

TAVISTOCK STREET BACKGROUND BRIEFING NOTE

Background

Environmental improvement proposals for Tavistock Street in Bletchley were initially proposed in association with the BT development proposals within Tavistock Street.

The wording of the Section 106 legal document related to the use of the developer funding was as follows:

"... the sum of £100,000 to be used by the council towards the cost of an unspecified scheme to improve traffic conditions in Tavistock Street, Bletchley, Milton Keynes"

The funding was received in August 1996 and the legal agreement stipulated that work was to commence on the scheme within 10 years.

There had been a longstanding concern that the mix of industry and residential land uses within Tavistock Street led to poor environmental conditions associated mainly with HGV flows and parking problems.

A 7.5 tonne weight limit is in operation, banning traffic from entering Tavistock Street from Victoria Road however it is well documented that this is subject to abuse despite frequent references to Thames Valley Police for increased enforcement activity.

There had been discussions for a number of years regarding the possibility of providing a link road through Goodman's Scrap yard linking Tavistock Street to Saxon Street (V7).

Development and Assessment of Proposals

Both Councillors Legg and Mabbott had raised the issue of the environmental improvements to Tavistock Street (both the severance and the possibility of the link road to V7) from 2002 onwards. In 2003/04 a Members' item was taken to Cabinet supported by deputation of local people.

A number of options relating to the provision of the link road were investigated during 2004 and early 2005 however the land immediately available (the old part of the Goodman's scrap yard site) was only sufficient to provide a one way in and out facility - in June 2005 the cost of this land was estimated at £140,000.

Additional proposals to stop Tavistock Street up and purchase land and demolish property to provide a turning head were also costed - the land costs were estimated to be of the same order, this did not include relocation of premises or construction costs.

At this time the traditional view was held that a turning head would be required if the road was to be stopped up – this was documented in a number of e-mails at the time.

Local Ward Members and the Town Council were advised by e-mail on 18 July 2005 of this information together with a number of options for alternative funding and possibilities of other measures, which might alleviate the situation. These included

- (a) Enhancing the existing weight restrictions in the area
- (b) Provision of one way systems
- (c) Provision of a width restriction

On 13 September 2005, the Town Council advised that it's Finance and General Purposes Committee had recommended that:

1. Tavistock Street is Blocked up halfway down
2. The link road with the V7 is built
3. Turning areas need to be created where the road is separated
4. North Street should be closed off at its junction with Princess Way
5. Emergency access is considered
6. Waiting restrictions are reviewed.

On 27th September, a meeting of the Fenny Stratford Resident's association was held, where this and other issues related to Tavistock Street (notably parking) were discussed. Councillors Mabbott and Gillingham attended this meeting.

Following this meeting, a more flexible and perhaps innovative view was considered, given experiences with other authorities and it was considered appropriate that with some degree of local management that it might be possible to gate the road without providing a turning area.

A number of meetings were then held between Council officers and the Town Council – these were held on 13 January, 22 February, and 2 March. (The latter meeting was attended by some members of the public from Tavistock Street and Councillor Gillingham)

At the meeting on 2 March a report was presented outlining proposed options for proceeding with environmental improvements in Tavistock Street. This is

included at **Annex A** and was reported to Local Ward Members in an e-mail dated 8 March 2006.

Consultation

As part of the consultation, residents and employers in Tavistock Street, Western Road and North Street were sent flyers advertising the public exhibition, which was held on the Borough Bus in Tavistock Street on Friday 28 and Saturday 29 of April 2006.

The exhibition on contained details of the proposals including

- (a) Stopping up Tavistock Street
- (b) Signing alternative routes
- (c) Enhancement to the cycle route between Tavistock Street and V7
- (d) Environmental improvements to Tavistock Street

125 people attended the exhibition over the two days.

Questionnaires were distributed to all who attended and the consultation, and the consultation closed on 22 May 2006. 42 responses were received, analysed and a decision was taken by Councillor Chris Williams (Portfolio member for Transport). A copy of the report considered by Councillor Williams is attached at **Annex B**.

A copy of the report was sent to local members on 3 July 2006, before the decision was taken by Councillor Williams on 14 July 2006.

Subsequent to this further representations were made to the Council by local businesses in Tavistock Street.

TAVISTOCK STREET BLETCHLEY - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

Background

Tavistock Street in Bletchley is an area of mixed land use. The western end is commercial in nature whilst the eastern end is generally residential. This does however result in a mix of traffic types throughout the road, which may at times give rise to congestion and environmental concerns.

