

**REPORT FOR: Traffic and Road Safety
Advisory Panel**

Date of Meeting: 5 June 2013

Subject: **INFORMATION REPORT**
Petitions relating to:

1. Walton Avenue - complaint about road humps
2. Blenheim Road - request for changes to shared parking bays
3. Milton Road - request to remove Parking Permit Zone H5
4. Reynolds Drive - request to deal with obstructive parking

Responsible Officer: Caroline Bruce - Corporate Director of Environment & Enterprise

Exempt: No

Enclosures: Appendix A - Blenheim Road parking arrangement
Appendix B - Milton Road parking arrangement

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out details of the petitions that have been received since the last meeting of TARSAP and provides details of the Council's investigations and findings where these have been undertaken.

FOR INFORMATION

Section 2 – Report

Walton Avenue – complaint about speed bumps.

- 2.1 A petition has been received from Walton Avenue containing six signatures. The petition states:

“My neighbours and myself are writing to complain about the speed bumps located in Walton Avenue. When first installed the bumps did not disrupt our lives so much but at the moment the vibrations from large vehicles going over the bumps are causing us a lot of problems and we require action to be taken urgently.

I believe the Highway Department did inspect the bumps. I would like to request that work to repair the bumps begin as soon as possible if the bumps or road surface have deteriorated. I also suggest that notices to slow down are placed near to where the bumps are. At present there is a 20 mph traffic zone notice at the beginning of the zone and there is one at the roundabout but there is not one near the bumps.

At present I am woken up every night by the vibrations and they disturb us while we are at home. We are an elderly couple and are often at home so our lives are very disrupted. I am also worried about structural damage to my property because the vibrations are so strong they cause my house to shake.”

- 2.2 The highway inspectors have inspected the road humps in Walton Avenue following the receipt of the petition and ordered repairs to those road humps that were within the council's intervention levels for reactive works to be undertaken. That work has been completed. *(BP to check)*
- 2.3 With regard to the request for additional 20mph repeater signs to be provided, unfortunately this is not possible because the road humps are within a 20mph zone and the signing regulations issued by the Department for Transport only permit 20 mph zone signs to be placed at the entry and exit points of the zone. One of the principles of a 20 mph zone is to implement an effective low speed environment that does not require excessive signing to reinforce the speed limit.

- 2.4 In respect of vibration and noise arising from road humps there have been extensive studies carried out by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) that concluded that although traffic vibration can cause severe nuisance to occupants there is no evidence that this vibration can cause structural damage to buildings. In general most of the vibration is airborne vibration which can cause windows to rattle but will not result in damage or cracking to buildings. It is therefore highly unlikely that vehicular traffic, including heavy goods vehicles, will cause any damage to property.

Blenheim Road, West Harrow - Request for changes to shared parking bays

- 2.5 A petition has been received signed by 119 customers and clients of businesses at 126 - 130 Blenheim Road West Harrow. The petition states:

“Please find enclosed a petition of 119 signed signatures by our customers/clients who are finding it increasingly difficult to park when they wish to come to the above shops/salon. We are requesting that the 3 parking bays outside the shops/salon be for pay and display only. We request the permit sign is removed from the pay and display machine. We are gradually losing customers as the road is increasingly becoming congested and with the proposal of Vaughan School being revamped we believe our businesses will be severely affected whilst undergoing building work.”

- 2.6 The background to this situation is that in 2010, following public and statutory consultation, a scheme consisting of 4 shared use bays (pay and display / permit holders) and a loading bay was implemented. This scheme was designed to remove the long stay commuter parking outside the shops and retail premises in order to make provision for customers to park and load as well as access the premises. The layout of the parking bays is shown on the plan at **Appendix A**.
- 2.7 A follow up parking review was carried out throughout the West Harrow area in 2012 after the original scheme had settled down to see if there was any need for revisions to be made, however, no requests were received.
- 2.8 Early in 2013 a request was made for some changes to the parking bays from one of the ward councillors. This appears to have been triggered as a consequence of nearby shared use parking bays in The Gardens being temporarily suspended to facilitate works on the adjacent railway embankment. Resident’s vehicles were displaced and began to lawfully park in the Blenheim Road shared use bays because of the works. The situation was also compounded by the parking of contractors’ vehicles involved in the embankment works.
- 2.9 Discussions between officers and the lead petitioners showed they were unaware of the ability of permit holders to park in the bays and they had assumed they were only available to pay and display customers. However, this shared use was clearly indicated in the consultations

undertaken with local residents and businesses prior to the implementation of the scheme as shown in Appendix A.

