



**OFFICER REPORT TO LOCAL COMMITTEE
(EPSOM & EWELL)**

**BLENHEIM ROAD, EPSOM
EXPERIMENTAL ROAD CLOSURE**

7 March 2011

KEY ISSUE

To consider making the Blenheim Road traffic management arrangement permanent following the expiry of the experimental traffic regulation order when it expires at the end of September 2011.

SUMMARY

An 18 month experimental point closure was placed across Blenheim Road outside the community waste centre in June 2010. Its purpose was to rationalise traffic movements within the waste site and along Blenheim Road by separating domestic and commercial users of the site. The measure was installed following concerns raised by local businesses about congestion in the road and instances of conflict between drivers attempting to enter the site at busy times.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS

The Local Committee is asked to:

- i) Agree that the arrangement becomes permanent at the end of the experimental period

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 An experimental closure of Blenheim Road was installed in June 2010 and the traffic order will expire at the end of September 2011.
- 1.2 A decision is usually made after 12 months of the experimental period. However due to objections to the arrangement an interim report was presented to the Local Committee in September 2010.
- 1.3 It was agreed to continue with the experimental traffic order for the time being.
- 1.4 Since the interim report a further letter has been received from Epsom Car Care Centre, 19a Blenheim Road, suggesting that they are still having problems with the flow of traffic.
- 1.5 In addition, a telephone call has been received from the manager of units 4-5 First Quarter (First Quarter is the name given to the collection of business units on the west side of Blenheim road between Felstead Road and the northern arm of Blenheim Road), identifying problems with trucks and low loaders turning on their premises. The practice is reported as having caused damage to paved areas and vegetation within the premises. A further call was received from Workman Commercial Property Management citing the same issue and requesting removal of the closure.

2 ANALYSIS

- 2.1 There has been one letter and two calls received since the interim report offering objection to the experimental closure. The view of staff at the waste site is that the traffic management arrangement is working well.
- 2.2 It is assumed that drivers turning HGVs in the entrance to the First Quarter business park have ignored signs indicating the road is effectively a cul-de-sac and that HGV access to the waste site is via the northern arm of Blenheim Road. Management of the waste site have assured Surrey Highways that they will permit HGVs to turn within the waste site premises.
- 2.3 It is disappointing that reports of this problem are still being received so long after the closure was initially installed when it could have been expected drivers would have become accustomed to the new road layout.
- 2.4 Despite the comments received, it is considered that the road closure works well in controlling access to the waste site and that those problems cited are due entirely to HGV drivers paying insufficient attention to road signs which have been displayed to the prescribed Department for Transport specification.

- 2.5 If the road closure is to remain, it may be possible to help the situation by offering trestle style signs to the business park indicating the entrance is unsuitable for HGVs to turn.
- 2.6 Epsom Car Care have highlighted a problem that their customers have become caught in queues to the waste site which has affected business. There has been little evidence of this from staff at the waste site but other testimony received would indicate this may become a problem at peak times (directly following a bank holiday, for example). If the problem is seen to persist, it may be possible to address it by more vigorous enforcement of parking restrictions and, perhaps, reconfiguration of road markings to help corral waiting motorists, en route to the waste site, to the near side of the road leaving scope for others to pass.

3 FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 No further work is required at this time to retain the closure although creation of a permanent traffic order opens the possibility for managers of the waste site to reconfigure the entrance to assist traffic movements.

4 EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None for the purpose of this report

5 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The triggers for the road closure initiative have included an incident outside the waste site when two drivers approaching from opposite directions were engaged in confrontation leading to serious consequences. The imposition of the road closure has reduced the likelihood of a repeat of such an incident.

6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The experimental order, after initial problems as members of the public adjusted to the new arrangements, has achieved what it set out to do. To separate the HGV commercial traffic and the general members of public using the site.
- 6.2 It is recommended that no change is made to the present access arrangements other than to make the road closure permanent as resources permit.

7 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The arrangements at the site are working well and should be permanently retained.

8 WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 8.1 Should the arrangements not be changed there is nothing to be done. However, it is proposed that at the end of the 18 month experimental period the Traffic Regulation Order will be made permanent.

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