and St Peter’s School – and through traffic.

4. JONATHAN PICKLES, SENIOR TRANSPORT AND SAFETY ENGINEER

Jonathan Pickles, Senior Transport and Safety Engineer, CYC, provided data from recent traffic surveys. He pointed out that although traffic surveys were conducted in May there is reason to doubt the accuracy of the data, so the most reliable surveys are limited manual surveys conducted in early June. These were conducted at peak traffic, from 7.45 - 9.15am and 4.30 - 6pm, and show an increase in traffic of about 50% when compared with the data obtained before the changes to the road layout. But a further survey will have to be conducted to establish the exact increase and the destinations of the traffic.

5. RICHARD SMYTH, HEAD TEACHER, ST PETER'S SCHOOL

Richard Smyth, Head Teacher at St Peter’s School, informed the meeting that the contractors cannot give a precise date for reinstating the speed humps as the progress of the work will depend on the weather.

6. PAUL HEPWORTH, CTC, NATIONAL CYCLISTS' ORGANISATION

Paul Hepworth, CTC, National Cyclists’ Organisation, spoke about the benefits of promoting sustainable transport. The cycle lane at Water End is not a stand alone feature but part of an orbital cycle route that seeks to promote sustainable transport and decrease unnecessary car journeys. He pointed out that there will never be sufficient road and parking capacity to satisfy demands of motorists. If more commuters can be convinced to travel by sustainable means – the target is 60% of peak time traffic – it will create more capacity for necessary car journeys.

7. GRAHAM TITCHENER, PROGRAMME MANAGER CYCLING CITY YORK

Graham Titchener, Programme Manager, Cycling City York, spoke about the aims of the Cycling City project and the place of the cycle lane at Water End in the overall project. The aim of the project is to create a better balance of infrastructure for sustainable forms of transport. The Cycling City project aims to complete an orbital cycle route to make it easier for people living within the ring road to access other parts of the city by bicycle. Improvements to York’s cycling routes have come from public consultation about barriers to cycling.

8. RESIDENTS' PETITION

A petition requesting that Westminster Road be closed to through traffic was submitted to councillors. The petition was signed by 88% of residents.

9. HAVE YOUR SAY

Among the issues raised by residents were: the reasons for the build up of traffic on Water End; the steps to be taken before changes can be made to the road layout; possible solutions to the increased traffic on Westminster Road; alternative routes for the cycle lane; whether the views of residents will be taken into account in finding a solution; the pollution resulting from the traffic build up; the possibility of installing bollards on Westminster Road; traffic speed; long-term solutions to school traffic across the city.

Responses and comments came from councillors, CYC officers and residents.

- In response to questions about the consultation and decisions in relation to Water End, it was pointed out that council officers present analysis and recommendations to members who make decisions about transport policy and infrastructure. Officers have a responsibility to provide full and robust data and in order to do this further traffic surveys will be required.
- Among measures under consideration are reinstating of the filter lane at Water End and a point closure (installation of bollards) at Westminster Road. Closure would have implications at other points of the network. An origin and destination survey will have to be conducted to distinguish between residents' traffic, school traffic and through traffic. The possibility of removing the cycle lane and reinstating the filter lane will also be considered. The residents' views and the petition for point closure on Westminster Road will be taken into account.
- Some residents spoke in favour of point closure, noting the danger, discomfort and pollution of the increased volume of traffic; one resident of the road pointed out that not all residents are in favour of point closure as Westminster Road is a public road. Another resident pointed out that closing Westminster Road to through traffic would not provide a solution to the underlying problem, which is the traffic build up at Water End.
- It was pointed out that new traffic surveys will not take place until September, as they can only be carried out after the speed humps have been reinstated on Westminster Road and cannot take place during the school holidays as this wouldn't give an accurate reflection of the volume of traffic using the road.
- Cllr David Scott instigated a Call for Action, in an attempt to speed up the process.
- In response to questions about finding long term solutions to school transport, it was pointed out that all CYC schools have a travel plan in place to promote sustainable forms of transport. Efforts have been made to work with St Peter's School to address traffic resulting from school travel.

Cllr. David Scott, Chair

[The meeting started at 7.00 pm and finished at 9.15 pm].