

NORTH AVENUE AND WHEATLEY CRESCENT – CONDITION OF CARRIAGEWAY SURFACE AND FOOTWAY SURFACE AND THE PROVISION OF SPEED HUMPS

Cabinet Member

Councillor Keith Burrows

Cabinet Portfolio

Cabinet Member for Planning and Transportation

Officer Contact

Colin Stewart

Papers with report

None

HEADLINE INFORMATION

Purpose of report

This report deals with a petition signed by 34 residents of North Avenue and Wheatley Crescent, requesting that consideration be given to the condition of the carriageways and footways and the provision of speed humps in North Avenue.

The lead petitioner is Mr Howard Cox, 21 North Avenue, Hayes, Middlesex UB3 2JE.

Contribution to our plans and strategies

A safe borough, a clean and attractive borough

Financial Cost

£8.9k to resurface the carriageway in North Avenue, £18.4k to resurface the carriageway of Wheatley Crescent, a further £4.3k to reconstruct the footways in North Avenue and a provision of £1.5k for maintenance work on the footways in Wheatley Crescent based on current contract rates.

Relevant Policy Overview Committee

Residents' and Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee

Ward(s) affected

Townfield Ward

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Planning & Transportation

- 1. Notes the petition and listens to the concerns of the petitioners;**

2. Notes that officers have carried out a detailed assessment and that they recommend that the carriageways be resurfaced during a future programme.
3. Further notes that similarly, the footways have been assessed and will be included in a future programme. Officers are to explore possible resources to fund this work.
4. Considers instructing officers to undertake a classified traffic volume and speed survey before reporting back to him.

INFORMATION

Reasons for recommendation

The existing carriageway surfaces have deteriorated to the extent that shallow fretting has taken place throughout the entire length of North Avenue and Wheatley Crescent. The failure is due to the natural ageing of the bitmac surface, which is now slowly disintegrating after an estimated life of 30 to 40 years. Past patching has filled some of the worst fretting but only as a temporary measure. The extent of patching that has been carried out has had a detrimental effect to ride quality, particularly for cyclists. Resurfacing would provide a smoother, safer riding surface, maintain the asset value of the highways and improve the visual aspect of the streets.

The footways in North Avenue in particular are in a poor state of repair but this has been exacerbated by the residents driving their vehicles over a footway which has not been strengthened to take their vehicles. The footways in Wheatley Crescent require some normal, patching type, maintenance work.

Alternative options considered

Officers consider that the carriageway surface is now beyond normal patching repair and that resurfacing is the only option available.

The footway in North Avenue needs reconstruction to eliminate the additional hazards created by residents due to their use of the footway as a vehicle access route and the change in levels caused by resident's new private paving. Patching will not eliminate these hazards.

Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)

None at this stage

Supporting Information

- 1 North Avenue is a residential road, approximately 120m in length but only some 3.0m to 4.0m in width that joins Wheatley Crescent to Orchard Road. The carriageway is of rigid construction, i.e. an original concrete road that has been subsequently surfaced over with various layers of bituminous material. The uppermost layer has oxidised to the extent that potholes have appeared (Appendix 'B') as well as a general 'wearing away' of the surfacing, resulting in shallow ruts and general unevenness. The joints between the concrete panels

have failed and these need to be resealed otherwise they will be liable to let in surface water that will ultimately undermine the strength of the structural concrete layer.

