

OLD MILL LANE & PACKET BOAT LANE, COWLEY - PETITION REQUESTING REVIEW OF ROAD SAFETY AND HGV MOVEMENTS

Cabinet Member(s)	Councillor Keith Burrows
Cabinet Portfolio(s)	Cabinet Member for Planning, Transportation and Recycling
Officer Contact(s)	Sophie Wilmot Residents Services
Papers with report	Appendices A & B

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	To inform the Cabinet Member that the Council has received a petition from residents requesting a review of road safety and HGV movements along Old Mill Lane and Packet Boat Lane, Cowley.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	The request can be considered as part of the Council's annual programme of road safety initiatives.
Financial Cost	The recommendation in this report is for further considerations to be undertaken by Council Officers. There will be no cost for undertaking this study other than officer time.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Residents', Education and Environmental Services.
Ward(s) affected	Uxbridge South

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Meeting with the Petitioners, the Cabinet Member:

- 1. Listens to their concerns about safety along Old Mill Lane and Packet Boat Lane and listens to their request for a review of road safety and HGV movements along these roads.**
- 2. Notes the outcome of traffic surveys which have already been undertaken, details of which are set out in the body of this report.**
- 3. Subject to the outcome of the above, considers asking officers to undertake further studies aimed at improving safety and potentially restricting HGV movements in the area and to then report back to the Cabinet Member.**

Reasons for recommendations

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

PART I - MEMBERS, PUBLIC AND PRESS

Alternative options considered / risk management

None at this stage.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

1. A petition has been received by the Council with 37 signatures from residents of Old Mill Lane and Packet Boat Lane with concerns about the number of HGVs travelling along both these roads, in particular in the very narrow section of Old Mill Lane running between the River Colne and the Fray's River.

2. The petition summarises the following safety issues:
'There are many issues regarding traffic using Old Mill Lane and Packet Boat Lane. This is historically a recreational area, as well as designated conservation area. Increasingly it is also becoming residential and the use of the area for recreation is growing too.'

There are many safety issues. These include:

- 1) *Exceptionally large vehicles, often at excess speed, often during unsocial hours;*
- 2) *Speed generally;*
- 3) *The mix of users:*
 - *Road vehicles*
 - *Bike riders*
 - *Horses and riders*
 - *Families (small children, prams etc)*
- 4) *Alcohol*

3. The petition continues to suggest why there is unwelcome traffic in the area:

- 1) *Questionable activities just off Packet Boat Lane (dumping of waste??);*
- 2) *The road is used as a cut through / rat run.*

4. The submitted petition states:

'Given the existing road, the mix of vehicular traffic, residential traffic, pedestrian (including families with prams and push chairs), horse riders, cyclists, joggers mean that this is an accident waiting to happen.

In fact it already has:

- *Horse and rider pushed into the river (witnessed)*
- *Daily incidents where pedestrians have had to move off the road to make way for oversized lorries (often moving at speed). There is no pavement, nor any room for a pavement.*
- *A police car in the river (tbc)*
- *Another vehicle in the river (2016 - witnessed)*

- *A car leaving the road at high speed to avoid pedestrians, car total write off, reported to the Environment Agency, damage to EA property (December 2015 - witnessed).*

It is highly likely that there will be a serious accident at some point soon.'

5. Packet Boat Lane runs from High Road, Cowley (A408) to where it meets Old Mill Lane at the Little Britain Lake. Old Mill Lane runs from Packet Boat Lane to Iver Lane. Old Mill Lane is a narrow lane around Little Britain Lake and alongside the River Colne and the Fray's River. The road is extremely narrow in places, typically 3m in width and single file in a number of locations. There are very limited footpaths in the area with no footpath at all present on Old Mill Lane or the section of Packet Boat Lane between Old Mill Lane and the Grand Union Canal. A location plan is provided in Appendix A.

6. There are a number of uses along both Packet Boat Lane and Old Mill Lane which have different servicing needs and require access by a range of vehicles. The uses include: residential; industrial; recreational; farming and public house / event facilities. There are a number of small industrial units in the area to which HGV traffic can be attributed and for which some access is required as part of the normal business operation of the area.

7. There are also a number of bridges in the area that may have an impact of the routing of HGV traffic. These are summarised below:

- Bridge on Iver Lane over the Grand Union Canal (owned by London Borough of Hillingdon) has a 7.5T weight limit;
- Bridge on Iver Lane over the River Fray (owned by Buckinghamshire County Council) has no weight restriction;
- Bridge on Packet Boat Lane over the Grand Union Canal (owned by London Borough of Hillingdon) has no weight restriction.

8. In order to assess the level of vehicles travelling in the area, the Cabinet Member, agreed for automated traffic counts to be undertaken. These surveys were undertaken during a one week period in June 2018. The surveys collected vehicle classification and speed data over a 24/7 period. A total of four locations were surveyed and are listed below:

- Packet Boat Lane west of A408 High Road;
- Packet Boat Lane at Marina Entrance;
- Old Mill Lane north of Packet Boat Lane;
- Old Mill Lane south of Iver Lane.

