



Minutes of the Transport Working Party

15 January 2015

-: Present :-

Councillor Pete Addis, Councillor Stephen Brooksbank, Councillor Darren Cowell, Councillor Ian Doggett, Councillor Ray Hill (Chairman), Councillor Michael Hytche and Councillor Mark Pountney

(Also in attendance: Patrick Carney, Councillor Bobbie Davies, Councillor Robert Excell, Sally Farley, William Prendergast and Kirsty Shears)

194. Apologies for absence

Sue Cheriton

Cllr Amil (Cllr Hytche in attendance as representative)

Cllr Hill opened the meeting and asked for any declaration of interest in the agenda item – Cllr Excell confirmed an interest as he owns two properties in Union Street.

195. Torquay Town Centre Access

- BP outlined to the Working Party that the report being considered is in response to Growth Deal Funding being agreed, in principle, by the Head of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to change the traffic flow into Torquay Town Centre. BP outlined the 4 options being presented in the report and confirmed the Officers recommended option is Option 1.
- BP expressed the critical timeline of the scheme with a deadline for submission of the Business Case to the Local Transport Board in March 2015.
- An overview of the Options was presented by BP and PC as detailed in the report.

Speakers at the meeting:-

- Mrs Rainbird
- Swithin Long
- Claire Hayward
- Mrs Bradford & Mr Lang Torre Traders

Mrs Rainbird (on behalf of the Pensioners)

- Mrs Rainbird expressed concern regarding increased CO₂ omissions if Option 1, 2 or 3 was approved.
- Mrs Rainbird expressed that Options 2 and 3 would delay the traffic flow with further pedestrian crossings being introduced. The reversal would create pavement pollution and a rat run and kill off local trader business.

- Mrs Rainbird expressed concern regarding 5x increased pollutants from vehicles and that the residents of Palm House would be subjected to increased traffic fumes. Mrs Rainbird was concerned with negative health effects and a black carbon problem.
- Mrs Rainbird was in favour of retaining the existing route along Lymington Road stating this is a wider tree-lined road, and that better signage could be implemented.
- Mrs Rainbird was of the opinion there is a Duty of Care for the community in Torre with reference to air pollution.

Swithin Long – Support Worker at Home Palms (Speaking on behalf of the residents from Home Palms House on Brunswick Square in Torre)

- The residents at Home Palms have perceived there has been a lack of consultation with local residents and feel the traders have been consulted with more than residents.
- Mr Long advised the surveying carried out in Brunswick car park was for 1 day and that further surveying needs to be carried out.
- Mr Long raised concern regarding refuse lorry that regularly parks on the roadside outside Home Palms due to a low canopy entrance. This currently causes traffic congestion which will be increased if the reversal goes ahead. This would also cause a problem for emergency vehicles that are often required to visit the property.
- Residents face difficulties gaining access to the House at present and fear the problems will only get worse.
- The residents are concerned regarding an increase in air pollution, where they already have to shut windows in the summer months and additional traffic will increase the problem that already exists.
- The residents suggest the local traders are against the reversal of traffic flow.
- Is the road side car park designed to cope with increased traffic?

Claire Hayward (Residents of Morgan Avenue)

- Ms Hayward confirmed a Petition has been passed to Bill Prendergast prior to the meeting. Ms Hayward raised concern that the proposed options will cause more problems than resolve outstanding issues.
- On the consultation day Ms Hayward could not find Morgan Avenue on the plans. Ms Hayward advised there are existing problems on Morgan Avenue with traffic speeding causing minor accidents and proving a danger to pedestrians, particularly children. Ms Hayward advised that the local MP and Councillors have been aware of these issues since they began recording incidents in 2009. From the petition submitted Morgan Avenue is used as rat ran. Ms Hayward was of the option if the scheme goes ahead the top of road will need to be shut off.
- Ms Hayward advised a better option would be to have the traffic go along Avenue Road rather than through Torre.
- Ms Hayward confirmed she is open to meeting with Council officers to work together regarding traffic calming rather than consulted at the last moment.

Mr Lang (Vice-Chairman of the Torre Traders Association)

- Mr Lang appreciates the fears of local residents but feels these are unfounded.

- Mr Lang does not believe there will be additional traffic past Home Palms, and that there would possibly be a slower and quieter flow of traffic.
- Mr Lang believes Torquay needs to be looked at in its entirety, particularly with the new SDLR, to ensure a main and direct route into Torbay is achieved.
- Mr Lang responded to comments previously made regarding Torre Traders not being in favour of the traffic reversal stating that regular meetings are held with the Traders and not 1 trader is against this scheme. The reversal will increase traffic past the shops and boost income.

