
Meeting of Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel

8 December 2008

Report of the Director of City Strategy

PETITION TO RESTRICT THROUGH TRAFFIC IN NEWLANDS DRIVE

Summary

1. This report informs the Advisory Panel of the receipt of a petition from residents of Newlands Drive requesting a restriction of through traffic to prevent their street being a “rat-run” after the Boroughbridge Road / Beckfield Lane junction is signalised. The report recommends that “before and after” surveys are carried out to help inform any future decision about changes in traffic management on Newlands Drive.

Background

2. On 8 September 2008 Members approved a package of highway improvements to create safer routes to the new Manor School. This package included signalisation of the Boroughbridge Road / Beckfield Lane/ Low Poppleton Lane junction, which currently operates as a mini-roundabout.
3. The petition from Newlands Drive residents was passed to a meeting of the Full Council on 25 September 2008 by Councillor Simpsom-Laing. The front page of the petition is provided as **Annex A**. The petition was signed by 21 local residents, representing 16 households (there are 24 properties along Newlands Drive).
4. The position of Newlands Drive in relation to the Boroughbridge Road / Beckfield Lane/ Low Poppleton Lane junction is shown on the plan in **Annex B**.

Consultation

5. As part of the consultation feedback on the Manor School proposals, some residents of Newlands Drive expressed concern that motorists would choose to cut through their street to avoid delays at the new traffic signals. In the 8 September EMAP report Officers commented as follows:-

“Local concerns about drivers cutting through Newlands Drive to avoid the traffic signals are understandable, but this is thought unlikely to develop into a significant problem. Under the existing mini-roundabout arrangement the junction currently experiences significant queuing at peak times, so any people who would find it attractive to cut through Newlands Drive are probably already doing so. However, before and after monitoring would be carried out and if a significant problem was identified then counter-measures could be considered. The options could include traffic calming or a point road closure.”

6. In approving the scheme, Members accepted the Officer comments on this issue. Therefore Officers are planning to carry out before and after surveys to assess if the introduction of the traffic signals leads to any significant increase in traffic levels on Newlands Drive.

Options

7. There are two main options available to members:

Option One - To await the outcome of the proposed traffic monitoring before considering if further action is necessary to deter or prevent through traffic using Newlands Drive.

Option Two - Not to await the outcome of the proposed traffic monitoring, and request Officers to consult residents immediately on options to deter or prevent through traffic using Newlands Drive.

Analysis

8. As explained in paragraph 5 above, it is not thought likely that the introduction of traffic signals will cause a significant number of additional motorists to “rat-run” through Newlands Drive. Furthermore, Officers consider that a signed “Access Only” restriction, as suggested by the petitioners (see Annex A), would not provide an effective solution because the Police could not provide a sufficiently high level of enforcement. A point closure or a one-way system would offer a much more effective solution, but would also present some drawbacks for residents in terms of limiting their route choices. Therefore Officers consider that this is not something that should be rushed into, and it would be better to wait to see if residents’ fears actually materialise. If the “after” surveys show that traffic levels have increased significantly, residents would then be better placed to gauge if the potential benefits of counter measures should outweigh possible disadvantages for them. Hence option one is still recommended as the best way forward.

Corporate Priorities

9. The recommended course of action would contribute to the following Corporate Priority :

Improve our focus on the needs of customers and residents in designing and providing services.

Implications

10. This report has the following implications:

- **Financial** – The cost of carrying out the proposed “before and after” traffic surveys in Newlands Drive can be met from the overall budget allocation for delivering the Manor School highway improvement scheme. Implementation of any additional measures to counter through traffic in Newlands Drive has not been budgeted for at this stage. If traffic monitoring shows there to be a significant problem then financial provision for a remedial scheme will need to be considered as part of the 2009/10 Capital Programme.
- **Human Resources (HR)** – None.
- **Equalities** – None.
- **Legal** – None.
- **Crime and Disorder** – None.
- **Information Technology (IT)** – None.
- **Property** – None.
- **Sustainability** – None.
- **Other** – None.

Risk Management

11. In compliance with the Council’s Risk Management Strategy, there are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

Recommendations

12. That the Advisory Panel advise the Executive Member for City Strategy to:

- i. Note the content of the petition, and that officers are arranging for “before and after” surveys to be carried out to assess changes in traffic levels on Newlands Drive as a result of traffic signals being introduced at the Boroughbridge Road/Beckfield Lane/Low Poppleton Lane junction.
Reason : To enable the impact of the new traffic signals on local traffic patterns to be properly assessed.
- ii. Reply to the lead petitioner;
Reason : To inform them of the panel’s decision.

Contact Details

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Report Approved

Date 11 –11-08

Wards Affected: Acomb

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

“Manor School – Highway Improvements (including Beckfield Lane Cycle Scheme)”
– report to the Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel meeting on
8 September 2008.

Annexes

Annex A Copy of front page of petition.

Annex B Location Plan.