
MEETING	DRINGHOUSES AND WOODTHORPE WARD COMMITTEE
DATE	20 MARCH 2024
PRESENT	COUNCILLORS FENTON, MASON AND WIDDOWSON
APOLOGIES	COUNCILLORS

1. **DROP-IN FROM 18:30**

2. **MAIN MEETING 19:00**

Welcome Chaired by Cllr Widdowson who opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

Selection of Dringhouses and Woodthorpe Ward Planning Panel

Julie Ainsworth, a member of the Planning Panel gave an overview of the Panel work. The purpose of the Planning Panel is to provide a structured opportunity for residents to come together to comment on planning applications within the ward. The comments are then submitted for consideration when applications are determined by the Local Planning Authority (City of York Council). The Panel meets once a month at a local venue, with the next meeting scheduled for Thursday 21st of March, 3pm at the Holiday Inn Hotel. Julie encouraged anyone interested in joining the Panel to put themselves forward as it was very rewarding to be part of the group.

The following residents have been confirmed as members of the Planning Panel for the forthcoming year: Stephen Fenton, Margaret Silcock, Julie Ainsworth, Fiona Barclay, Judith Gresty and Marion Croft.

Q – A comment was made about the proposed development on Tadcaster Road, opposite Hunters Way junction. It was felt that the site entrance is too narrow and the site becoming overdeveloped.

A- This application will be discussed at the Panel meeting on Thursday. The resident was thanked for sharing their opinion and invited to join the Panel.

Road safety in our community

With the use of PowerPoint presentation, Cllr Fenton outlined the topic. Recent consultation on Transport Strategy for York saw 80% of respondents supporting the creation of a 'Movement & Place Plan' to identify how best to balance the needs of streets as travel corridors and as places where people live, shop, go to school and enjoy their leisure. It is felt that improvements are required for streets to fulfil those roles better. Reduction of car dependency has been identified as a priority area, considering the fact that cycling is not an option for everybody. There is a

strong support towards encouraging more cycling and walking to school and the need to create safer environment, with specific focus on road safety issues around schools. Both Primary schools in the ward are facing ongoing problems with road safety in their vicinity, namely: irresponsible and illegal parking on double yellow lines, Zig Zags, on junctions, on footpaths and speeding. All these behaviours put pedestrians and wheelers at risk. Today's meeting will focus mainly on the area around Woodthorpe School.

In terms of enforcement, City of York Council has powers to enforce parking on double yellow lines and over private driveways, whereas the Police can enforce blocked roads and pavements.

Campaigns involving school children speaking with their parents/carers about inconsiderate parking issue, flyers, visual props and community speed watch have been tried elsewhere in the city and in the area, however a small minority of drivers remains indifferent to this type of encouragement.

Projects taking place elsewhere in the city include installation of low fencing and bollards to tackle parking on pavements around Badger Hill School, and one day trial including installation of pedestrian friendly infrastructure on Ostman Road outside Carr Schools.

Before inviting Peter Marsland to speak Cllr Widdowson reiterated the purpose of tonight, that it was hoped to come up with ideas for changes to the physical environment and what can be done to change driver behaviours to alleviate the situation.

Peter Marsland, CYC Highway Regulations spoke about legal aspects of introducing road markings and implementing road closures in schools' vicinities. There are 11 school in York, including Woodthorpe School, that have been identified as hot spots for the worst driver offending ratio. Refreshing of existing road markings outside Woodthorpe School is being delayed due to contractor – CYC communication, however it is hoped to be implemented soon. An example of a street closure for a short period of time at drop of and pick times outside Park Grove Primary was outlined. This approach works in low traffic zones with no thorough traffic.

A comment was made that child safety should be paramount and with the increase of car usage over the years incident is imminent without urgent action.

Q – Vehicle parking and blocking pavements on Bramble Dene is an ongoing issue. Can enforcement actions be taken?

A – Noted. Currently the Police has responsibility for footpath and road parking enforcement.

