

Halesowen Area Committee – 12th September 2006

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

A458 Between Halesowen & Stourbridge : Possible Traffic Management Measures

Purpose of Report

1. To seek Area Committee's support for an extensive public consultation in relation to proposals for the introduction of traffic management measures between Stourbridge Ring Road and the borough's Birmingham/Sandwell boundary in Quinton.

Background

2. Congestion on our roads and in our towns is getting worse year by year, costing £2.5 billion for the whole of the West Midlands Region. Congestion causes us to waste money on fuel and time stuck in traffic. Through congestion we face higher transport costs, pay more for the goods we buy and suffer the effects of poorer air quality.

The A458 is a route which suffers considerably from delay, congestion and air quality concerns.

The route passes through local areas such as the Stag and Three Horseshoes Shopping Centre, Colley Gate and Cradley and Lye. Traffic and parking problems causing delays arise on separate sections of this route at differing times of the day or evening.

It is considered that these problems of delay, congestion and air quality could be greatly relieved through the introduction of route based traffic management proposals. This would involve looking at opportunities to improve problem junctions, facilities for cyclists and pedestrians as well as local off street parking facilities.

3. Traffic management is a way of making busy roads work better for everyone – the people who travel on them, the businesses based beside them or served by them and the residents who live nearby. With the backing of effective enforcement they put a stop to motorists who park without consideration of other users blocking the flow of traffic and causing congestion and delay.

4. The proper introduction and enforcement of traffic management measures will:-
- Reduce traffic congestion
 - Improve safety for all road users through better management of conflict areas, achieving a reduction in accidents
 - Improve general traffic times and reliability – resulting in easier and less frustrating journeys for everyone, and a better quality of life for local communities along the route
 - Improve bus service speed and reliability and optimise the layout and location of bus stops
 - Provide better, safer conditions for pedestrians and cyclists
 - Improve parking enforcement and compliance
 - Improve air quality – less queuing traffic reduced traffic noise and exhaust emissions
5. One of the integral parts of such a scheme would be the introduction of measures that are easy for road users to understand and obey and which are easier to implement. It is hoped this consistency will increase public respect for such restrictions and that over time less enforcement will be required.
- Many issues that are regularly raised at Area Committee might be addressed through these traffic management proposals and the ability to obtain funding for highway, traffic management and car park schemes. In the future, the enforcement of these proposals would be through Civil Parking Enforcement.
- As such it is proposed that a traffic management scheme including the introduction of a 'Red Route' is designed to a preliminary stage which reconciles as far as practically possible the needs and interests of the communities through which it runs.
- Whilst the introduction of such proposals is some time away yet, early, full and proper consultation including local communities, their representatives and if necessary both industrial business and residents is essential.
6. Part of the purpose of this report is to open a dialogue and begin consideration of the issues involved.
7. As part of the route design public car parks and road junctions along the route would be considered for improvement, as would facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.
8. Where on-street parking is currently permitted, every effort would be made to formalise safe and appropriate parking and loading facilities, to meet local needs.
9. The attached plan and **the more detailed plans to be displayed at the meeting** indicate the likely opportunities to improve facilities along the route, but clearly these may change as part of the ongoing consultation process.

Sustainable Transport

10. Measures to assist movements by all forms of transport, and also to reduce instances of obstructive parking, support sustainable practices

Finance

11. Currently all funds for future Red Route developments would derive from the West Midlands Local Transport Plan Capital allocations.

Law

12. The Road Traffic Act 1991 permits the Council, as Highway Authority, to apply to the Secretary of State for Transport to become Special Parking Areas and Permitted Parking Areas.
13. The Council may participate in the National Parking Adjudication Service Joint Committee under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972.
14. Traffic Regulation Orders are made under powers contained in Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
15. Off-Street parking places may be provided by the Council under Sections 32 and 35 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
16. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Council to do anything calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of its functions.
17. Each Red Route proposal, or set of Red Route proposals, must be individually authorised by the Department for Transport.


Equality Impact

18. The proposal contained within this report complies with the Council's equal opportunities policy.
19. The proposal would assist pedestrian movements.
20. Visually-impaired pedestrians, young people and other vulnerable users of the public highway would benefit from vehicles not being parked on pavements, and not waiting obstructively in other areas.
21. The proposal would result in reduced congestion and delay and thereby improve journey times for all users including those on public transport.

Recommendation

22. That, having considered the contents of this report, Members support the commencement of a public consultation exercise regarding the proposals to introduce traffic management measures along the Class I A458 route between Quinton and Stourbridge Ring Road, as outlined in the report via Halesowen and Lye.

23. That the Cabinet Member for Transportation be informed of the results of your considerations.



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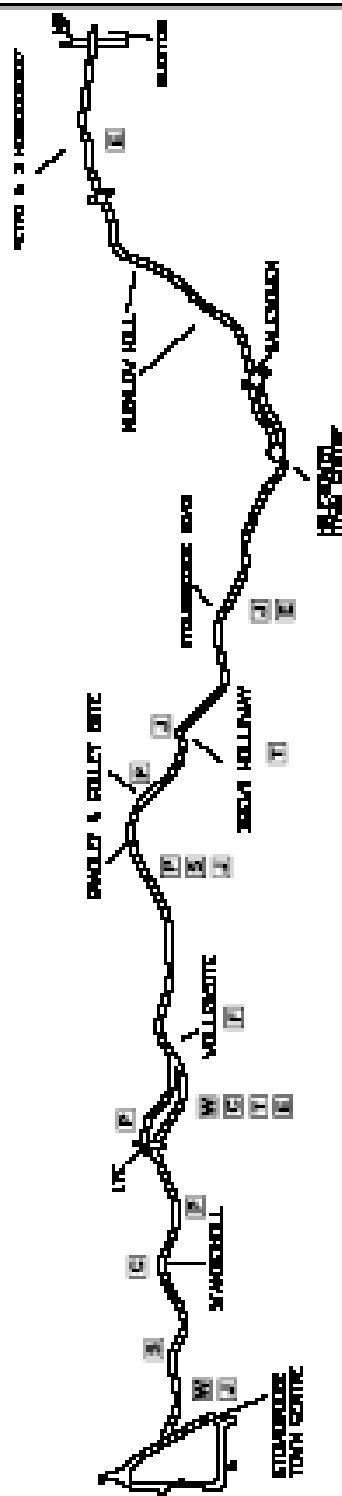
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List of Background Papers

1. Red Routes Guidelines for Implementation (Produced for CEPOG and the West Midlands Authorities)

KEY OPPORTUNITIES

- P** OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE OR IMPROVE CAR PARKS.
- X** OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP OR IMPROVE SIGNALS.
- Q** OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE JUNCTIONS.
- G** OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE OR IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS.
- W** OPPORTUNITIES TO REVIEW ON-STREET WAITING
- A** OPPORTUNITIES TO INTRODUCE NEW FOOTWAYS.
- T** OPPORTUNITIES TO REVIEW TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS.
- E** OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE LOCAL ECONOMY.



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DIRECTORATE OF THE
URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Project **A458 BETWEEN HALESOWEN & STOURBRIDGE**
Title **POSSIBLE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT MEASURES**

Drawing No.
ONE

Drawn By **JL**

Checked By **PVG**

Revision No.

Date **17/07/06**

Scale