

NORTHGATE, NORTHWOOD - PETITION REQUESTING TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES AND CAMERA ENFORCEMENT OF BANNED TURNS

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Keith Burrows
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Planning, Transportation and Recycling
Officer Contact(s)	Steven Austin, Residents Services
Papers with report	Appendix A - Location plan

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Member that the Council has received a petition requesting traffic calming measures in Northgate and camera enforcement of the banned turns from Duck's Hill Road.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	The request can be considered as part of the Council's Road Safety Programme.
Financial Cost	There are no direct costs associated with the recommendations to this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents' & Environmental Services
Ward(s) affected	Northwood Ward

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member:

1. Notes the original reason for the banned turn being introduced.
2. Subject to the above, asks officers to undertake classified traffic volume and speed survey(s) at location(s) to be agreed with the petitioners and the relevant Ward Members.
3. Subject to the above asks officers to add the petitioners' request to the Council's Road Safety Programme for further investigation.
4. Asks officers to liaise with the Metropolitan Police Service to request enforcement of the banned turn.

Reasons for recommendation

The petition hearing will provide a valuable opportunity to hear directly from the petitioners of their concerns and suggestions

Alternative options considered / risk management

None at this stage.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

1. A petition with 30 signatures has been submitted to the Council mainly signed by residents who live on Northgate but also by households in adjoining roads, requesting traffic calming measures in Northgate and the installation of a camera to enforce the banned turns from Duck's Hill Road into Northgate.
 2. Northgate is a mainly residential road that provides a link between Duck's Hill Road (A4180) which is classified as a Borough main distributor road with Copsewood Way then onto the Rickmansworth Road (A404) which is classified as a Borough strategic road. Northgate is also served by the 331 bus route.
 3. In a statement submitted with the petition residents have helpfully included two suggestions to address their concerns:-
 - *Camera installation to control the "no turn" issue through the use of fines.*
 - *Appropriate traffic calming measures to reduce excessive speeding on Northgate.*
 4. Analysis of the latest available Police recorded personal injury accident data for the three year period ending October 2014 has shown that there have been no reported collisions along Northgate, but four slight and one serious accident took place on Duck's Hill Road within a 50 metre radius of its junction with Northgate.
 5. As the Cabinet Member will be aware the banned turn was introduced in February 2002, following a review of accident trends in Hillingdon over a three year period. The junction of Duck's Hill Road and Northgate was identified as one where a higher than average number of collisions had occurred. At the time there were ten recorded collisions in the three year period prior to the scheme being implemented and there was subsequently a significant reduction to four in an equivalent time span after the scheme, which from the data available has since remained reasonably consistent.
 6. To assist with investigations concerning the speed of vehicles using Northgate, it is recommended that the Cabinet Member considers asking officers to commission independent 24 hour / 7 day vehicle speed and classification surveys at locations agreed by the petitioners and relevant Ward Councillors. It is suggested that these surveys are undertaken by the use of Automatic Traffic Counters (ATCs) which as the Cabinet Member will know, are pairs of rubber
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tubes laid across the carriageway and attached to a road-side data recorder. These types of surveys are the most reliable means of measuring traffic volumes, types and speeds over a 24-hour, seven day a week basis. The data captured will help inform any options officers could recommend to address any identified speeding issues.

7. As the Cabinet Member will be aware the enforcement of banned turns, such as the ones at the junction of Northgate and Duck's Hill Road, Northwood, used to be carried out using a mobile CCTV camera. The traffic offence is one of a group of contraventions which are known as Moving Traffic Contraventions. Cabinet agreed that the Council take over the powers to undertake the CCTV enforcement of moving traffic contraventions, including banned turns, from the police with effect from September 2006. However, in January 2008, Cabinet suspended the enforcement of these contraventions with effect from 31 January 2008. The decision was taken that the enforcement be suspended "until the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transportation and Recycling is happy that such enforcement is managed as required with a further report back to the Cabinet." This was again reviewed as recently as March 2013, and it was confirmed that there are currently no plans to change the current policy and reintroduce enforcement of this type.

8. This junction has generated a number of enquiries over the last few years. A minority of drivers do indeed flout the banned turn and the fact that there is currently no formal enforcement by the Council was rather unfortunately publicised by the local police to the local residents in 2013. However, the signs are clear and there is a traffic order in force, and so whilst some drivers ignore the ban, they surely do so in the full knowledge that they are committing an offence and so could, in theory, be liable to prosecution. It is understood that from time to time the police have undertaken some ad-hoc enforcement which they remain able to do so, subject to their own resource constraints. The vast majority of observant law abiding drivers do not make this banned turn and respect the restrictions. Should anyone cause an accident through ignoring these restrictions, then they could still be prosecuted by the police for "driving without due care and attention" or "dangerous driving". The banned turn was first introduced on road safety grounds, to tackle a pre-existing accident history and there is arguably justification for that decision in that there have been fewer accidents there since.

9. The Council recently carried out a review of a number of areas in the Borough, including the Northgate junction, where the suspension of enforcement has resulted in some contraventions. These observations confirmed that a small proportion of motorists continue to ignore the regulations. The idea of removing the restrictions has been formally put to the Metropolitan Police and the bus operators, but both were adamant that they wished to see this restriction retained on the basis that their original concerns dating from before the introduction of the restrictions remain.

