

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	Newtown Road Environmental Improvement Scheme – Objections to Proposed Traffic Orders		
Report to be considered by:	Councillor Sally Hannon	on:	04/06/04
Forward Plan Ref:	ID0789		

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Portfolio Member for Highways and Transportation of the receipt of a number of letters of objection and a petition opposing elements of the proposed Newtown Road Environmental Improvement Scheme

Recommended Action:

That the Portfolio Member resolves that :

- (1) The substantive scheme for the environmental improvement of Newtown Road (North), including the making of a traffic order to convert Argyle Road to one way southbound is approved, and;
- (2) Implementation of the traffic order proposed for Derby Road is deferred pending further investigation and consultation.

Reason for decision to be taken:

To enable the Newtown Road (North) Environmental Improvement Scheme to proceed.

List of other options considered:

None

Key background documentation:

- Drawing No 81224/4 – Proposed no entry and one way restrictions
- Responses to the Statutory Consultation Appendix A

Portfolio Member:	Councillor Sally Hannon
Tel. No.:	01635 846855
E-mail Address:	Sallyhannon@hotmail.com

Contact Officer Details

Name:	Derek Crouch
Job Title:	Projects Manager
Tel. No.:	01635 519113
E-mail Address:	dcrouch@westberks.gov.uk

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 Consultation on the scheme took place between 30th March and 26th April 2004.
- 1.2 In addition to formal advertisement in the press of the proposed changes to Traffic Regulation Orders, letters accompanied by drawings detailing the proposed scheme layout (81224/1B) and the proposed amendments to waiting restrictions (81224/2) were hand delivered to all private residences and businesses in Newtown Road, Argyle Road, Hampton Road and Derby Road.
- 1.3 The scheme layout drawing outlined the southbound one-way system proposed for Argyle Road and Derby Road by way of accommodation works to the main scheme.
- 1.4 In addition to a number of individual letters objecting to elements of the scheme a petition of objection containing 72 signatures was also submitted to the Council.
- 1.5 The petition received on 30th April reads :-
- We, the undersigned, oppose the proposed environmental improvements because we believe the proposal is ill-considered and does not take into account that:
- Turning Derby Road into a one way street in the opposite direction would lead to “rat running” from Pound Street to St John’s roundabout in the mornings with drivers eager to avoid the traffic lights and speed cushions in Newtown Road.
 - This will greatly endanger scores of children walking to St Bartholomew’s, St Nicholas’ and St John’s schools (as well as the elderly living there) and this would appear to be at odds with West Berkshire Council’s “safe routes to schools” scheme, especially as there is no pavement on either side of Hampton Road by the Red House public house.
 - No clear reason has been provided for changing the direction of Derby Road traffic flow. The subsequent costs of modifying St John’s roundabout to make it safe for traffic to enter it from Derby Road are a waste of Council Tax payer’s money and provide no tangible benefit.
 - If the Derby Road and Argyle Road changes are unavoidable for reasons not shared with affected residents and Council Tax payers, we demand proper residents consultation to consider traffic calming measures.
- 1.6 The Newtown Road (north) Environmental Enhancement Scheme forms an integral part of the Council’s Vision for Newbury 2025 and as such is included in the Council’s Capital Programme for 2004/2005
- 1.7 The introduction of traffic signals at the Pound Street / Newtown Road junction makes it imperative that Argyle Road be converted to one way southbound to avoid conflict between vehicles entering and exiting at it’s northern end against signal regulated flows.
- 1.8 Argyle Road is also considered too narrow to safely accommodate two way traffic and on street parking.

