

THE ASSEMBLY

7 JUNE 2006

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION

Title: Petition for changes to the experimental traffic management system in the Cavendish Gardens area	For Decision
<p>Summary:</p> <p>The Council has implemented an experimental traffic management system in the Cavendish Gardens area in an attempt to reduce the volume of unnecessary through traffic in response to requests for assistance from local residents.</p> <p>The measures implemented have caused a great deal of resident concern due to inconvenience caused by the introduction of a number of one-way roads and the Council has been petitioned to remove the scheme.</p> <p>Following consultation with the lead petitioners and former Ward Councillors it is recommended that the scheme be modified to reduce the number of roads that are one-way and the scheme as modified to be implemented as a permanent scheme</p> <p>Wards Affected: Longbridge Ward</p>	
<p>Implications:</p> <p>Financial:</p> <p>The scheme is substantially in place. If the recommendations of this report are agreed, the cost of implementation and modifications can be met from within existing budgets.</p> <p>Legal:</p> <p>It will be necessary to advertise and prepare Traffic Management Orders to implement the scheme as modified. Challenges to the Orders will need to be addressed through the due legal process.</p> <p>Risk Management:</p> <p>The scheme has been in place on an experimental basis to determine actual traffic movement changes. By implementing in this way it has been possible to assess both driver behaviour and resident reaction.</p> <p>Social Inclusion and Diversity: None.</p> <p>Crime and Disorder:</p> <p>Unfortunately some drivers persist in driving the wrong way along one-way roads. The Council is working with the Police to address these issues and the Council is considering whether it is able to undertake enforcement of these offences.</p>	

Recommendations

The Assembly is asked to agree:

1. The experimental scheme be modified by changing the following one-way roads to two-way traffic:
 - a). Woodbridge Road between Oulton Crescent and Brockdish Avenue
 - b). Stratton Drive between Oulton Crescent and Brockdish Avenue
2. The preparation of Traffic Management Orders to make the following roads one-way:
 - a). Cavendish Gardens between Beccles Drive and Stratton Drive towards Stratton Drive
 - b). Service Road behind Longbridge Road shops adjacent to residential flats towards Stratton Drive
3. The measures on site be modified in accordance with the recommendations above

Reason

The Council has implemented an experimental traffic management scheme to assess the impact on traffic flow and residential reaction. It appears that modifications as set out in this report would achieve benefits to those residents originally requesting assistance while appeasing widespread opposition from residents in the surrounding area.

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1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 A petition of 296 signatories was received by the Council stating 'Petition Re: Leftley Estate; Residents not in agreement with the one-way system installed on the estate after a trial of one month.
- 1.2 The petition relates to a modification of the junction, and signal timings at the junction of Upney Lane and Longbridge Road in order to reduce the potential for accidents. This has resulted in a safer junction with improved pedestrian facilities. A negative impact of these changes was the extension of queue lengths leading to the junction particularly at peak periods.
- 1.3 The Council was approached by residents of Cavendish Gardens between Beccles Drive and Stratton Drive requesting assistance to reduce the volume of traffic using their length of road as drivers attempted to by-pass the junction. Residents recommended that their road be closed however this was not considered feasible due to access requirements of emergency and service vehicles.

1.4 Funding became available to reduce traffic flow in the Leftley Estate to encourage an increase in children walking to school and this represented an opportunity to address the request of the residents of Cavendish Gardens.

1.5 The Council prepared a scheme for consultation that made Cavendish Gardens one-way between Stratton Drive and Beccles Drive to reduce the volume of traffic using that road. In order to avoid potential displacement other roads were shown to be one-way in the local vicinity, namely:

Cavendish Gardens – Between Sudbury Road and Brockdish Avenue towards Brockdish Avenue

Stratton Drive – Longbridge Road to Cavendish Gardens towards Cavendish Gardens

1.6 Approximately 500 residences were consulted on this scheme. It was clear from the responses that the project did not receive support of the community that did not benefit from a reduction in through traffic. The proposed changes to traffic movement presented residents with lengthened journeys to move around the estate and the inconvenience resulted in widespread opposition.

1.7 Many residents took the opportunity to suggest alternative arrangements and these were considered. It was clear that it would be difficult to devise a scheme that would receive overwhelming support as much of the estate did not suffer from the problem of rat-running. As a result it was decided to implement a modified scheme on an experimental basis. Traffic surveys were carried out before implementation and then after implementation to assess actual changes to traffic flow.

1.8 During the period that the experimental scheme was in place a substantial petition was received primarily signed by residents on the estate opposing the scheme. Following a meeting with lead petitioners and ward councillors it was agreed that the scheme could be modified to retain the one way roads in Cavendish Gardens between Sutton Drive and Beccles Drive and the service road to the rear of the shops but remove the one-way restrictions in Stratton Drive and Woodbridge Road.

2. Current Position

2.1 The experimental orders are time limited and therefore the Council needs to decide whether the scheme should be implemented as a final scheme and Traffic Orders prepared accordingly.

2.2 Alternatively the scheme could be removed or modified. Most of the scheme is implemented however if the recommendations of this report are accepted there would be a need to modify a kerb line at the junction of Cavendish Gardens and Stratton Drive to further deter drivers from driving illegally against the direction of traffic flow.

3. Report Detail

3.1 There are often difficulty in gaining community acceptance of a scheme which delivers a localised improvements with inconvenience to surrounding residents, however in this project it appears that efforts to reduce displacement of traffic into other areas has been counter productive in terms of community acceptance.

- 3.2 The changes in design of the Longbridge Road/Upney Lane junction have improved conditions in terms of road safety but unfortunately some drivers have decided to use alternate routes to avoid the junction.
- 3.3 Traffic data shows a reduction in traffic using the length of Cavendish Gardens where the original complaints occurred and although the current or recommended scheme does not reduce all through traffic, it does represent a scheme that appears to receive community support.
- 3.4 Drivers appear to be driving around the one-way streets resulting in increased traffic volume elsewhere on the estate. Coupled with the request from residents of Stratton Drive and Woodbridge Road to remove the one-way system, it would appear that traffic management in these roads does not have community support and the removal is in line with residents wishes. Overall it appears that this change would not increase the overall volume of traffic using the estate.

4. Implications

- 4.1 The Council must make a decision to make the scheme permanent, change the scheme or undertake a modified scheme. Funding is available in existing budgets to implement the scheme in accordance with the recommendations set out in this report.
- 4.2 It is possible that the petition is not representative of the whole community and the new Traffic Orders may be opposed. If this is the case and substantial opposition is received a further report will be presented to the Assembly in due course

5. Consultees

- 5.1 The former Ward Councillors, prior to the local election, were participant in the meeting with residents. These details have been issued to Legal Services for comment.

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

- Petition.
- Consultation Exercise – June 2004