Mrs Bradford

- Mrs Bradford confirmed she has lived and worked in Brunswick Square for many years and does not feel any more traffic will be going past Home Palms House than already. In favour of option 1.

Patrick Carney confirmed the following points raised by the speakers:

- Technically the proposed route into the Town Centre with the proposed reversal is a shorter distance than going via Lymington Road. An assessment shows the total pollution and Co2 omissions would be reduced. The increase on Union Street is correct, during am peak there is a 3 fold traffic increase going through Torre – that is the point of the scheme.
- The road past Brunswick Square car park is wide enough but there may have to be some work to thicken up the bitmac layers.
- There should not be an increase in traffic past Home Palms but the traffic flow would be on two sides.
- Morgan Avenue was not in the consultation plans as the road would not be directly affected. However there may be a possibility for traffic calming if there is some money available. PC confirmed a covert camera can be put in place to establish speeds, and once the changes are reviewed Torbay Council would be happy to works with the residents.

Discussion regarding Options in report:

- Cllr Hytche requested confirmation on the cycleway. PC advised a cycleway is already being implemented and funded from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund along Lymington Road, past the Town hall, through the town. Cyclists will be able to come in via the same route as vehicles along Union Street. Option 1 would route down Trematon Avenue to join the new cycle route. In Options 2 and 3 the route in would be past the Church.
- Councillor Cowell felt Option 3 was the best option to get the route right the first time. PC advised that with Option 3, only light vehicles will be able to turn right up Tor Hill Road. There would be concern regarding the enforcement of this issue and the danger that larger vehicles may attempt to turn right. Councillor Cowell felt there would be a mixed message at Trematon if Option 1 was progressed. PC advised the appropriate signage will be erected.
- Cllr Doggett requested clarification relating to Mrs Rainbird's comments on air pollution. The EU is soon to promote a Level 6 Omissions Standard. PC advised this is likely to be voluntary in the first instance rather statutory. In reality the No 12 buses have modern clean engines and in relation to other

HGV's there are standards in place through the MOT process that control emissions.

- PC confirmed in relation to Mr Long's concerns regarding emergency vehicles using the highway outside House Palms, this could be looked at with a view to localised widening and that these comments will be taken on board.
- Cllr Addis agreed the current situation is not acceptable and there is a need for a direct route to the town centre. Councillor Addis requested clarification why Option 1 is preferred over Option 3. PC advised that both Options are physically possible, but officers have some concerns relating to Option 3. The advantages of Option 1 are that this route would take the vehicles past the entrance to the Town Hall car park, past access to the Haldon Centre car park up Castle Road, and towards the Lower Union Lane car park entrance. Option 3 would require additional traffic signals and a further set is not preferred. With Option 3 the road widths will vary between 5.7 to 6m on Union Street and in the Manual for Streets, it stipulates a minimum of 5.5m for two way traffic, which is kerb to kerb. When vehicles are parked on one side of the road, you lose up to 300mm, and getting out of vehicles onto the oncoming traffic is a cause for concern. The final point is the effect on the Castle Circus junction. If Option 3 was progressed more footway would be lost. There is concern coming down Union Street that you will not be able to turn right up Tor Hill Road and will have to go through the Town Centre to reach a car park. With Option 3 there would be signals at Trematon and more at Castle Circus, where Option 1 would provide free flow for traffic all the way into the town centre (apart from the pedestrian crossing).
- PC confirmed there has been no input from the emergency services at this point – their views have been requested.
- Cllr Excell reiterated that Morgan Avenue is a busy street particularly in the summer months and is used as a rat run, this needs to be looked at. Councillor Davies agreed and is keen to get a camera in place to view the traffic flow 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and would like this to be part of the design process.
- PC confirmed if Option 1 is chosen there will be an additional option in the detailed design between a give way or a merge as outlined in Appendix 4.

Recommendation:

Councillor M Hytche proposed Option 1; Councillor I Doggett seconded. Cllr Addis and Cllr Brooksbank were also in support of Option 1.

Councillor M Pountney and Councillor D Cowell voted against Option 1.

Motion carried: Option 1 to be progressed.

196. Any Other Business

None

197. Date of Next Meeting

18th June 2015, 4.00pm, Meadfoot Room, Town Hall.