

TITLE: GATEHILL FARM ESTATE, NORTHWOOD – PETITIONS CONCERNING ROAD SAFETY MEASURES

Cabinet Portfolio

Planning and Transportation

Report Author

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Papers with report

Appendix A

HEADLINE INFORMATION**Purpose of report**

To inform the Cabinet Member that three petitions have been submitted to the Council from residents who live on or close to the Gatehill Farm Estate, Northwood. Two petitions are asking for measures to address problems associated with “rat-running” through the estate and one is requesting a previous proposed banned right turn scheme be deferred.

Contribution to our plans and strategies

The request can be considered as part of the Council’s strategy for road safety.

Financial Cost

There are none associated with the recommendations to this report.

Relevant Policy Overview Committee

Residents’ and Environmental Services

Ward(s) affected

Northwood Hills

RECOMMENDATION

That the Cabinet Member

1. **Notes the petitions and discusses with petitioners in detail their concerns with traffic using the Gatehill Farm Estate**
2. **Subject to the above asks officers to investigate measures to deal with resident’s road safety concerns and to identify suitable funding.**

INFORMATION**Reasons for recommendation**

It is clear there are concerns with road safety and rat-running through the estate particularly during morning and afternoon rush hours. Traffic measures that address rat-running are largely

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successful if they are acceptable to local residents. These can be identified with petitioners for further detailed investigation by officers within the Road Safety programme.

Alternative options considered

This will form part of the discussion with petitioners.

Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)

None at this stage

Supporting Information

1. Gatehill Farm Estate is situated in the north of the borough and is close to the boundary with Hertfordshire. The area, which the three petitions are concerned with, is indicated on the plan attached as Appendix A. The estate has been designated as an area of Special Local Character and includes areas that possess sufficient architectural, townscape and environmental quality to make them of considerable local value.
2. In May 2008 a detailed and comprehensive traffic study and analysis prepared by residents of Woodside Road was given to the council detailing residents' concerns over increasing issues of road safety and traffic volumes which they associated with "rat-running" through the estate.
3. Following site meetings with residents of Woodside Road and in consultation with local Ward Councillors, a scheme to prohibit vehicles from entering Woodside Road from Elgood Avenue was developed and an informal consultation was undertaken in June 2009. The responses received indicated 16 out of 18 households in Woodside Road supported the "No entry" proposal.
4. In November 2009 following a meeting of the Gatehill Residents Association (GRA) it was suggested to the Council that the proposed "No entry" for Woodside Road would be supported in principle by the GRA "provided it was part of an overall safety plan for the whole of the estate". The GRA was concerned the "No entry" would have the effect of pushing the rat-running traffic further into the Estate onto roads many of which have no pavements.
5. As a result of the GRA meeting, a council officer attended a meeting with a local ward councillor to consider other possible solutions to the issues previously raised, as it appeared that agreement over the implementation of the "No Entry" proposal in isolation was unlikely to be reached between Woodside Road residents and the GRA.
6. In December 2009, a petition with 22 signatures was received from residents of Woodside Road, which represents 17 out of the 18 households in the road, requesting progress on the "No Entry" sign at the Woodside Road entrance from Elgood Avenue.
7. In light of the differing views expressed by residents of the Estate, in February 2010 a meeting was arranged with representatives from Woodside Road to discuss options to

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address their road safety concerns that could provide a more acceptable solution for everyone.

8. Resulting from this meeting and after further discussions with the Gatehill Residents Association an alternative scheme was developed which was to ban the right turns from Elgood Avenue into Woodside Road and from Elgood Avenue into Gatehill Road. This proposal appeared to be a reasonable compromise that was supported by the majority of Woodside Road residents and the GRA.
9. In order for the road safety concerns to be addressed urgently it was proposed to implement this scheme by way of an experimental traffic order. This would have allowed the Council to monitor the situation and make changes in light of operational experience.
10. The scheme was scheduled to become operational on 12th April 2010 and an information letter was delivered to all properties in part of Elgood Avenue, Gate End, part of Gatehill Road, Ravenswood Park and Woodside Road on 24th March. At the same time public notices were published in the local paper and London Gazette and street notices displayed on lamp columns in the area. As a result of the publication of the notices and the letter drop, individual responses commenting on the proposals and two petitions were received
11. The first contains 77 signatures, the majority from Ravenswood Park but also signed by residents of other roads, signed under the following heading;

“We the following residents of Ravenswood Park HA6 3PR/S, call on the London Borough of Hillingdon to defer the proposal to install no right turns in Elgood Avenue, until a full and proper consultation exercise has been carried out promptly please, involving all the residents in the Gatehill Estate and Ravenswood Park”.
12. The second contains 155 signatures from households in every road on the Estate with the exception of Ravenswood Park and Woodside Road signed under the following heading;

“We, the undersigned residents of the Gatehill Estate, acknowledge that there is significant usage of parts of the Estate (the adopted part of Elgood Avenue, Woodside Road, and a portion of the adopted part of Gatehill Road) as a rat-run, posing a potential safety risk. We believe that any solution to the rat-run must be “Estate-wide”, must avoid the potential to divert traffic to the other parts of the Estate where the roads are without pavements or normal street lighting and must recognise the legitimate interests of all the affected residents”.
13. To summarise it appears from the petitions received that Woodside Road residents would like measures to improve road safety and reduce traffic volumes using the Estate but there are a range of views on what may be acceptable. Whatever measures can be developed would require consultation with local residents who would be most affected.
14. It is recommended that the Cabinet Member listens to the three petitions and seeks to agree a compromise solution that achieves the overall objectives of enhances road

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safety and reduced rat-running but which also receives the majority support from local residents.

Financial Implications

There are none associated with the recommendations to this report, however the introduction of traffic measures would require funding from an appropriate budget which could be from an allocation from Transport for London for these types of schemes.

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

To allow the Cabinet Member to discuss directly with petitioners their concerns and possible measures to address the issues.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

Consultation with local residents would be carried out if suitable traffic measures could be identified to address the petitioners concerns.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Legal

The Council's power to make orders permitting and regulating parking on the street (including pavements) are set out in Part 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The consultation and order making statutory procedures to be followed where orders are required are set out in The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedures) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 (SI 1996/2489).

Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 means that the Council must balance the views of any consultees with the statutory duty to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic.

The safety risks identified in this report are a relevant consideration in deciding whether to make an order. In considering the 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 were conscientiously taken into account.

The Cabinet member may, pending the completion of the statutory consultation for the proposed scheme, issue an executive direction not to enforce against parking infringements on the Gatehill Farm Estate. However, an executive direction given by the Cabinet member would not override the statutory powers that the police have and therefore it would be advisable for officers to inform the police of the Council's proposal not to enforce parking infringements at Gatehill Farm Estate pending the making of a formal parking order.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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Petition received 9th December 2009

Petition received 8th April 2010

Petition received 18th May 2010

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