- 2 Wheatley Crescent is a very similar road to North Avenue but wider at approximately 6.0m, 230m long, and forming a link between Hemmen Lane and Central Avenue. The remarks concerning the condition of the carriageway in Wheatley Crescent are the same as those for North Avenue.
- 3 Based on the results of the recent UKPMS (United Kingdom Pavement Management System) structural condition surveys, carried out on all Borough roads between November 2008 and January 2009, North Avenue and Wheatley Crescent are placed fairly low on the advised priority list for future treatment. However, roads resurfaced in any one year have been included in the highways renewal long-term programme and prioritised as a result of both planned highway structural condition surveys and “serviceability” criteria such as appearance, ride-quality etc. The number of roads resurfaced in any one year represents the most urgent works compared against need in the various areas of highway deterioration and represent a small proportion of the total programme.
- 4 At the time of the assessment prior to writing this report there was no fretting in evidence greater than 40mm, the minimum intervention level for immediate repair for dangerous defects, but there were concerns that the roughened surface could be a problem to cyclists and treatment could therefore be justified on safety grounds.
- 5 Numerous patching operations have been carried out over the years but these have primarily been of a temporary nature as the traditional patching method of cutting out neat rectangles and compacting in new material is impractical due to the age and brittleness of the surrounding material.
- 6 The footpaths in North Avenue are very narrow and have clearly been subject to extensive over riding caused by residents accessing their abutting properties. The levels between the residents’ new brick paving and the footway are different and the difference has been worsened by the residents allowing the supporting concrete to their paving spilling on to the footpath. The only effective remedial action is for the footway to be reconstructed while obtaining a contribution for strengthening the footway from each abutting resident who wishes to maintain access to their property for vehicles.
- 7 The Cabinet Member will be aware that the Council does not introduce road humps because of the level of objection both from the bus operators and the emergency services, whose response times can be seriously affected by such features.
- 8 The police reported personal injury accident data records for the 36 months period ending in December 2008 shows there have been no accidents in North Avenue or Wheatley Crescent.
- 9 Funding for traffic calming schemes is generally allocated by Transport for London (TfL). Their funding allocation is based on accident data and one of the criteria is six or more police reported personal injury accidents at the site of the proposed scheme. North Avenue with no personal injury accidents therefore does not meet the TfL criteria.

- 10 The Cabinet Member will also be aware that the Council operates a Road Safety Programme, funded from the Council's own capital reserves, and this programme allows the Council to explore road safety measures which fall outside the TfL criteria. The Cabinet Member may therefore wish to consider including North Avenue within that programme for further study, once he has heard the concerns of the petitioners
- 11 The Cabinet Member will wish to hear the views of the petitioners and, subject to that, may wish to approve a 24 hour/seven day speed and volume survey in North Avenue as part of the Road Safety Programme.

Financial Implications

In certain circumstances the Council can incur legal liability, as the Highway Authority, for loss or damages to users of the highway, as a result of not complying with their duties under the Highways Act 1980, which could result in costs being incurred by the Council in settling claims if the work is not carried out.

Officers are to explore possible resources to fund this work, for instance consideration will be given to obtaining funding from the Highways Renewal (Capital) programme or S106 funding.

Legal Implications

The Council has a statutory duty to maintain the highway under section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 (the duty). Each street must be maintained to the standard necessary to allow its ordinary traffic to pass along it. For example, there is a breach of duty in cases where danger is caused by a failure to repair.

A failure to comply with the duty leading to loss or damage to users of the highway creates a risk of legal liability for the Council.

Continued periodic inspection and the making of expeditious repairs, is sufficient to keep the highway in accordance with the necessary standard. The officer's report indicates that although the highways are not dangerous, improved ride quality would be facilitated in the longer term by resurfacing rather than a programme of continued patching. In the meantime, continued patching works may be necessary to discharge the duty.

There are competing priorities in any ongoing programme of maintenance. It is a matter for officers to recommend when the planned resurfacing should take place in the programme of highway works having regard to the legal requirement to meet the duty.

EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

The resurfacing of North Avenue and Wheatley Crescent will take into consideration the particular needs of older people and people with disabilities to provide smoother, safer highway surfaces and features.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Petition received, dated 24 September 2008.
Letter John McDonnell MP dated 16 September 2008.

APPENDIX 'B' – PHOTOGRAPHS OF EXISTING CARRIAGEWAY SURFACE – MAY 2008

North Avenue





Wheatley Crescent

PART 1 – MEMBERS, PRESS & PUBLIC
CABINER MEMBER MEETING WITH PETITIONERS 17 JUNE 2009

