

RESIDENTS CONCERNS REGARDING THE IMPACT OF LORRIES IN COWLEY MILL ROAD AND THE SURROUNDING STREETS IN UXBRIDGE SOUTH WARD

Cabinet Member	Councillor Keith Burrows
Cabinet Portfolio	Planning, Transportation and Recycling
Report Author	Alan Tilly Residents Services
Papers with report	Appendix 1. Photographs Appendix 2. Location Plan

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Purpose of report	To advise the Cabinet Member that two separate but broadly similar petitions have been received, both asking the Council to address residents' concerns regarding lorry traffic along Cowley Mill Road and the surrounding streets. Residents are concerned about the effect this is having upon road safety, residential amenity and public health.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	The petitions will be considered within the context of the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy and the transport strategy set out in Hillingdon's Local Implementation Plan.
Financial Cost	None at this stage.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents' and Environmental Services.
Ward(s) affected	Uxbridge South

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member:

- 1. Meets and discusses with petitioners their concerns regarding lorry traffic along Cowley Mill Road, Waterloo Road and Swan Bridge and the surrounding streets and the impact this is having on road safety, residential amenity and public health.**
- 2. Notes the existing availability of data that could be used to inform a transportation study in the area.**
- 3. Subject to 1, instructs officers to incorporate evidence from petitioners and to collect, collate, analyse and interpret this data and report back to him with details**

of traffic speed and volume, and in particular its effect upon road safety, residential amenity and public health together with options for effective interventions to address these matters.

Reasons for recommendation

The petitioners' complaints, coupled with the recent incident of a lorry grounding and becoming stuck on Swan Bridge, indicate that there is a case for an investigation into the movement of lorry traffic and the impact this is having upon road safety, residential amenity and public health along Cowley Mill Road and the surrounding streets.

Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)

None at this stage.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

1. This report considers two broadly similar petitions from residents in the Cowley Mill Road, South Uxbridge area raising concerns about the impact of lorry traffic on road safety, residential amenity and public health (see photograph 1, Appendix 1). In these petitions mention is made of the speed and volume of lorry traffic and the risk this poses to pedestrians and cyclists as well as sleep disturbance caused by lorries moving at night.

2. The first petition states '*We the undersigned, petition the council to restrict the speed of heavy lorries travelling through Uxbridge, along St John's and Cowley Mill Road to the so-called recycling sites on Wallingford Road, Uxbridge Industrial Estate. These lorries are driven dangerously with no consideration for others. Whether pedestrians, other road users or sleeping residents. It is unreasonable to expect us residents to put up with this situation as it now stands. The council should now restrict the speed of these lorries and ban night-time lorry movement to protect residents' health.*'

3. A view of Cowley Mill Road showing queuing traffic is shown in photograph 2 of Appendix 1.

4. The second petition states '*We the undersigned, petition the Council to consider the residents' concerns in relation to the traffic in Cowley Mill Road and Waterloo Road in Uxbridge. We are concerned about the high volume of traffic in Cowley Mills Road and Waterloo Road. We are also concerned about pedestrian and cyclist safety at the junction of Cowley Mill Road/ Waterloo Road/ access road leading to the industrial estate and Post Office Sorting Office*' (see photograph 3).

5. This petition also highlights pollution and the effect this is having on public health. This petition makes specific mention of pedestrian safety at the Cowley Mill Road/ Waterloo Road junction '*At the junction of Cowley Mill Road and Waterloo Road there are no pedestrian lights. It is not possible to see the colour of the lights, as it is a staggered junction, which means that crossing the road is hazardous. There has been an increase in the number of pedestrians crossing the junction, due to the opening of three shops at the junction, more children walking to school from the new houses and flats in Waterloo Road and more people walking to the Post*

Office Sorting depot. This petition also states that the traffic signals on Swan Bridge are not clearly visible as the lights are obscured by 'shutters.'

6. A general layout plan is attached as Appendix 2 to this report. Cowley Mill Road links St Johns Road to the west and A408 Cowley Road to the east. Approximately halfway along Cowley Mill Road Swan Bridge carries traffic over the Grand Union Canal. This bridge has a 17 tonne weight limit and there are signs warning lorry drivers that there is a risk of long vehicles grounding. These signs and their lighting conform to all the relevant standards. This bridge is narrow with traffic signals controlling one way operation (see photographs 4 and 5).

