

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE		
DATE:	4 NOVEMBER 2014	AGENDA ITEM:	9
TITLE:	HIGHMOOR ROAD / ALBERT ROAD - PETITION FOR A SAFER CROSSROADS - OBJECTIONS TO ADVERTISED ORDER		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	TONY PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORTATION & STREETCARE	WARDS:	THAMES
LEAD OFFICER:	SIMON BEASLEY	TEL:	0118 937 2228
JOB TITLE:	NETWORK MANAGER	E-MAIL:	simon.beasley@reading.gov.uk

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To share with the Sub-Committee objections, support and other comments received to the proposal to restrict vehicle movements from the west side of Highmoor Road across the junction with Albert Road. Around 70 individual representations have been received prior to the issue of the statutory notice with a further 15 received during the statutory period
- 1.2 This report provides a response to the thoughts and ideas that many have expressed. This is to help the sub-committee reach a decision on whether or not to continue with the proposal or consider an alternative option.
- 1.3 Appendix 1 is the original list of options reviewed at September TM Sub-committee meeting.
- 1.4 Appendix 2 (to follow) is a summary of the objections, thoughts and ideas received an officer response.

## 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Sub-Committee note the objections received in response to the statutory consultation to restriction the west side of Highmoor Road at its junction with Albert Road. Appendix 2 provides a response to the objections and additional thoughts and ideas shared with us as a part of the statutory advert.
- 2.2 That the Sub-committee make a decision based on the evidence to either proceed with the restriction or consider an alternative option to deal with some rather than all of the safety concerns.

## 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 Under the 1988 Road Traffic Act the highway authority has a duty to take steps to both reduce and prevent collisions on the road network. In addition under the Traffic Management Act 2004 the authority has a duty to maintain and manage the road network and secure the safe and expeditious movement of traffic. Traffic is defined as encompassing all road users including pedestrians.
- 3.2 In response to our duty the closure of the west side of Highmoor Road has been promoted to deal with a very specific pattern of accidents that has resulted in three injuries within the last four years. In addition, concern has been growing across the community where we have been petitioned *"to make Highmoor Road/Albert Road crossroads safer to use for pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles; historically we have had a number of near misses. We do not want to wait for a serious accident to occur before you act"*.

## 4. RESPONSE TO STATUTORY CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The proposal to close the west side of Highmoor Road has prompted a significant response with around 80 individual objections, thoughts and suggestions received at the time of writing this report. The objection period to the statutory advert closes on the day of the Sub-committee meeting where there will be an update paper tabled on the evening.
- 4.2 Of the responses received so far the vast majority are from residents of the immediate area mainly concerned with the displacement of traffic onto their street. Despite the whole area being residential Highmoor Road is regarded by some as being more of a main road link across Caversham Heights. The main concern from those that live within the immediate area is that drivers will weave through other streets that are less appropriate. Further to this traffic will then be

displaced onto other junctions that are 'just as dangerous' with similar visibility issues. The argument is that by preventing drivers from using Highmoor Road to travel west to east will just move the problem to another location.

- 4.3 Of the objections and comments received the majority regard speeding on Albert Road as the main safety issue and by reducing the speed of drivers the junction will be made safer. This and all other suggestions of how to improve safety at the junction have already been explored in the review of options as presented to TM Sub-committee in September. Appendix 1 is a copy of the review.
- 4.4 A full summary and officer response is detailed in Appendix 2 (to follow).
- 4.5 The Sub-committee must decide (based on the evidence) to either proceed with the restriction or consider an alternative option to deal with some, rather than all, of the safety concerns.

## **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 5.1 To promote equality, social inclusion and a safe and healthy environment for all.

## **6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 6.1 Statutory consultation will be carried out in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. The list of options has been shared with the lead petitioner and ward members for wider circulation within the community.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Proposals for movement restrictions are advertised under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

## **8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1 In addition to the Human Rights Act 1998 the Council is required to comply with the Equalities Act 2010. Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 requires the Council to have due regard to the need to:-
  - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;

- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The annual road safety programme is funded through existing Transport Capital Budgets.

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1 TM Sub Committee 16<sup>th</sup> January 2014 petition submission. TM Sub Committee 13<sup>th</sup> March 2014 Annual Road Safety Review. TM Sub Committee 14<sup>th</sup> September 2014.