



**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S
LOCAL COMMITTEE IN
EPSOM & EWELL**

**AMIS AVENUE & GATLEY AVENUE
ROAD CLOSURE**

23 January 2006

KEY ISSUE:

To consider closing Amis Avenue to vehicular traffic at its junction with Gatley Avenue.

SUMMARY:

Following the introduction of traffic signals at the junction of Chessington Road and Ruxley Lane, local residents have expressed concerns about vehicles using Gatley Avenue, Amis Avenue and Derek Avenue to by-pass the junction to avoid queues at peak times.

Local Residents have been consulted about a proposal to close Amis Avenue to vehicular traffic at its junction with Gatley Avenue. The majority of residents expressed support for the proposal.

This report therefore proposes that the road is initially closed on an experimental basis so that public reaction can be assessed. If no irresolvable objection is received then the closure will subsequently be made permanent.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to agree that:

- i. authorisation is given to advertise an experimental traffic order to close Amis Avenue to vehicular traffic at its junction with Gatley Avenue;
- ii. A Members' Working Group (consisting of the Chairman of the Local Committee and the local County and Borough Members) is set up to consider comments received in response to the experimental closure; and
- iii. authorisation is given to advertise a permanent closure if no irresolvable objections are received following the introduction of the experimental closure.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 As part of the development of the Horton Hospital Development site, traffic signals (including controlled crossing facilities for pedestrians) have been installed at the junction of Ruxley Lane with Chessington Road. The signals were commissioned in December 2004 at the same time the new dual carriageway section of Chessington Road (between Hook Road and Ruxley Lane) was opened to the public.
- 1.2 The signals incorporate a system known as MOVA (Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation). This reduces delays by generating signal timings that continuously vary with traffic conditions. Despite this, queuing still occurs on the approaches to the junction at peak times.
- 1.3 During the periods when vehicle queues exist some drivers by-pass the signals by using Gatley Avenue, Amis Avenue and Derek Avenue.
- 1.4 These residential roads have high levels of on-street parking. The increased traffic flows have led to constant complaints from local residents about vehicles speeding between junctions, congestion at junctions, driving on footways and increased noise and pollution.
- 1.5 Both local Councillors and residents have asked Surrey County Council to introduce measures to deter "rat running" through these local residential roads.

2. ANALYSIS

2.1 Consideration has been given to the introduction of the following measures to try and resolve the “rat running” problem:

- **Traffic Calming**

The introduction of physical traffic calming measures would reduce vehicle speeds in Gatley Avenue, Amis Avenue and Derek Avenue. However, they would not necessarily deter motorists from using these roads to avoid the signalised junction. In addition, the cost of introducing such measures would be difficult to justify in these circumstances when considering other priorities within the Borough.

- **Banned Turns/No Entry/Prohibition of Vehicles**

A traffic order could be promoted to introduce banned turns, a “No entry” system or a prohibition of vehicles (accept for access). However, the Police do not have sufficient resources to be able to treat the enforcement of such restrictions as a high priority. As such, there is a risk that some motorists would abuse them.

- **Road Closure**

A road closure to vehicular traffic could be introduced to make Gatley Avenue, Amis Avenue and Derek Avenue a no through route. Measures (such as some form of bollards and an area of raised kerbing) could be put in place at relatively low cost to ensure that the road is physically closed to motorists (whilst still maintaining access for pedestrians and cyclists).

3. CONSULTATIONS

3.1 The local County Councillor supported the option of introducing a closure to vehicular traffic and decided to consult local residents about the proposal.

3.2 A leaflet detailing the proposed closure of Amis Avenue at its junction with Gatley Avenue (the plan attached in Annexe 1 shows the location of the proposed closure) was delivered to the residents of Gatley Avenue, Amis Avenue, Derek Avenue and those cul-de-sacs adjoining them. The leaflet included a reply slip to allow residents to indicate whether or not they support the proposal and to make any further comments.

- 3.3 The following advantages and disadvantages of the proposal were detailed in the leaflet:

Advantages of the closure:

- Reduction in the amount of traffic on these residential roads and consequent reduction in noise, pollution and congestion.
- Local accountability for speeding along residential roads.
- Safer for children to play outside.

Disadvantages of the closure:

- Additional distance for some residents to travel to join either Ruxley Lane or Chessington Road.

- 3.4 A total of 430 leaflets were delivered and 182 replies were received. The table below gives a summary of the replies received:

	Number of people in favour	Percentage of people in favour
Support road closure	128	70%
Do not support road closure	49	27%
No preference indicated	5	3%

- 3.5 In response to the above results, it is proposed that Amis Avenue should be closed to vehicular traffic at its junction with Gatley Avenue. In order to allow assessment of public reaction to the closure and its impact on the surrounding road network, it is proposed that the closure will initially be made on an experimental basis.
- 3.6 Subject to the findings during the review period, a permanent traffic order can subsequently be promoted.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The total estimated cost of promoting an experimental traffic order for the closure is £2,500. The local County Councillor has agreed to meet this cost from her personal Members allowance.
- 4.2 A further £2,500 would be required to introduce physical measures at the point of closure to prevent access for motor vehicles. Subject to the agreement of the Local Committee, it is proposed that these measures would be funded from the Members capital allocation grant.

5 CONCLUSION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 During peak times vehicle queues exist on the approaches to the traffic signals at the junction of Ruxley Lane and Chessington Road.
- 5.2 In order to avoid these queues, some motorists by-pass the junction by “rat running” through Gatley Avenue, Amis Avenue and Derek Avenue. This has led to complaints from local residents and requests for the introduction of measures to address the problem.
- 5.3 Consultation leaflets were delivered to local residents requesting their views on the possible closure of Amis Avenue at its junction with Gatley Avenue. 70 percent of residents who responded to the leaflet indicated that they supported the proposal.
- 5.4 It is therefore proposed that the road is initially closed on an experimental basis so that public reaction can be assessed. If no irresolvable objection is received then the closure will subsequently be made permanent.

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Jason Gosden, Senior Engineer

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01372 832293

BACKGROUND PAPERS: None