Funds have been made available through the Planning Gain process for improvements in order to enhance the environment within Tavistock Street in Bletchley.

Initially proposals were pursued for the creation of a new link road from the western end of Tavistock Street onto V7. There is however insufficient land likely to be available for the construction of an all movement junction here and the imminent Bletchley Link Passenger Transport Corridor proposals for V7 would severely limit turning opportunities for HGV's emerging from a link and having to travel South on V7.

A range of alternative options have also been considered and discussed with the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council including

- Enhancing the existing weight restrictions in the area
- Provision of one-way or partial one-way streets
- Provision of width restrictions
- Severance partway down and the construction of turning heads to allow turning movements

None of these alternative options has however been deemed viable

Current Proposals

Recently additional traffic surveys and enquiries to the commercial premises have been undertaken and as a result the following package of options is proposed as follows.

a) Enhancements to the existing cycle and pedestrian facilities

It is proposed to enhance the facilities from Tavistock Street both northwards through the subway to V7 and westwards to Princes way. This would include

- Additional on and possibly off road facilities
- Improved surfacing
- Improved lighting
- Improved signing

b) Enhanced paving throughout Tavistock Street

Possibly supplementing planning gain available with highway maintenance funds, the footways along the whole length of Tavistock Street could be improved. It is proposed to involve MKC's Urban Design team in this process so that the scheme is not simply a maintenance replacement but rather more, an environmental enhancement scheme.

c) Severance of Tavistock Street between Residential and Commercial sections.

It is proposed, initially on an experimental basis, to close the road using lockable bollards. The exact layout and design will be challenging, as at the residential/commercial split there are a number of accesses, which are likely to constrain the layout.

There is however not sufficient highway space to construct proper turning areas at the closure point it will therefore be necessary to ensure that the carriageway is not restricted to allow cars to turn.

Signing would be significantly enhanced on both approaches to Tavistock Street to advise of the closure and an advisory HGV route signed to the Western end.

There are a number of implications, which do need to be set out as follows:

o ***Emergency Vehicles***

Emergency Controls would obviously be aware of the location of the closure however there would need to be exemptions for emergency vehicles (fire police and ambulance).

o ***Refuse and recycling vehicles***

These vehicles would not be able to turn around - there fore exemptions would need to be provided for these vehicles which would be issued with Keys.

o ***Large delivery and removal vehicles serving residents.***

Again these vehicles would not be able to turn around at the closure - it will therefore be the responsibility of the residents to advise delivery companies accordingly or to arrange to make a key available to remove the lockable bollards thereby allowing such vehicles to exit. There will need to be provisions in the Formal Traffic Order allowing nominated key holders to

permit access. There is obviously a considerable onus upon local residents to ensure that the scheme operates effectively.

- o ***"Rogue" HGV's delivering to Commercial premises in the Western end on Tavistock Street***

Regardless of the extent of advisory signing there will always be instances when large vehicles enter the eastern end of Tavistock Street in error. This is likely to result in congestion whilst the drivers determine how to proceed.

- o ***Residents would need to access and egress via Victoria Road***
- o ***There may be some detrimental impact upon North Street***

Next Steps

The three elements of the project need to be designed in detail.

In addition it will be necessary to promote a traffic regulation Order prior to closing the road.

The following steps will need to be undertaken, a rough guide as to the timescale is also included.

Once agreement to the principle of the proposals has been achieved - it is suggested that a consultation workshop (see 2 below) be arranged whereby local residents are fully involved in the initial design process.

1	<i>Initial site visits</i>	<i>End march</i>
2	<i>Initial public consultation workshop to identify options/issues</i>	<i>Early April</i>
3	<i>Design</i>	<i>End May</i>
4	<i>Consultation on design options</i>	<i>June</i>
5	<i>Commence implementation (phased)</i>	<i>August</i>

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14th July 2006
DELEGATED DECISION

Key Decision	YES
On Forward Plan	YES
Within Policy	YES
Policy Document	LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

Decision made by: - Cllr Chris Williams (Cabinet Member for Transport.)
Signed: _____ Date: 14 JULY 2006

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS - TAVISTOCK STREET,
BLETCHLEY.**

Accountable Cabinet Member: Councillor Chris Williams.
Authors: Dave Roche, Richard Duffill

1.0 Purpose

1.1 To report the outcome of the recently completed public consultation held to obtain views on the proposed environmental enhancements to Tavistock Street, Bletchley.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the following environmental enhancement proposals be implemented:

- a) An experimental Traffic Regulation Order be implemented which has the effect of severing Tavistock Street from through traffic (with exemptions for emergency vehicles, cleansing and recycling vehicles, delivery and removal vehicles).
- b) Upgrading the cycle and pedestrian link via the subway between Tavistock Street and Saxon Street (V7)
- c) Upgrading the footways and carriageway in Tavistock Street
- d) Advisory HGV signing routing HGV's to the western end of Tavistock Street

2.2 That the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer be authorised to commence all the work necessary to make the Traffic Regulation Orders required to both enable enforcement of the proposed waiting restrictions in Tavistock Street and allow severance of the road.