10. It is therefore recommended that the Cabinet Member meets the petitioners and listens to their concerns and decides if this request should be added to the Council's Road Safety Programme for further investigation.

Financial Implications

There are none associated with the recommendations in this report. However, if the Cabinet Member approves the inclusion of the request in the Council's Road Safety Programme a suitable budget will need to be identified. As this stage the cost of possible measures is unknown and will only be determined following detailed investigation.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

To allow the Cabinet Member an opportunity to discuss in detail with petitioners their concerns

Consultation Carried Out or Required

None at this stage.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial implications set out above, noting that there are no direct costs associated with the recommendations outlined above.

Legal

There are no special legal implications with the Cabinet Member to meet and discuss with petitioners their request for the installation of cameras and traffic calming measures and to consider recommendations 1 and 3-5 above.

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.

In considering any informal consultation responses, decision makers must ensure there is a full consideration of all representations arising including those which do not accord with the officer recommendation. The decision maker must be satisfied that responses from the public are conscientiously taken into account.

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 and Construction

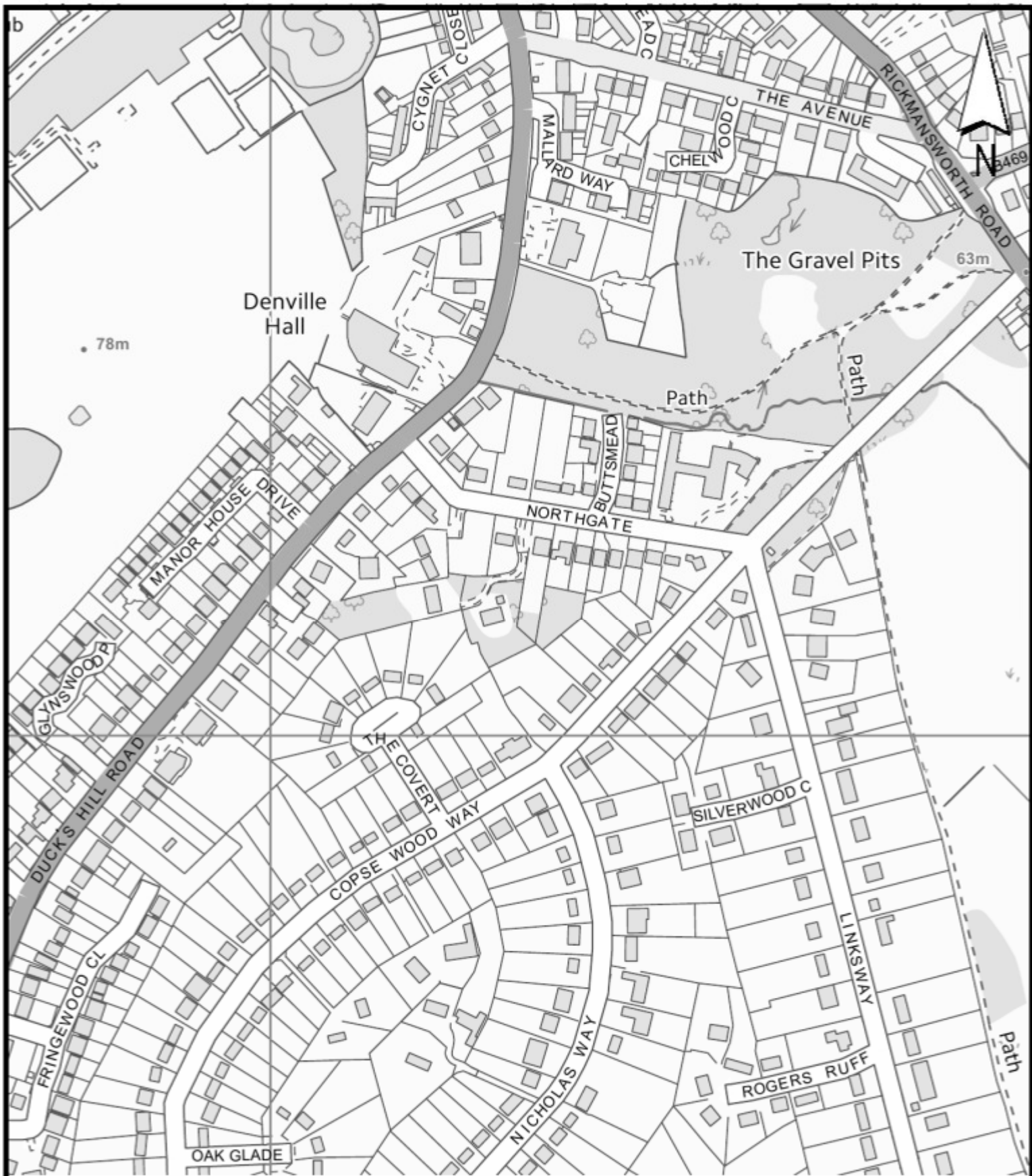
There are no property implications resulting from the recommendations set out in this report.

Relevant Service Groups

None at this stage.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.



Northgate, Northwood - Area plan

Appendix A

Date March 2015

Scale 1:4,500