

HIGHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

9 July 2013

REPORT

Subject Heading:

Adoption of a 'link' road and parking improvements for the Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch

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The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Clean, safe and green borough	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Excellence in education and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opportunities for all through economic, social and cultural activity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Value and enhance the life of every individual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
High customer satisfaction and a stable council tax	<input type="checkbox"/>

SUMMARY

This report deals with the outcome of a consultation relating to a proposed parking management scheme on the two roads outside the Queen's Theatre (one linking Billet Lane and North Street, one in front of the theatre) and one-way working on the road outside the theatre and recommends implementation of the scheme. These proposals are linked to the imminent adoption of the two roads as public highways maintainable at public expense.

The scheme is within **St Andrews** ward.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee having considered the responses and information set out in this report recommends to the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment that the measures as listed in Appendix A (Schedules 1 to 5) of this report are implemented and the necessary traffic orders are made.
 - 'At Any' time waiting and loading restrictions to enhance highway safety in various places along the 'link' roads;
 - Loading bay in the 'link' road between Billet Lane & North Street;
 - Stopping for 5 minutes maximum by the recycling centre;
 - Stopping to drop off/ pick up parking bay in the 'link' road fronting the theatre entrance for 10 minutes maximum;
 - Impose one-way traffic flow in the road fronting The Queen's theatre;
 - 3 blue badge parking bays in the 'link' road fronting the theatre entrance;
 - Free parking bays in areas not subject to other controls.
2. That the Committee recommends to the Cabinet Member for Community Empowerment a name for 'link' road between Billet Lane and North Street, from the list of prospective road names included in section 6 of this report.
3. That it be noted the cost of carrying out the works is £8,000 which can be met by the Council's Revenue budget for Minor Improvements on Borough Roads

REPORT DETAIL

1. **Background**
 - 1.1 This report deals with proposals for formalising a parking management scheme for the two unnamed roads adjacent to the Queen's Theatre which are due to be adopted in the near future. One road links Billet Lane and North Street and for the convenience of this report it will be referred to as the 'link' road until such time when the Committee Members recommend an appropriate road name. The other road connects the 'link' road to Billet Lane and passes in front of the Queen's Theatre.

1.2 Both roads are owned by the Council and currently managed by Culture and Leisure Services. They are considered to be public highways maintainable at private expense, but given the ownership, it would be more appropriate for the roads to be managed by Streetcare acting in the Council's interests as Highway Authority in terms of being subject to routine inspections, deal with defence of claims arising from defects and so roads are to be adopted in the near future through powers delegated to the Head of Streetcare.

2. Existing traffic conditions in Billet Lane and North Street, Hornchurch

2.1 North Street and Billet Lane handle considerable amount of both local and through traffic. Traffic is permitted in both directions and both roads are connected to A124 Hornchurch High Street in the south and at a gyratory with Butts Green Road in the north. The 'link' road on the north side of the Queen's theatre connects Billet Lane and North Street. It also provides an access to the Billet Lane public car park and a direct access to the road in front of the theatre.

2.2 This section of Hornchurch mainly comprises of residential properties and businesses. These include Sainsbury's, Iceland, estate agents and various restaurants. There is also the Queen's Theatre, Hornchurch Library, Fire Brigade, Langtons House, Fairkytes Art Centre and Craft Gallery. All these businesses and organisations attract significant number of customers and delivery of goods through out the day.

Public Transport facilities in North Street, Hornchurch

2.3 North Street in Hornchurch conveys high frequency of bus services namely 165 (10), 256 (10) and 370 (6) and 646 which operates during school term times only. This equates to 26 buses per hour travelling in both directions. The figures in the bracket indicate number of buses operating per hour in both directions.

2.4 Emerson Park station is within close vicinity of the Queen's theatre and is on the main rail line services between Romford and Upminster. At Upminster, there are further services connecting to Fenchurch Street and Southend-on-Sea.