2.3 That following a period of monitoring of the experimental Traffic regulation Order the Head of Planning and Transport be given delegated powers to make amendments to the Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders

3.0 Issues and Choices

3.1 A sum of £133,000 has been made available from developer contributions from British Telecom for environmental improvements in Tavistock Street.

3.2 Lengthy discussions with local resident groups, Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council and the relevant elected Members resulted in the decision to use the money to finance five facets of improvement within the street. These are: -

- a) Street Severance,
- b) Parking Improvements
- c) Improvements to existing footways and pavements,
- d) Improvements to the existing cycle and pedestrian network.
- e) Advisory HGV signing scheme

3.3 During April, a public consultation was undertaken, on site in Tavistock Street, in order to obtain the views of both the residents and the businesses in the street and neighbouring streets in regard to the proposed enhancements.

3.4 The comments received during this consultation are summarised in Annex A.

3.5 The majority of residents who expressed a preference were in favour of severing Tavistock Street into two separate cul-de-sacs. In order to achieve this it will be necessary to implement an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order for a period of 18 months

3.6 It is proposed to carry out the severance at the point where the residential portion of the road meets the industrial portion adjacent to No 76 Tavistock Street; this will be controlled by a gated access point.

3.7 Emergency Services and Council cleansing service vehicles will have unimpeded access, as the lock used will be a standard 'Redway' access lock.

3.8 In order to allow removal and delivery vehicles access without the need for lorries to have to reverse along Tavistock Street and out onto Victoria Road, there is a need for the local residents to arrange a key-holder group which will allow access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

3.9 The cost of installing the barrier is estimated at £5000.

3.10 As part of the ongoing review of waiting restrictions in Bletchley various minor changes are proposed to the existing waiting restrictions throughout the road and these are fully financed by Milton Keynes Council.

3.11 It will, however, be necessary to further review the parking layout within Tavistock Street, as the severance will change the traffic and parking requirements in the street.

3.12 The existing cycle route and footway from North Street and Tavistock Street that passes through the tunnel at the bottom of Denbigh Way is currently in need of a complete refurbishment. The proposal is to construct a new Redway from the Tavistock Street end and improve the lighting both in the tunnel and alongside the newly built Redway. The route itself is a major link for pedestrians and cyclists who are heading in a north south or south north direction (to/from the Tesco supermarket). The estimated cost of this work is £24,000.

3.13 Pavement and surface improvements are planned for the whole length of Tavistock Street. This will include surface dressing both the Pavements and the Road surface after repair work has been carried out to the kerbs and where appropriate concrete entrances are removed and replaced with a bituminous surface equivalent. The cost for this work is estimated at £95,000.

3.14 HGV signing is proposed for all the surrounding main roads to guide HGV traffic away from the Tavistock Street entrance and to the North Road end of the 'Tavistock Industrial Site'. The cost of this advisory signing is estimated at £6,000.

3.15 The total cost of the works is estimated at £130,000.

4.0 Consultation Undertaken

4.1 A public consultation was undertaken, on site in Tavistock Street, using the Energiser Bus as a base. A full summary of the responses received is given in Annex A attached.

4.2 The town council and local members have been advised of the proposals and all local members have been circulated this document prior to the delegated decision being made.

5.0 Implications

5.1 Policy

There are no Policy implications.

5.2 Resources

Significant staff resources are required within both the Traffic Management and Legal Sections in order to process the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders to make both the severance and the waiting restrictions.

5.3 Legal

There are Legal requirements caused by the need to advertise the making of the Traffic Regulation Orders necessitated by both the severance and the waiting restriction amendments.

5.4 Financial

All costs will be met by the developer contributions.

Background Papers:

41 Feedback Forms received as part of the public consultation.

Letter dated 19 May 2006 from Mr P Wilkinson, Charles Head Ltd, 78 Tavistock Street.