

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND SPORT

TO:	TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ADVISORY PANEL		
DATE:	11 NOVEMBER 2009	AGENDA ITEM:	6
TITLE:	NEW ROAD - ACCESS ONLY RESTRICTION		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	COUNCILLOR T PAGE	PORTFOLIO:	PLANNING AND TRANSPORT
SERVICE:	TRANSPORT	WARDS:	REDLANDS
LEAD OFFICER:	SIMON BEASLEY	TEL:	0118 939 0228
JOB TITLE:	NETWORK MANAGER	E-MAIL:	simon.beasley@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report to the Panel a request for access only restriction by residents of New Road.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Panel notes the report.
- 2.2 That the following recommendation be made to Cabinet:
 - 2.2.1 That in consultation with the Chair of the Advisory Panel, Lead Councillor for Planning and Transport and Ward Councillors and the Head of Legal Services be authorised to carry out statutory consultation for access only in accordance with the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 to advertise the proposal and subject to no objections being received to implement the proposal.
 - 2.2.2 That if objections are received during the statutory consultation, those objections be reported back to a future meeting of the Panel.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 The improvement of the public highway is specified within existing Traffic Management Policies and Standards.

4. THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 New Road has been considered for formal parking restrictions within the annual SPA review several times in recent years. The main issue is with hospital and university staff, visitors and students parking within the street. There is also a concern that New Road is used as a rat run to gain access to Redlands Road particularly in the AM peak period. This rat running takes place when there is a build-up of traffic exiting Upper Redlands Road at its junction with Redlands Road. Various minor lining and waiting restriction changes have been implemented at the junction to aid visibility and turning traffic.
- 4.2 Residents permit parking has been considered in the past but residents have not supported its implementation. Currently resident permit parking rules both locally and in national legislation do not support single street schemes. However, the parking issues within New Road would be resolved by a resident permit only scheme. With the current resident permit scheme review further consideration could be given to New Road once the results of the review are known.
- 4.3 In response to recommendations to implement yellow line restrictions through the annual SPA7 review many residents objected. Many residents expressed that they did not feel that additional parking restrictions were the answer to their problems. A meeting with residents took place allowing the council to explain what is possible and to better understand expectations. The meeting was seemingly well represented where it became clear that parking remains the greatest concern for residents. However, resident permit only parking was not really offered and appeared to receive a cool response when it was mentioned.
- 4.4 Residents made it clear that they did not want anyone using New Road unless they had reason to be there. The meeting involved both the university and hospital as well as representation by the council. Both the university and the hospital responded very positively to their impact on parking within streets around the area. Both are working to reduce this impact and encourage staff and students to not bring cars into Reading. The university is promoted as a car free establishment and for students living on campus cars are banned. It was acknowledged that for students living on campus this car free policy is easy to achieve and enforce. However, for students that live off campus and where on-street parking is available, it is impossible to stop students from bring their cars into Reading. For the hospital, staff are encouraged to declare car use and register their vehicles. The hospital do carry out regular surveys of the local streets to gain an understanding of their impact and how well their parking policy

works. However, this only works as well as those that declare their vehicles and this does not extend to other visitors to the hospital.

- 4.5 The meeting was successful in the respect that appreciation was gained of the work that is happening to reduce the impact of parking within the area. However, for the residents of New Road the issues are current affecting them daily and they are keen for a solution now. Whilst there were inevitable differences in opinion residents kept coming back to finding a solution that excluded everyone else from New Road except those that had to be there. Residents centred their demand on making New Road access only as they perceive that this resolves both parking and rat running. Whilst access only may reduce rat running it would not stop any other driver from parking on-street.
- 4.6 Much time was spent explaining what access only meant and what was the likely impact should it be implemented. It was explained that access only to prevent rat running would only be effective with enforcement. Enforcement of this restriction can only be carried out by the police and that they are unlikely to be able to resource enforcement. It is unlikely that the police would support an access only restriction and that a physical restriction such as one-way or closure of one end of the street should be considered. This was discussed but residents were not keen on either one-way or a closure of one end. Furthermore, access only will not stop parking. Access only does not prevent anyone from gaining access to park. Even if access only did prohibit access to park on street it will be impossible to tell who is legitimately parked or gone off elsewhere. However, residents believe that access only will result in a reduction of both parking and rat running regardless of no enforcement and would like its introduction.
- 4.7 Initially residents offered to pay for access only themselves. But with an estimated cost of £6k to £8K dependent upon electrical costs and response to statutory consultation this has not been forthcoming. However, a small amount of developer funding has been identified to be spent specifically on traffic and parking related issues within the area. With ward members keen to resolve these long standing issues that the residents of New Road are faced with consideration to an access only restriction is requested.
- 4.8 If the panel agree to pursue this by carrying out statutory consultation residents should be reminded of the discussion at the earlier meeting. Very careful consideration should be given to wrongly raising expectation of residents in the thought that access only will resolve their concerns. It should be fully explained and documented that an access only restriction will not be supported with enforcement and therefore will have a limited, if any, impact.

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. Additional local consultation should be carried out to fully explain to residents the likely impact as appropriate.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1.1 The proposals for the movement and waiting restriction orders will be advertised under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the Traffic Management Act 2004.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The proposal will be funded by developer contributions.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

TMAP - SPA7 report and objections.