9. Tables 1 and 2 summarise the results of the vehicle classification study for all four locations. These summaries focus on the total vehicles and the number of HGVs which are classed as three axle rigid and above. The figures are the total vehicles over the course of the survey week.

	Packet Boat Lane west of A408		Packet Boat Lane at the Marina	
	Total Vehicles	3 axle rigid and above	Total Vehicles	3 axle rigid and above
Eastbound	5715	1405	4438	79
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>2%</i>
Westbound	11126	327	3489	92
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>3%</i>

	Old Mill Ln north Packet Boat Ln		Old Mill Lane south Iver Lane	
	Total Vehicles	3 axle rigid and above	Total Vehicles	3 axle rigid and above
Northbound	3264	34	2808	57
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>1%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>2%</i>
Southbound	2356	58	3710	46
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>1.3%</i>

10. The results show that there is the greatest HGV movement on the section of Packet Boat Lane between the A408 and the Grand Union Canal. This is to be expected given that this section has a large number of industrial units and, during the period of the survey, construction was underway for the redevelopment of the Union Park from offices to residential units.

11. The other sections of Packet Boat Lane and Old Mill Lane have a small percentage of HGVs in terms of overall vehicles but given the nature of some sections of the road being narrow there are sufficient HGV movements to possibly increase a perception of poor road safety and may as a consequence put people off using this as a recreational area.

12. The results shown in tables 3 and 4 below summarise the speed surveys at all four locations, the results showing the total vehicle numbers over the entire survey period. At each location the 85th percentile speed has been calculated. The Cabinet Member will be aware that the so-called 85th percentile speed is the speed at or below which 85% of traffic is travelling, and is the standard robust statistical tool used by traffic and road safety professionals when analysing speed trends.

	Packet Boat Lane west of A408				Packet Boat Lane at the Marina			
	Total Vehicles	Below 30mph	Above 30mph	85% tile	Total Vehicles	Below 30mph	Above 30mph	85% tile
Eastbound	5715	5715	0	15mph	4438	2993	1445	34mph
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>0%</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>67%</i>	<i>33%</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Westbound	11126	11125	1	19mph	3489	2866	654	31mph
<i>Percentage</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>99.99%</i>	<i>0.01%</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>82%</i>	<i>18%</i>	<i>N/A</i>

Table 4: Summary of speed surveys results for sites on Old Mill Lane, Cowley

	Old Mill Ln north Packet Boat Ln				Old Mill Lane south Iver Lane			
	Total Vehicles	Below 30mph	Above 30mph	85% tile	Total Vehicles	Below 30mph	Above 30mph	85% tile
Northbound	2785	2548	237	28mph	2808	2160	648	32mph
Percentage	100%	91%	9%	N/A	100%	77%	23%	N/A
Southbound	2356	2176	180	28mph	3710	2962	748	31mph
Percentage	100%	92%	8%	N/A	100%	80%	20%	N/A

13. The results show that the speed of vehicles on Packet Boat Lane between A408 and the Grand Union Canal have a low speed well under the 30mph limit. This area of Packet Boat Lane is also much more congested. On the other sections of Packet Boat Lane and Old Mill Lane the 85%tile speed is recorded as just below or above the 30mph limit; these results do not highlight a significant speeding issue in the area for any type of vehicle.

14. The accident data for both Old Mill Lane and Packet Boat Lane has been collected from Transport for London (TfL) for the most recent five year period available which is up to December 2017. During this five year period, a total of one personal injury accident was recorded. This is detailed below:

The sole accident occurred on 2nd April 2017 at 17:38 at the junction of Old Mill Lane 200m south of junction with Iver Lane. The incident involved two cars, one car drove into the path of another car, the first car swerved and went into a ditch. It resulted in a slight injury.

15. The results of the accident analysis do not indicate a significant road safety issue in the area. However, the recorded accident data only records accidents which result in injury and does not include damage only collisions or near misses.

16. The vehicle classification surveys shows that, although there is evidence in places of a high level of HGV use, this seems to be confined to the section of Packet Boat Lane between the A408 and the Grand Union Canal which would be expected given the high number of industrial units and the Union Park Development. The results do not suggest excessive rat running by HGVs. Along the majority of both Packet Boat Lane and Old Mill Lane there are business which potentially require access by HGVs, which could explain the HGVs recorded on these sections of road.

17. There is one section of Old Mill Lane which is particularly narrow and only suitable for the passage of one vehicle with only a couple of small potential passing places, as shown on the plan in Appendix B. This has been identified as the main section where conflicts are likely to have been experienced and where road safety concerns are the highest as there are no footpaths in the area and some pedestrian activity due to the recreation nature of Little Britain Lake and the two rivers in the area.

18. Due to the narrow nature of this section and a potential conflict between users there could be potential to explore options to improve road safety and limit HGV movements. In this section there are no properties, therefore no requirements for servicing by HGVs.

19. Based on the evidence outlined in the report, the Cabinet Member may be minded to instruct Officers to further review HGV movements and road safety in the area, focusing on the narrow section of Old Mill Lane and present a package of potential suggestions back to him, for

consideration. The petition hearing will provide an excellent opportunity to hear the testimony of petitioners which may helpfully inform such investigations.

