

Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 26 February 2003

Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held on **26 February 2003** when there were present:-

Cllr P A Capon (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs R Brown (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr R A Amner
Cllr C A Hungate

Cllr P K Savill
Cllr Mrs M A Weir

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr R S Allen

SUBSTITUTES

Cllr J R F Mason

DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICERS PRESENT

R Crofts	Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)
A Bugeja	Head of Legal Services
S Fowler	Head of Administrative & Member Services
R Tatton-Bennett	Senior Engineer
M Martin	Committee Administrator

COUNTY COUNCIL OFFICERS PRESENT

N McCullagh	Area Manager, Transportation & Operational Services
L Harvey	Assistant District Engineer, County Highways

ALSO PRESENT

T Stubbington	Casualty Reduction Unit, Essex Police
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96 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2003 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

97 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr R A Amner declared an interest in the Magnolia Road item by virtue of his acquaintance with one of the residents.

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98 MAGNOLIA ROAD, HAWKWELL – PROPOSED PROHIBITION OF DRIVING

The Chairman welcomed local residents and other interested parties to the meeting and outlined the procedure, a copy of which had been provided for those present. All those who had responded to the previous consultation from the County Council had been invited to attend.

It was noted that the purpose of the meeting was to provide Members of the Committee with information and evidence concerning the request which had been made by several residents and recreational users of Magnolia Road to restrict traffic movement along the public right of way.

Background information had been provided in the form of a report, prepared by the County Council's Area Manager and a site visit had been arranged for Members of the Committee, together with Officers of the County and District Councils. Attached to the report were details of the written responses received during the informal consultation process which had taken place prior to the meeting of the Environmental Services Committee held on 5 September 2002, at which this matter had previously been considered, before being referred to this Committee for a more detailed investigation to be carried out.

Interested parties were invited to speak in favour of the proposal, during which the following comments were noted:-

- The traffic along Magnolia Road had increased greatly during recent years, together with a gradual widening of the road to the extent that it would now allow large lorries/coaches to travel the length of this road, which has resulted in erosion of verge area.
- The residents are required to maintain their own road to an acceptable standard and should be able to determine the future of the road.
- A proportion of those in favour of the proposal would support a width restriction instead of a barrier, which would prevent the traffic of vehicles larger than a car.
- A width restriction of be around 5 feet ought to be maintained, should the positioning of bollards not be the preferred option.
- Standards of car driving have deteriorated over recent years with increased speeds along this road, making for dangerous conditions for dog walkers and horse riders.
- Horse riders can't be seen by drivers coming over the railway bridge in White Hart Lane.

Interested parties were invited to speak against the proposal, during which the following comments were noted:-

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- The majority of the objectors to the proposal are the actual residents who have spent money on the upkeep of the road and would therefore wish to see access retained from both ends.
- Magnolia Road is a well used route for children going to Greensward school
- Concern that restricting the traffic movement would encourage fly tipping and the dumping of cars.
- Difficulties for the Green Goddess machines when used during the Firefighters' strike.
- The Rugby Club are now a valuable part of the community and this would affect the traffic using the Club.
- A better solution would be to widen the White Hart Lane end of Magnolia Road.
- Residents have put in an application for Footpath No 7 to be raised to bridleway status, to encourage horse riders away from using Magnolia Road.
- More traffic than is necessary uses the White Hart Lane end due to inaccuracies on many maps, which show the other end to be closed.
- If a barrier were to be considered, it ought to be at the end of Magnolia Road and not as suggested on the map, where a blind bend exists.
- Increased likelihood of flytipping and abandoned vehicles if lockable barrier introduced.

Responding to various comments, the County Council's Area Manager confirmed that-

- if a width restriction were ultimately the preferred option, a turning point at a suitable point would need to be found and advance notice would be provided.
- the use of speed humps was heavily regulated and that this would completely change the nature of the road.
- He would arrange for a speed check to measure actual speeds along the road.
- It would be difficult to impose a speed restriction, although better signage could be organised.
- The application relating to upgrading footpath No 7 to a bridleway was likely to be successful.
- The County Council acknowledges the work that has been achieved by residents.
- There is insufficient width to separate walkers and horseriders from cars.
- Ordnance Survey have been contacted with regard to rectifying maps that show the Rectory Road end of Magnolia Road to be closed.
- New signs could be erected indicating that the road is unsuitable for heavy vehicular traffic.
- The County Council could look at ways of protecting verges and ditches.

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The Police representative reported that a lockable barrier with a key would cause problems for them in the practicalities of maintaining a supply of keys to all those who might at any time be called to the scene.

Resolved

That a recommendation be deferred until the next meeting of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee, to be held on 18 March 2003, in order that adequate consideration could be given to the views expressed. (Area Highways)

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

Chairman

Date