3. Proposed Changes

Several measures have been identified and these are explained in details below:

3.1 Proposals to convert existing road fronting the theatre to one -way system

It is proposed to convert the existing road fronting The Queen's Theatre to one way system. The section of the road in question is between the 'link' road and Billet Lane. Traffic will be permitted to enter via the 'link' road and exit at its southern end. This arrangement would create road

space to provide parking bays for blue-badge holders, a drop off and pick up point (10 minutes maximum stay) and provision of free parking bays which may be used by anybody.

3.2 Proposed loading bay in the 'link' road between Billet Lane and North Street, Hornchurch

Currently, there is no dedicated loading bay in the 'link' road. The delivery vehicles serving the theatre park in the road which in turn disrupts the traffic flow. In view of the situation, it is proposed to provide a loading bay in the 'link' road. The bay will be installed on the north side of the theatre as shown on drawing no.QH083-of-201. The loading bay will permit free loading for a maximum period of 20 minutes with no return within 1 hour. The loading bay will operate 24 hours, throughout the week.

4. Provision of stopping for 5 minutes by the recycling centre

As part of the proposals, it is proposed to provide a free short term stopping facility by the recycling centre. Drivers will be allowed to stop free of charge for 5 minutes to use the recycling centre or as a 'kiss and ride' to drop off or collect passengers (who may be visiting the theatre and other local attractions). The proposals are shown on drawing no. QH083-of-201.

5. Proposed 'At Any' time waiting restrictions

5.1 The existing parking restrictions vary in both Billet Lane and North Street. Generally, the parking restrictions apply from Monday to Saturdays, 08:30 am to 06:30pm. The restrictions close to the Queen's theatre apply from 8am to 8pm to avoid any illegal parking, particularly in the evenings when the performances are taking place.

5.2 The existing parking restrictions and the parking facilities in the 'link' road and the road fronting the theatre are not supported by traffic management orders. These were merely provided as deterrence to prevent illegal parking at potential locations, but have proved to be ineffective.

5.3 It is proposed to provide 'At Any' time waiting and loading restrictions at potential locations with a view to prevent inconsiderate parking and enhancing road safety. The proposals are shown on drawing no. QH083-of-201.

6. Suggested road names for unnamed 'link' road, Hornchurch

6.1 During the feasibility studies it was considered necessary to designate a name to the 'link' road which connects with Billet Lane and North Street in Hornchurch. This would make it easier for the Council to define parking controls, maintain street records etc.

6.2 Below is a list of some suggested road names for the 'link' road provided by the Council's Legal services. A brief detail is also provided as the road

names in the borough are generally associated with the local importance as far as possible.

- i) **Drama Road** – The name is associated with stage shows, performances etc held at the Queen's Theatre.
- ii) **Players Road** – The name is associated with actors, players, performers, entertainers etc.
- iii) **Thespian Road** – As above.
- iv) **Theatre Road** - The name is associated with live performances held at the Queen's Theatre.

Members are requested to select an appropriate road name from the above list so that the Council's Legal Services can designate it in the Council's Highway Register and appropriate street signs are installed at both entrances of the road.

7. **Outcome of the consultation**

- 7.1 Approximately, 100 letters were hand delivered in the consultation area and the proposals were also advertised in the Romford Recorder on 24th May 2013, London Gazette and site notices were displayed in the immediate area of the Queen's theatre. In addition to the above, the emergency services ie the Metropolitan Police, Hornchurch Fire Brigade and London Ambulance services were consulted. Ward Members of St. Andrews were also consulted.
- 7.2 The closing date for receiving any comments was set for 21st June 2013. Only 4 responses were received which relates to 4% of the letters delivered.
- 7.3 The responses received were analysed carefully and a summary of comments is included in appendix B of this report.

8. **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the proposals be implemented as advertised and consulted. The measures are included in schedule of proposals in Appendix A of the report and are shown on drawing no. QH083-of-201, attached to this report.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial Implications and risks:

It is estimated that the cost to implement the measures is £8,000, which would be met from the Council's Revenue budget for Minor Improvements on Borough Roads.