Q – Fixed traffic camera with registration plate recognition feature has been promised in a meeting with Traffic Management that took place at Council offices eight years ago, yet it hasn't been delivered. Apparently, funding was available towards it at the time.

A – Fixed installation measures could be subject to vandalism and damage. A mobile camera van solution is being investigated and would be a preferred option from the Council perspective.

Q – Is there a record of actions that have been tried before?

A – Not as such, however colleagues within the Team have knowledge and are open to answer specific questions.

It was further added that campaigns aimed at behaviour change, stressing importance of pedestrian safety are important, and that City of York Council works closely with the Police on that. With community support school safe street could be introduced on Summerfield Road on a trial basis; however it would take some time to implement.

Q – A concern was raised about cars driving over 20mph speed limit on Rycroft Avenue. Can physical measures, such as speed bumps be introduced to slow down traffic?

A – Installation of speed bumps can be looked into; however cars driving over them would create additional noise and vibrations, which could affect adjacent properties. Larger vehicles have a wheel span wide enough to drive over a speed bump without the need to slow down. Speed table would be a better option, or private vehicles parked on the road creating a barrier slowing traffic down, however this comes with a risk of damage to the parked vehicles.

Q – Large delivery vans often struggle to negotiate narrow roads and/or drive at speed.

A – Noted. We acknowledge that ever increasing number of delivery vans, resulting from online shopping, has a negative impact on road and pavement surfaces.

Graham Titchener, CYC Head of Parking Services spoke about ways to tackle the issue with emphasis on “pester power” approach and importance of involving young people in the road safety awareness campaigns. A multitude of initiatives including Bikeability schemes and work with Sustrans is needed to reach generation after generation and have a meaningful impact. We operate an instant ticket policy, where a driver gets a ticket for breaching parking regulations, however when uniformed patrol is seen most drivers tend to abide the regulations. With 16 CYC Traffic Officers and 70 schools in the city our ability to patrol is limited. Traffic camera with registration plate recognition feature costs around £12k.

A comment was made that drivers tend to use social media to share about uniformed patrol presence outside the school. If officers could attend at 8:40am instead of 8am they would be there just in time for morning traffic and with a chance to witness and fine the offenders.

A resident received verbal abuse while trying to tell a driver that they are blocking their driveway. It is not easy to have this type of conversations with drivers.

A - It is hoped that the Local Transport Strategy and devolution of funding to the Local Authority will enable implementation of physical interventions

such as speed tables, planters, and other traffic calming measures. Schools can communicate with parents about the importance of walking to school as opposed to using a vehicle. Children could play a big role by having conversations with parents/carers and challenge them to walk instead of driving.

Q – Is Woodthorpe School interacting with parents on the matter of parking and road safety?

A – School Business Manager responded that indeed the school communicates regularly with parents/carers about initiatives such as the minions at the school entrance and the importance of being mindful of road safety and respectful towards our neighbours. Those matters frequently come up at governors' meetings. Staff members presence outside the school and speaking with drivers has been tried before, however it was met with some verbal abuse and it was felt that it wasn't fair on staff members to continue with that approach.

Q – Is there an adequate parking within school for all staff to park? Some staff members have been seen parking on adjacent roads during the day.

A – Parking for staff is being addressed and will be resolved over the summer. This will be achieved by installation of a gate (funded by the school) which will operate on a registration plate recognition basis. This will eliminate the issue of non-staff using the school car park allowing sufficient space for staff members. There are no plans to increase the number of staff visiting the site.

Q – We live next door to the school and our drive is being blocked regularly. Can we contact the school directly when that occurs?

A – The enforcement and ability to issue instant fine sits with the City of York Council. Please use Council Parking hotline 0800 138 1119 to report such instances. We work towards a policy to attend the site within 45min of the report, depending on traffic. If they are repeat offenders perhaps the school could help with identifying them and speaking with them directly?

A School Governor stated that the school staff have been speaking with parents and can only do so much. He stated that enforcement powers are required to step in now.

