

Agenda Item No: 11
Report To: Joint Transportation Board
Date: Tuesday 11th December 2012
Report Title: Willesborough Lees Highway Safety Scheme (Amendment 26) Update Report
Report Author: Ray Wilkinson (01233) 330299



Summary:	This report outlines the progress on the formal public consultation on the Willesborough Lees Safety Scheme since the Board's meeting of 11 th September 2012 at which it was agreed that the consultation take place.
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Key Decision: NO

Affected Wards: North Willesborough, Highfield

Recommendations: **The Board be asked to:-
Consider and note the content of the report.**

Background Papers: 'Willesborough Lees Safety Scheme Proposals' report to Joint Transportation Board 11th September 2012, minutes of Joint Transportation Board 11th September 2012

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Purpose of the Report

1. This report outlines the progress on the formal public consultation on the Willesborough Lees Safety Scheme since the Board's meeting of 11th September 2012 at which it was agreed that consultation take place.

The Consultation

2. Following the decision of the Board on 11th September 2012, a formal public consultation was held between 18th October and 9th November. A notice announcing the intention to make a traffic order was placed in the local KM newspaper detailing where the deposit documents could be found and how to make a representation. Copies of the notice were also placed in all affected roads and all residents / businesses in the vicinity of the proposals (a total of 465) were written to explaining the scheme and consultation process.
3. The deposit documents (copies of the notice of intention, statement of reasons, plan, proposed traffic order, relevant existing traffic orders and JTB report and minutes) were made available in hard copy format at Ashford Gateway Plus and Sessions House, Maidstone and in electronic format on the Ashford Borough Council website.

Consultation Responses

4. During the consultation a total of 59 pre-populated objection letters were received in addition to the individual email / letter responses. It is understood that a local resident disseminated these pre-populated letters across the scheme area. The pre-populated letter was addressed to Ashford Borough Council and contained sections for the recipient to fill out their name and address and sign and date the letter. The body of the letter consisted of a list of reasons for objection and a second list composed of preferred alternative restrictions (each presumably for the recipient to ring / tick / cross through as appropriate) and finally a section for any additional comments.
5. Analysis of the pre-populated letters found that many are difficult to interpret because they either contain conflicting statements, the correspondent appears to have misunderstood the proposals or to have been confused over what different types of restriction mean. A total of 29 of the respondees did not tick / ring / cross through or annotate any of the options relating to either the reasons for objection or preferred alternatives.
6. In addition there also appears to have been some confusion among residents over the pre-populated objection letter and alternative proposals put forward

by a local resident and the proposals and formal public consultation held by ABC.

7. In order to ensure that the views of all respondees are fully understood Officers are therefore in the process of writing to all those who have submitted a response requiring some clarification.

Other Progress Made

8. In addition to the above discussed consultation, 2 meetings have been held between Officers and East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust since the last meeting of the Board in September. These meetings have proved to be extremely positive and it is anticipated that further details will be made available for update at the meeting.

Next Step

9. Due to the additional time required in order to clarify some of the responses received, it is intended to present a report to the Board with a full analysis of responses received for decision at a special meeting in February 2012.

Conclusion

10. As discussed above, Officers are currently working to resolve any confusion in respect to the representations received during the recent formal consultation on the Willesborough Lees Safety Scheme. The results of the consultation will then be presented to the special meeting of the Board in February 2013 for decision.

Portfolio Holder's Views

11. The Portfolio Holder's views were not available at the time of publication and will therefore be provided verbally at the meeting.

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