The costs shown are an estimate of the full costs of the scheme, should it be implemented. A final decision would be made by the Lead Member – as regards actual implementation and scheme detail. Therefore, final costs are subject to change.

This is a standard project for Streetcare and there is no expectation that the works cannot be contained within the cost estimate. There is an element of contingency built into the financial estimate. In the unlikely event of an over spend the balance would need to be contained within the overall Streetcare revenue budget.

Legal Implications and risks:

Parking restrictions, parking bays, loading bays and one-way working require advertisement and consultation of proposals before a decision can be taken prior to their implementation.

Human Resources Implications and risks:

The proposal can be delivered within the standard resourcing within Streetcare, and has no specific impact on staffing/HR issues.

Equalities Implications and risks:

The Council has a general duty under the Equality Act of 2010 to ensure that its highway network is accessible to all users. Where infrastructure is provided or substantially upgraded, reasonable adjustments should be made to improve access. In considering the impacts and making improvements for people with protected characteristics (mainly, but not limited to disabled people, the young and older people), this will assist the Council in meeting its duty under the Act.

Loading restrictions do not allow parking by blue-badge holders, but are sometimes necessary in order to maintain traffic flow, traffic capacity or to improve road safety by preventing all parking in key locations. This scheme provides parking for blue-badge holders.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Scheme project file: QH083 – Queen’s Theatre road adoption.

Appendix A

Draft schedule for recommendations

- 'At Any' time waiting and loading restrictions to enhance highway safety in various places along the 'link' roads;
- Loading bay in the 'link' road between Billet Lane & North Street;
- Stopping for 5 minutes maximum by the recycling centre;
- Stopping to drop off/ pick up parking bay in the 'link' road fronting the theatre entrance for 10 minutes maximum;
- One way traffic flow in the road fronting The Queen's Theatre;
- 3 blue badge parking bays in the 'link' road fronting the theatre entrance;
- Free parking bays in areas not subject to other controls.

Schedule of Proposals

Schedule 1: Waiting and loading restrictions operative between 8:00 am and 6:30 pm, on Mondays and Saturdays

North Street, Hornchurch, the west side, between a point 8 metres south of the unnamed access road leading to the rear of The Queen's Theatre and a point 15 metres north of the northern kerb-line of the 'link' road.

The 'link' road

- (a) the north side
 - (i) between the eastern kerb-line of Billet Lane and a point 10 metres east of the eastern kerb-line of the exit from the Billet Lane car park;
 - (ii) between a point 31 metres west of the western kerb-line of North Street and a point 37 metres west of the western kerb-line of North Street;
 - (iii) between the western kerb-line of North Street and a point 16 metres west of that kerb-line.

- (b) the south side
 - (i) between the eastern kerb-line of Billet Lane and a point 10 metres east of the eastern kerb-line of the unnamed road fronting The Queen's Theatre;
 - (ii) between the western kerb-line of North Street and a point 15 metres west of that kerb-line.

The unnamed road fronting The Queen's Theatre

- (a) the east side
 - (i) between the southern kerb-line of the 'link' road and a point 8.4 metres south of that kerb-line;
 - (ii) between the eastern kerb-line of Billet Lane and a point 10 metres north-east of that kerb-line;
- (b) the whole of the west side.

Schedule 2: Provision of loading bay, operative at any time

The 'link' road, the south side, from a point 10 metres east of the eastern kerb-line of the unnamed road fronting Queen's Theatre extending eastward for a distance of 15 metres.

Schedule 3: No stopping restrictions operative at any time.

Schedule 3A: The unnamed road fronting The Queen's Theatre, the east side, from a point 28.2 metres south of the southern kerb-line of the 'link' road, extending southward for a distance 18 metres.