- 1.9 It was also proposed that Derby Road be made one way over its entire length to eliminate abuse which regularly occurs at present over the existing short one way section immediately prior to St Johns Roundabout.
- 1.10 It was also envisaged that this would create an exit route for users of Argyle Road and Hampton Road.
- 1.11 Derby Road, like Argyle Road, is considered too narrow for safe use by two-way traffic and has no turning head for vehicles at the point where the present exit restriction commences.
- 1.12 Whilst it is recommended that implementation of the traffic order covering Derby Road be deferred in order that delivery of the substantive element of the scheme not be prejudiced, it is intended that further investigation and consultation take place with a view to resolving the above issues.
- 1.13 To this end the Council is in discussion with Sovereign Housing regarding the possibility of acquiring an area of land to the rear of the old hospital site to enable the construction of turning heads at the junction of Hampton Road and Rectory Close. This would have the effect of turning both roads into cul-de-sacs thereby preventing through traffic and so called rat running.
- 1.14 To provide traffic calming in Argyle Road, Rectory Close and Derby Road is considered unnecessary.
- 1.15 Traffic counts are programmed to be carried out immediately prior to and upon completion of the scheme to monitor the impact if any, of the works, on adjoining streets.
- 1.16 Later in the year consultation is due to commence on the Residents Parking scheme. At this stage staggered parking could be introduced along Argyle Road to act as a traffic calming measure should a problem of speeding traffic be found to occur.

Recommendation

To proceed with the Newtown Road Environmental Enhancement scheme, including the introduction of a traffic order making Argyle Road one way in a southerly direction and to defer implementation of the one way order proposed for Derby Road pending further investigation and consultation

Appendices

Appendix A - Responses to the objections

Appendix B - Drawing No 81224/4 – Proposed no entry and one way restrictions

Implications

Policy: None arising from this report

Financial: Budgetary Provision in the Council's Capital Programme for 2004/05 - £335,000

Personnel:	None arising from this report
Legal:	Complete processing of the traffic Order
Environmental:	None arising from this report
Equalities:	None arising from this report
Partnering:	The contract is to be delivered in partnership with P.T. Contractors Ltd as approved by Management Board.
Property:	N/A
Risk Management:	N/A
Community Safety:	N/A

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council:	Royce Longton - No comments received at time of preparing report
Select Committee Chairmen:	Brian Bedwell is happy to agree with Emma Webster's comments
P&L Committee Chairman (where appropriate):	N/A

Ward Members:

Sally Hannon in her capacity as Portfolio Member for Highways and Transportation.

Comments from Emma Webster:-

I understand that this scheme is vital to the fulfilment of the vision 2025 and in principle support the work that is suggested to develop this area as the Southern Gateway into the town.

However there are a number of additional comments I would like to make. Firstly, I welcome the deferment of the traffic order proposed for Derby Road pending further investigation and consultation. As governor of St John the Evangelist School, Old Newtown Road, I have had a number of parents comment about the risk they perceive that their children would be put in as there would be the potential for rat running were Derby Road to be turned into one way access. I believe that the extension of the period of consultation would enable all of those parents who have not yet voiced a concern directly to be able to do so.

I note the concerns that have been raised in writing to myself regarding parking in Derby Road and Argyle Road and understand that the residents parking study should hope to alleviate some of the concerns that residents have in this area. I would ask that this area be regarded as a priority when it comes to the study so that we can fully understand the potential issues that might arise and that the residents of this area are kept fully up to date as to the progress of this work.

I note the questions that the Access Officer, Janet Parker, has asked and would seek confirmation that all outlined within the response will be included to prevent any discomfort to be caused to the elderly and disabled people resident in that area and also those using the route.

Many of the other thoughts that I have, have been brought up and comments and answers have been given in respect of other questions and therefore do not feel it is necessary to repeat them.

Opposition Spokesperson:

Councillor Brian Bedwell – comments as above

Advisory Members:

N/A

Local Stakeholders:

Local Stakeholders, including Council Members, Newbury Town Council, Newbury Town Centre Management Group, Local Businesses and Local Residents have been consulted as part of the statutory consultation process.

Officers Consulted:

John Ashworth, Mark Edwards, Charles Stickler

Trade Union:

N/A