- 2.10 As the matter was not raised during the follow up parking review there is now no further opportunity to consider the changes in this area because it is not included within the currently agreed parking management programme of works. Making these changes is not simply a case of changing the signs, as stated in the petition, but involves advertising legal traffic orders and carrying out statutory consultation in the same method as when the bays were originally proposed and would need a budget to be assigned in order to take this forward.
- 2.11 Officers have discussed the situation with the lead ward councillor involved and it has been suggested that the changes are funded through the Neighbourhood Investment Scheme (NIS). This has been accepted in principle by the ward councillor concerned. This type of funding has been successfully utilised to take forward other small parking amendments in recent years where it has been a priority for the ward concerned. Subject to confirmation of the NIS funding levels for 2013/14 it is the intention to make an application for funds for this work. Once agreed the necessary statutory consultation will commence and proceed to implementation.
- 2.12 This amendment will prevent permit holders, mainly residents, from parking in the bays during the CPZ operational times. An assessment of bay usage has indicated that there would be adequate provision in The Gardens for permit holders to park. The amendment would not affect the ability of residents or anyone else to park in the bays outside of the CPZ operational times.
- 2.13 Panel members are asked to note the intended course of action and that the lead petitioners have been suitably advised.

Milton Road - Request to remove Permit Zone H5

- 2.14 A petition has been received signed by eight residents in Milton Road. The petition states:
- “We the undersigned, call upon Harrow Council, to abolish the new Residents/Visitors Scheme Zone H5 Milton Road, as the economic effect on our residents is severer. There is a controlled parking zone that is currently in operation on our street and introducing a permit scheme for the residential car park will mean residents who like both parking options will be charged separately to park in their front street and also in the residential car park. The residential car park is part of the facilities for Milton Road residents and is covered in our rent and service charges and if the council want to introduce a separate compulsory charge to use the car park facility then the residents believe the council will need to also conduct a review of our tenancy/leaseholder agreement as well as a review of our rent and service charges.---”*
- 2.15 The petition continues with issues relating to the maintenance of the car park and concludes:

“Furthermore, the main perpetrators of authorised vehicles in the residential car park belong to Harrow Council staff and it is wrong that residents should be the ones to pay the bill to stop council staff from parking there”

- 2.16 The background to the situation is that the car park referred to as Milton Road H5 is the responsibility of the housing department. A plan of the location is shown in **Appendix B**.
- 2.17 The housing department have over the last few years been considering how to manage a number of their car parks and have held consultations with their tenants and leaseholders over a range of options. Some years ago they appointed a private clamping contractor to deal with parking problems but this contract ran into difficulties. As the panel will be aware since autumn 2012 the use of private clamping companies has become illegal in the public sector.
- 2.18 Having considered options such as gates and bollards and investigated their implementation and running costs and the advantages and disadvantages officers in Housing considered using the council’s civil enforcement officers to manage a number of their car parks. This could be achieved by the implementation of an off-street parking order similar to that used in public council operated car parks. Housing subsequently proceeded with a scheme to implement an off-street parking order and the necessary statutory consultation process was carried out. No unresolved objections were received and following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety the scheme was implemented.
- 2.19 As this petition primarily relates to the housing department’s decision to manage the car park in this way it was referred to Housing for consideration. After due consideration the Portfolio Holder for Housing decided to proceed with implementation and enforcement of the scheme commenced in early April 2013. As a consequence of considering this petition there was a slight delay in introducing the scheme in the Milton Road site compared with the other four housing sites.
- 2.20 The scheme introduced at Milton Road housing car park requires users parked in the car park to have a permit. The parking controls on-street also requires users to have a zone C permit to park in the on-street bays. The permits in the housing car park and on-street are not interchangeable and can only be used for their designated purpose. In the CPZ in Milton Road (zone C) any valid premises within the zone can purchase a resident permit for the on-street bays (including the residents of the adjacent block of flats) whereas in the housing car park H5 only residents of the adjacent block of flats are eligible to obtain permits.
- 2.21 The costs of permits for the car park are identical to those for the on-street Controlled Parking Zones (CPZ) in the borough. Anyone contravening the car park restrictions is liable to receive a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).

