

Report to the City of York Council's Water End Scrutiny Task Group
meeting at Clifton Parish Church on 18th February 2010.

From the informal TRAFFIC GROUP for Westminster Road (WMR) and The Avenue (TA).

Summary of case. The Traffic Group believes that the consequences of the scheme on Water End have created unwarranted nuisance to the residents of this suburb and their environment. The Group ask for point closure of the road to prevent cut through (rat-run) vehicles.

Background including calendar of meetings etc.

5th September 2008 A consultative letter written by Jonathan Pickles, CYC. was delivered to houses *{the extent and comprehensiveness of the distribution has been challenged}*

26th September 2008 At a CYC Planning meeting Cllr K King and a resident spoke against the removal of the speed cushions (road humps) in WMR.

13th October 2008 A letter from Jonathan Pickles to a resident stated

"I am aware that some "rat running" occurs along Westminster Road and The Avenue but consider that this is unlikely to increase to any significant extent, given the difficulty motorists experience when turning right into Clifton Road"

He goes on to dismiss suggestions made by the resident and explains

- that Access Only is not recommended by officers because of lack of enforcement.
- that 20mph zones have reserved applications and "may not be the most appropriate course of action"
- that the Council "do not have the resources to provide the luxury of a "quiet" road surface".
- He added that the proposals for the scheme were not relevant to the Clifton Planning Panel.
- Mr Pickles gave an invitation to the City Strategy and Advisory Panel*.

20th October 2008 * The panel met and Cllr D. Scott anticipated potential problem areas.

4th February 2009 A resident wrote an e-mail to Jonathan Pickles about state of footpath at Water End as work started and commented upon attitude of foreman. Quotation *"speak to the hand this face is not listening"*.

27th March 2009 Informal Traffic Group established to coordinate the feelings of residents.

21st April 2009 Clifton Ward Committee meeting hears complaints about the scheme from residents.

02 May 2009 Petition against removal of speed humps presented to Cllr D.Scott

07 May 2009. Speed humps removed regardless of local opinion.

16th May 2009 Photo of handover of the petition appears in The Press

10th June 2009 Clifton Ward Committee meeting receives a further petition for point closure from WMR and TA. in a large meeting

22nd June 2009 Louise Robinson, "Safer Routes to Schools", CYC, states that WMR lacks a school sign. *{not yet installed}*

12th August 2009 Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)

01st September 2009 Executive Members meeting

also Humps replaced at lower height and poor quality

01st December 2009 Humps "topped" up after continual protests.

15th December 2009 Task Group meeting

05th January 2010 Executive Members Decision Meeting. –“called in” by ward cllrs.-
25th Jan 2010 City Strategy meeting upheld the “called in” decision of the 5th
26th Jan 2010 Task Group meeting
28th Jan 2010 Clifton Ward Committee meeting update on situation.
02nd February Letter distributed by A Briggs, Traffic Engineer CYC, providing
an analysis of his questionnaire of November.

Conclusions from the above chain of events are

- 1 .that the Council Officers and Executive Decision maker have disregarded the majority views of the residents.
- 2 .that the views of the elected representatives have been dismissed.
3. that the evidence of the CYC surveys showing a 97% increase in traffic flows and a 87.5% of through traffic (rat runners) have been ignored.
- 4 that Council officers have offered NOTHING to ameliorate the actual problems.
- 5 that considerations of environmental damage, dust, noise, vibrations etc have NOT been taken into account.
- 6 that safety concerns have not been addressed.

TRAFFIC TASK grp180210 JB

Further observations to the Water End Scrutiny Task Group

The scheme for cycle management as part of the Orbital Route was put through in haste to ensure the grant aid was spent before the end of the financial year.

As such the scheme was ill thought out and badly planned, for example,

*the lampposts were removed from the bridge as part of a plan, for a shared use pathway, which did not take place.

*the height of the new lighting on the bridge was only reduced after publicity in The Press.

*the scheme was massively over budget and poor value for money as no evidence of modal shift to cycle use has been shown.

*there was poor contingency planning eg. response to water pipe damage.

*the cycle path is missing at the point of greatest need, i.e. alongside The Green heading west and the hierarchy of users fails as bus users and cyclists conflict at the bus stop on the north side.

*the inadequate modelling of traffic movement did not take account of the smaller suburban roads such as Westminster Road and The Avenue.

*the modelling has not forecast the problems at Clifton traffic lights and the loss of the left filter light.

*the overgrown public footpath might have been more fully considered

*there is a disregard for the Councils own Highway Guidelines by using WMR and TA as relief roads

* Residents and elected members observations have been ignored

*there is too much tarmac and what was green is now black.

In conclusion there does seem to be enough facts for a complaint to the local government Ombudsman.