7. Cowley Mill Road west of the bridge is known as Cowley Mill Road West, with the corresponding section on the other side known as Cowley Mill Road East. Cowley Mill Road East is primarily a residential street of terraced houses. The footway is narrow and has bollards next to the kerb, many of which appear to have been hit and are now leaning at an angle (see photograph 6). Cowley Mill Road East provides access to a Post Office depot and the former British Gasworks site which now has planning approval for various industrial uses. There is also a mosque which generates considerable demand for parking on Fridays.

8. Cowley Mill Road West provides access to Uxbridge Industrial Estate and compared to Cowley Mill East there is a greater proportion of industrial units along this stretch of Cowley Mill Road. Clearly commercial premises attract a greater proportion of heavy goods traffic and it is important to ensure that this is carefully considered in context to ensure a fair balance between the need for reasonable access and the understandable desire to minimise such movements as far as practicable.

9. There are no recent traffic counts to verify the petitioners' concerns regarding the speed and volume of traffic using Cowley Mill Road, however officers' local knowledge and site visits do collectively suggest that the volume of traffic contributes to congestion and queuing. To help understand further the lorry movements in the area and the effect this is having on local residents, the Cabinet Member will recall authorising 24 hour automatic traffic speed and count surveys. These surveys have been commissioned and if available will be provided in summary form at the petition meeting.

10. St John's Road forms part of the A4007 linking Uxbridge with Slough, traffic at the junction with Cowley Mill Road West being controlled by a mini roundabout. West of the Cowley Mill Road junction, towards Uxbridge town centre, the A4007 St John's Road changes to Rockingham Road then New Windsor Street. This section of the A4007 is fronted by a mix of residential and industrial land uses. Eastbound towards Slough the A4007 travels through green belt in South Bucks District.

11. To further help understand the issues, officers have undertaken a high-level review of the background and other information available. This has to date revealed the following:-

- Cowley Mill Road forms part of an air quality management area. In June 2012 'diffusion tube' monitoring equipment was installed on Cowley Road at the eastern end of Cowley Mill Road. This will be interrogated to provide details of nitrogen oxide levels;
- Road traffic accident data by date, location, road user type and severity is available from Transport for London. A review of this has shown that over the 36 month period to 30 November 2012 there have been 18 personal injury road traffic accidents of which seventeen were slight and one serious;
- There is no noise survey information currently available;

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- Travel to school, qualitative information is available from the White Hall and St Mary Primary Schools' Travel Plans. The White Hall School Travel Plan was rewritten in September 2012. This showed that pupils living in the houses bounded by Cowley Mill Road, Waterloo Road and Austin Way walk to school through the estate and cross the River Fray using a footbridge between Austin Way and Cowley Road. This then takes them to a signalised pedestrian crossing over Cowley Road situated outside the school itself;
- Workplace travel plans exist for the Kier Park, British Gas Works site and Uxbridge Industrial Estate. These may be able to provide details of trip generation and modal split;
- Details regarding road surface and the condition of street lighting is held by the Council. For example, Rockingham Road between Trumper Way (west of Uxbridge town centre) and the Canal Bridge near Waterloo Road was recently resurfaced in March 2013;
- As noted above, fresh traffic surveys to record speed and volume have been commissioned.

9. The above outline information can be investigated in greater detail and collated, allowing officers to complete a 'desktop' study of lorry traffic movements in the area and their effect. From this traffic issues in the area would be better understood allowing a programme of interventions to be produced for the Cabinet Member to consider.

10. In the meantime, however, the specific evidence and ideas from the two sets of petitioners will provide an invaluable opportunity to help focus these further studies and ensure that residents' key concerns are understood and can be properly addressed.

Financial Implications

There are no additional financial implications arising from the recommendations of the report, as the proposed data sources for any further review are drawn from existing resources.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendations?

They will allow the Council to build an understanding of the factors giving rise to petitioners' concerns and to then produce realistic and cost effective interventions to address the reasons for the concerns.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

None at this stage

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and confirms that the financial implications arising from the recommendations set out above will be contained within existing budgets.

Legal

There are no special legal implications for the proposal, which amounts to an informal consultation. A meeting with the petitioners is perfectly legitimate as part of a listening exercise, especially where consideration of the policy, factual and engineering issues are still at a formative stage. Fairness and natural justice requires that there must be no predetermination of a decision in advance of any wider non-statutory consultation.

Should there be a decision that further measures are to be considered then the relevant statutory provisions will have to be identified and considered.

