

CHARLTON HAYES – HIGHWOOD ROAD, PATCHWAY: PROPOSED TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT CHANGES.

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

Introduction

In 2007, South Gloucestershire Council approved a planning application to develop the Filton Airfield “Northfield” site in Patchway.

The adopted South Gloucestershire Local Plan (January 2006) has allocated this site to provide for a major mixed-use housing and employment development up to 2,200 residential dwellings and 14 hectares of employment use.

The site is bordered by Highwood Road to the North, the operational runway of Filton aerodrome to the South, the A38 Gloucester Road to the East and Merlin Road to the West.

The planning consent for the Northfield development requires that Highwood Road becomes a single carriageway between the Standing Stone Roundabout and ‘The Boulevard’ (currently being built).

The changes to Highwood Road are as follows:

Northern half of the carriageway

- Highwood Road will become a single carriageway and accommodate two-way traffic between Standing Stone Roundabout and Coniston Road.
- Highwood Road will become a single carriageway dedicated bus and cycling route only between Coniston Road and ‘The Boulevard’.

Southern half of the carriageway

- Highwood Road will be open to local traffic from Charlton Hayes development and emergency vehicles only between Coniston Road and ‘The Boulevard’.

Highwood Road will remain a dual carriageway between ‘The Boulevard’ and Patchway Roundabout.

The proposed traffic management changes on Highwood Road, Patchway were submitted to public consultation between 16th September and 30th October 2011.

Those invited to comment were the local council members, Filton town council, Patchway town council, the emergency services, and the bus operators via email and / or posted letters. The consultation was also available for three weeks on the South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) “online consultation diary”. Traffic signs were notifying residents and road users of the consultation.

Consultation Results

During the consultation period, a total of sixty five (65) comments were received: 43 by residents or business owners located in the Patchway area, 19 by residents who are regular commuters through Patchway, a local member, and a member of Patchway Town Council.

A petition signed by approximately 700 residents in the Patchway area was also submitted.

The attached spreadsheet (see Appendix 1) provides the respondents’ details together with a summary of their views and comments. The petition and the officer’s response are also attached.

The responses resulted in the following outcome:

- 1 is satisfied with the proposals,
- 19 raised queries or suggestions on an alternative approach to the current proposals,
- and 45 objected to the proposals.

1. Consultees' queries / suggestions

Of the 19 responses received, the following points were made.

- Most consultees requested for further clarification about the proposals.
- Most consultees requested that these proposals are reviewed so Highwood Road remains accessible to all traffic between Coniston Road and 'The Boulevard'.
- Also, concerns have been raised that these proposals are not:
 - i. sufficient to address the reduction of traffic on Coniston Road and Windermere Road; or
 - ii. detailed enough to contain any increase of traffic on the adjacent residential roads; or
 - iii. satisfactory to reduce journey time between:
 - Bradley Stoke / Stoke Lodge and the Mall / M5 South, or
 - Durban / Rodway / Cranbourne / Pretoria Roads and the Mall / M5 South, or
 - Bay Tree Close / Sycamore Drive and the A38 / Aztec West Roundabout, or
 - Callicroft / Southsea Roads and the Mall / M5 South; or
 - iv. cost effective.

2. Objectors' comments

Of the 45 objections received, the following points were made.

- Do not convert the northern half carriageway of Highwood Road into a single carriageway dedicated to "bus and cycling route only" between Coniston Road and 'The Boulevard' on the northern half of Highwood Road.
- Do not implement 20mph speed on Highwood Road as this would not be appropriate for a carriageway with such layout.
- Do not decrease the current speed limit from 40mph to 30mph between Patchway Roundabout and Durban Road.

3. Objectors' suggestions

- Maintain access to all traffic between Coniston Road and 'The Boulevard' on the northern half of the carriageway of Highwood Road.
- Since the opening of Hayes Way, there has been a decrease of traffic congestion between the Mall and Patchway. Hence, it would be preferable to maintain the existing road network unchanged.
- Tackle anticipated rat running on Coniston Road.
- Implement consistent speed limits between Highwood Road and the adjacent residential roads (i.e. Coniston Road, Sycamore Drive, Durban Road, and Windermere Road).

4. Officer's comments

- The currently proposed bus route only is an intrinsic part of planning permission reference PT03/3143/O issued in March 2008. The detailed design of the bus route only and the associated Linear Park was granted planning permission in February 2011. These planning applications were subject to extensive public consultation over a number of years.
- It should be stated that the Traffic Orders recently promoted were intended to formalise the planning decision made in February 2011 to close Highwood Road to through traffic.

- The proposal has also been subject to careful traffic modelling. In the ten years following the opening of the Mall, Highwood Road was severely congested on weekends and at busy shopping times such as bank holidays. During that period residents have frequently complained of not being able to “get out of their driveways”. The principles of the road network associated with the new development were therefore carefully designed to overcome the adverse effects of that congestion on the living conditions of the existing Patchway residents. As part of the Council’s proposals Hayes Way has been built between the A38 and Cribbs Causeway (at a cost of in excess of £6M) to act as a relief road for Patchway. All through traffic will be directed to this new road thus only local Patchway traffic will enter into Highwood Road.
- While the Council is very confident that there will be no material change to traffic levels on Coniston Road, under the terms of the Section 106 Agreement attached to the planning permission, a contribution of £100,000 (plus indexing) was paid in Autumn 2009 towards traffic surveys and mitigation measures on Coniston Road. This sum can be expended on mitigation works if there is proven to be an increase in rat running. “Before” traffic surveys were carried out in 2008 and again in 2009 and an interim traffic count survey was undertaken recently. Subject to any executive decision of the Council that might be made on the current closure proposals, “after” counts will be undertaken in 2012.
- Finally, the closure is reversible; if all of the modelling proves to be wrong and members of the public are correct then Highwood Road can be reopened to all traffic.
- The whole of the Linear Park works, including the “bus and cycling route only”, will be funded by the Charlton Hayes development. The Council has made no contribution towards the works but has been paid a fee for supervising them. The administrative costs of the Traffic Regulation Orders are also paid by the developer. The Council has used officer resources to carrying out the extensive liaison process with local residents and their representatives.

Public Advertisement Stage

Following consideration of the consultation responses, the proposed waiting restrictions, bus priority measures, speed limits, signal controlled pedestrian and cycle crossings, and prohibited movements were formally advertised as statutory legal notices between 5th and 29th March 2012. A total of six (6) comments were received.

- one (1) by a member of Patchway Town Council, and
- five (5) by residents in the Patchway area.

A total of two (2) formal objections were received from local residents.

These objections will be considered by the Council in the near future with a recommendation in how to proceed in this matter.