- 2.22 The housing department will be monitoring the Milton Road car park over the coming months. The Panel is asked to note the situation.

Reynolds Drive - Request for Parking Controls

- 2.24 The council has received 19 identical pro forma letters from residents in Reynolds Drive that effectively constitutes a petition. The letters state:

"In Reynolds Drive we have an ongoing problem with commuter and non residents parking. Because of the present parking boxes anyone can park across our driveways which prevents us from either entering or driving out of our properties. When these boxes were introduced in 2002 we as residents were given the "choice" of either the present boxes or double yellow lines outside our homes, which we were informed would be in force 24 hours a day seven days a week 365 days a year. It seems that the boxes were installed as if in spite, continuous aprking lines either side of trees and lamp posts. No definitive parking boxes that allow residents clear access to our properties. Commuters using Queensbury station seem to think that we are their car park, they often complain to us that they cannot park in Reynolds Drive but refuse to use the station car park. Even as early as 7am some non resident "parkers" have been known to park across our driveways in the early mornings and not return for a few days. Some solution needs to be found to stop this problem and stop the obstruction of our driveways"

- 2.25 The background to this situation is that a hybrid parking scheme, not found elsewhere in the borough, was introduced over 10 years ago in an effort to meet a range of conflicting views within legislative requirements. This scheme, however, has not addressed the issues successfully and residents still have significant problems with commuter parking for the station.
- 2.26 Parking in this area has been a growing problem and has been reported to the Panel each February for a number of years. Queensbury station lies within Brent but is surrounded to the North, West and South by roads within Harrow. Brent implemented parking controls within its area in the roads immediately surrounding the station several years ago and this has had the undesirable effect of displacing parked vehicles into Harrow's roads.
- 2.27 It is obviously important that any review of parking in the area is holistic if problems are not simply to be displaced to adjoining roads. At the Panel meeting in February 2013 the Panel recommended that a comprehensive review of parking is carried out in the area around Reynolds Drive during 2013/14. This was ratified by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Safety on 7th March 2013.
- 2.28 At the time of writing this report preparations were being made for a stakeholders meeting and a public consultation. The results of consultation would subsequently be reported to future meetings of the Panel in the normal manner. All petitioners have been advised and the panel is asked to note the situation.

Section 3 – Further Information

- 3.1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Panel about any new petitions received since the last meeting. No updates on the progress made with previous petitions will be reported at future meetings as officers will liaise with the Chair of TARSAP and the Portfolio Holder directly regarding any updates.

Section 4 – Financial Implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications. Any suggested measures in the report that require further investigation would be taken forward using existing resources and funding.

Section 5 - Equalities implications

- 5.1 Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? No.
- 5.2 The petitions raise issues about existing schemes in the transportation works programme as well as new areas for investigation. The officer's response indicates a suggested way forward in each case. An equality impact assessment (EqIA) will be carried out if members subsequently decide that officers should develop detailed schemes or proposals to address any of the concerns raised in the petitions.

Section 6 – Corporate Priorities

- 6.1. Any suggested measures in the report accord with our corporate priorities:
- Keeping neighbourhoods clean, green and safe
 - United and involved communities: a Council that listens and leads
 - Supporting and protecting people who are most in need
 - Supporting our Town Centre, our local shopping centres and businesses

Section 7 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Kanta Halai	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 09/05/13		

Section 8 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

Barry Philips

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Background Papers:

TRL Report 235: Traffic Calming: Vehicle generated ground-borne vibration alongside speed control cushions and road humps

The Harrow (Housing Land Off Street Parking Places) Traffic Order 2013