Financial Implications

The recommendation in this report is for further considerations to be undertaken by Council Officers. There will be no cost for undertaking this study other than Officer time.

Should the results of the study result in measures to be taken forward; the cost of these will be discussed with the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transportation and Recycling. A potential source of funding for any measures could be the Council's grant allocation from Transport for London under the Local Implementation Plan. Any spend from these funds would be subject to approval under the Council's capital release process.

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 the report and concurs with the financial implications set out above that there are no financial implications arising from the proposed recommendations.

Legal

There are no special legal implications for the proposal to discuss with petitioners their request for a review of HGVs along Old Mill Lane and Packet Boat Lane, 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 require that there must be no predetermination of a decision in advance of any wider non-statutory or statutory consultation.

In considering the residents' responses, decision makers must ensure there is a full consideration of all representations arising including those which do not accord with the officer recommendations. 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 at that time.

If further advice is required, please feel free to contact legal services.

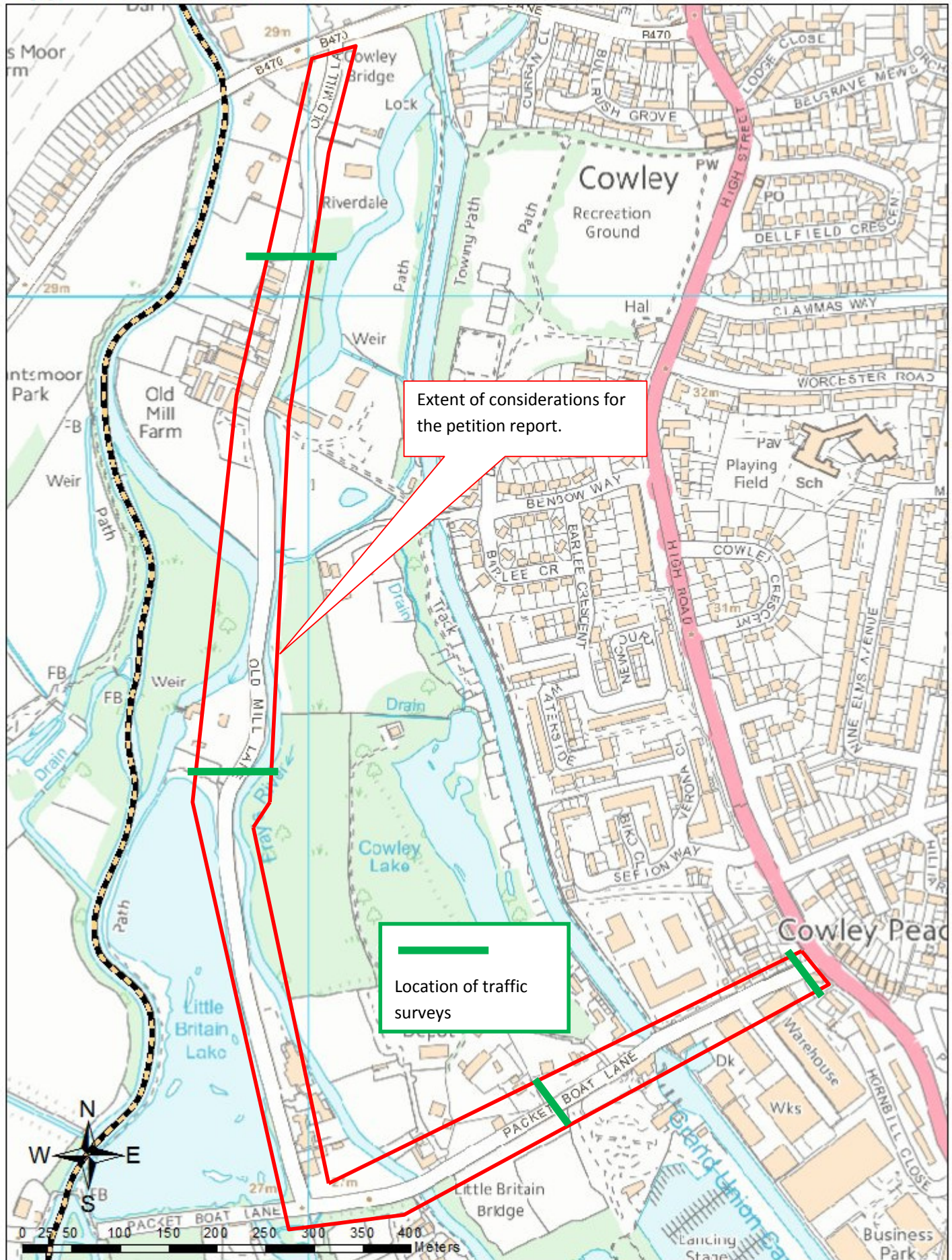
Corporate Property and Construction

There are no Corporate Property and Construction implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Petition received.

Appendix A - Location Plan



Appendix B - Proposed Study Location