Corporate Property & Construction

There are no property implications resulting from the recommendations set out in this report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil

Appendix 1: Photographs



1. Cowley Mill Road looking east. Lorry traffic queuing during the AM peak and limited road space



2. Western access to Cowley Mill Road from St Johns showing directional signs for lorries



3 Junction Cowley Mill Road/Waterloo Road looking east. Concerns for the safety of pedestrians and cyclist crossing the junction



4. Swan Bridge over the Grand Union canal, traffic signals controlling single lane operation

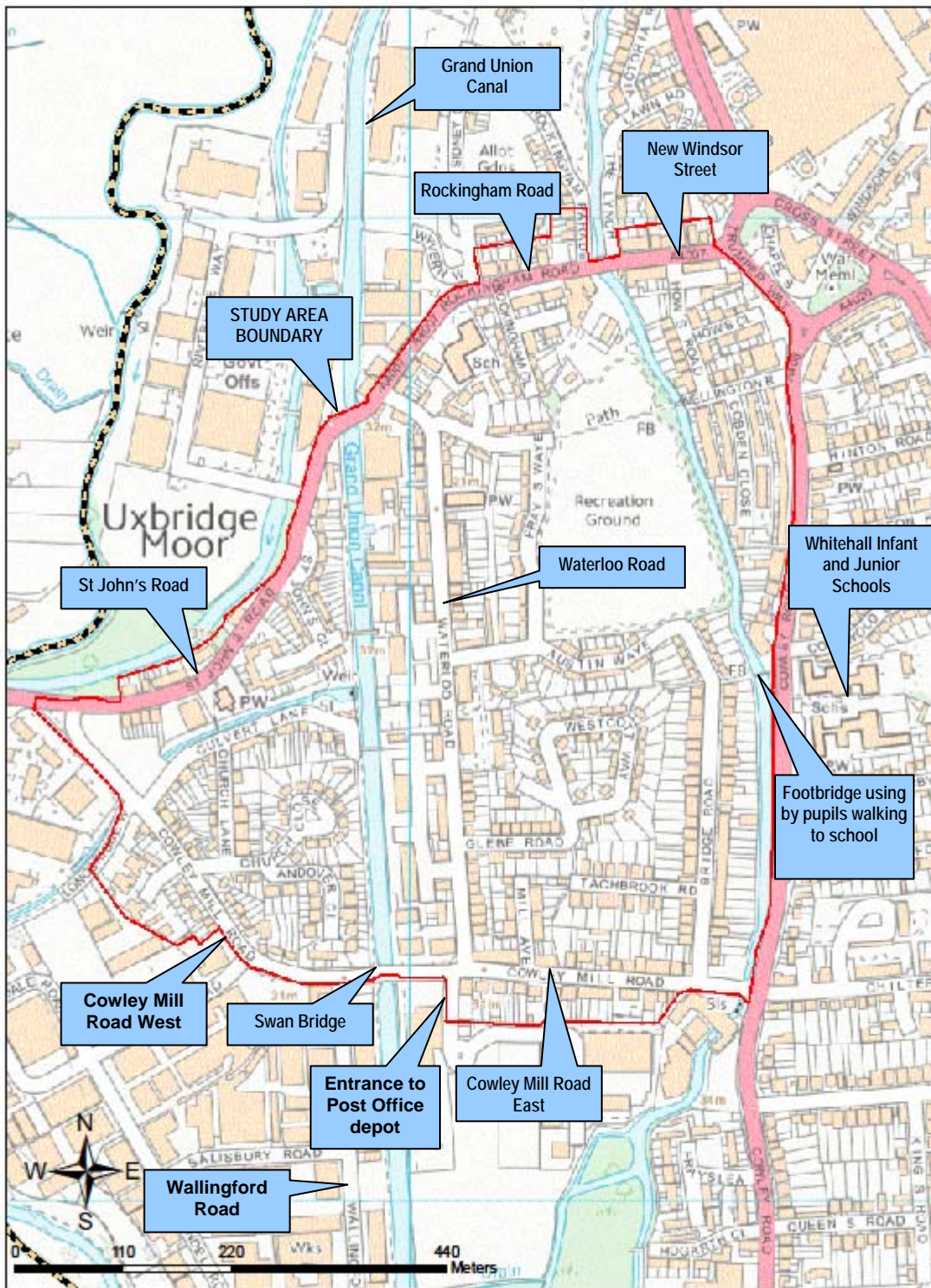


5. Swan Bridge road traffic signs and lighting conform with all relevant standards



6. Cowley Mill Road, looking east, bollards that have been hit

Appendix 2: Location Plan



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