At this point Cllr Fenton introduced Greg Morgan, CYC Transport Planner who outlined the trial of solutions outside Carr Junior School, temporary road closures and urban clearways as potential means to try to alleviate the issue outside Woodthorpe School. He further spoke about available active travel routes to the school and its relatively small catchment area.

Q – Is there a reason why Traffic Enforcement Officers operate in pairs?

A – Yes, it is for safety reasons.

Q - Could entrance to school from Miterdale be introduced for pedestrians? It would help reduce the number of cars driven in the morning and afternoon.

A – It is a good suggestion. Security measures around access will have to be put in place, but it can be investigated.

Q – It seems that what is missing is adequate enforcement. I have been a victim to a cyclist on a footpath today.

A – We would encourage reporting every instance of cyclists on pavements, including their description where possible to the Police.

At this point Cllrs Widdowson and Fenton introduced the following questions:

1. What does a safe and accessible place look and feel like?
2. Can this vision be delivered just by 'behaviour change'? If so, what might work?
3. Will achieving the vision require physical interventions? If so, what could these measures be and where are they needed?

The following comments and suggestions were offered in response to the above:

- Behaviour change will not solve all the problems.
 - Enforcement Officers must attend in pairs for safety reasons.
 - Better enforcement is required between 8:30am and 8:50am.
- Freedom of Information response has shown that 0 fines were issued and 7 patrols carried out outside the school in 2023.
- Alternative parking could be sought at Moorcroft Road shops.
 - Footage from private household CCTV cameras in the school vicinity could be made available to the Police.
 - A suggestion to run a behaviour change campaign involving each class at school to find out how many pupils are walking or cycling to school and work with children to create their route map to school.
 - Trial a walking bus approach.
 - Introduce physical interventions such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition camera.
 - The same price applies for road closure despite the frequency i.e. 1ce a week, or 1ce a month. This could be featured in the school active travel plan.
 - Trial road closure with a barrier and frame it as a fun thing for kids as opposed a punishment for parents.
 - Could Summerfield Road have one way traffic system?
 - The term school street means a street that is closed to traffic at certain times of day, Monday to Friday during term time only. Does it need physical barrier and what would be the cost involved? Some schools involve PTFA members to man the barrier, or it could be a person with a cone/bollard standing at the end of the road.
 - Explore alternative pedestrian access from Miterdale.
 - Could the gate from the playground be opened as additional access route? A – It would require security measures and having additional staff to man it would be an issue.
 - Install additional cycle racks to encourage cycling to school.
 - Introduce hefty fines and penalty points for traffic offenders. A - only the Police can issue Fixed Penalty Notice for driving offences.
 - Residents could park their vehicles on the road to create a traffic slowing barrier. This approach however could push parking problem to other nearby areas.
 - Create a route map and rewards as attractive alternatives to driving.

Q - The problem that we are facing is twofold: failure to enforce and anti-social parking. What can the community do to request better enforcement? Would writing to the local MP help?

A – A petition backed with community support could be one of the options. Once the plan of action and solutions are established, we will need to work on it together to achieve change.

A follow up meeting on the matter, following the mayoral election, will be held in early May.

Q - A question was asked about mayoral election and the need for more information on candidates.

A – It is believed that the Combined Authority will be disseminating information to every household in York in the runup to the election.

Q – An issue about hedges encroaching on pavements limiting space for pedestrians was raised. This is especially an issue at an address on Moor Lane.

A – Noted. Please report any instances of overgrown vegetation to Ward Councillors and we will raise it with CYC Highway Regulation.

Q – A question was asked about the amount of funding spent on Tadcaster Road improvements without tangible results around pedestrian and cyclists safety.

A – Large proportion of funding (£5m) was utilized towards improvements to underground drainage. We were hoping to achieve more for the £2.2m that was dedicated towards encouraging walking and cycling. The project went over budget and some elements could not be delivered. The new pedestrian crossings are the biggest improvements in our opinion. We believe that the works were paused while horse races were on which impacted on the project delivery timeline.

The meeting closed at 20:40.

, Chair

[The meeting started at Time Not Specified and finished at Time Not Specified].