Schedule 3B: The 'link' road, the north side, from a point 16 metres west of the western kerb-line of North Street extending westward for a distance of 15 metres.

Schedule 4: designation of free parking places

The 'link' road

- (a) the south side, from a point 15 metres west of the western kerb-line of North Street extending westward for a distance of 38 metres;
- (b) the north side, from a point 37 metres west of the western kerb-line of North Street extending westward for a distance of 19.35 metres.

The unnamed road fronting The Queen's Theatre, the east side, from a point 46.2 metres south of the southern kerb-line of the 'link' road extending southward for a distance of 21 metres.

Schedule 5: Disabled Persons Parking Places, Monday to Saturdays 8a.m. to 6.30p.m.

The unnamed road fronting The Queen's Theatre, the east side, from a point 8.4 metres south of the southern kerb-line of the 'link' road extending southward for a distance of 19.8 metres.

Appendix B: Summary of consultation

1. Summary of consultation responses

1.1 The Metropolitan Police and London Buses responded that they have no comments on the proposals as presented to them.

1.2 The manager of the Queen's theatre responded on following grounds:

- Appreciated the concept of the consultation.
- Broadly agrees with the proposals. Had queried about the parking for staff and suggested that coaches are allowed to park in the road fronting the Queen's theatre.

Staff comments: The manager was advised that the proposals include free parking bays which will allow the staff to gain access on a first come first served basis at the following locations:

- i) Free parking in the link road, south side ie on the side of the theatre.
- ii) 3/4 parking bays have been proposed in the road fronting the theatre.

In regards to provisions for coach and bus parking in the road fronting the theatre, the manager was informed to apply for a temporary order for a road closure to facilitate events. Such procedure has been carried out in the past in hosting events such as Safe Drive Stay Alive. As the proposals include the provisions for disabled parking bays, a drop off point and free parking bays, it is not possible to provide a coach drop off point.

1.3 A resident of Wedlake Close has objected the proposals on the following grounds:

- Over the past 38 years or more, the system of link roads have operated successfully around the Queen's Theatre and has required no involvement of the local authority.
- The respondent considers that there is no reason why the proposed enforceable changes are being considered by the Traffic and Engineering department of the Council particularly in view of the temporary causes. With the unnecessary work proposed are clearly not required with the present situation operating successfully with savings to the council tax payer in the present economic climate and obligations to save money.
- The respondent considers that conversion of private roads to highways in the past, parking charges and other restrictions introduced by the Council

in the ward is unhelpful and obstructive to community life. There appears to be no reasonable justification to accept or support the proposals, which appear to be introduced at this time on the back of the recent town refurbishment and temporary diversions.

- It may be advantageous to the community, users of the Queen's Theatre and the public passing through Billet Lane to assist traffic flow and road safety. For consideration and consultation to be given to parking outside the Fairkytes Hall, the Hermitage and other buildings adjacent. With passing traffic both ways and vehicles attempting to turn left and right into Billet Lane after travelling from North Street.
- In the public interest and road safety, further potential hazards may well exist with buses parked at the stop outside the Job Centre in North Street. With vehicles turning left out of Sainsbury's car park and vehicle pulling round to overtake parked buses. Equally buses parked on the Sainsbury's car park side stop and vehicle pulling round parked buses at this location can present a hazard to vehicles leaving the car park.

Staff comments: The proposals in general will remain the same (parking for disabled, no parking charges in the 'link' road) with the exception of converting the road fronting the Queen's theatre to one way, provision of a loading bay and restricting waiting time at the mini-recycling bay.

Apart from enforcing the parking restrictions, the two roads are being adopted by the Highway Authority as they are best able to manage the roads as the highway authority, rather than the current situation which is operates ad hoc and not enforceable. Furthermore, this will enable the Council to apply the highway law.

In regards to traffic overtaking parked buses outside the Job Centre and traffic emerging from the Sainsbury car park, the existing stops have been in operation since several years. Both the Council and London Buses (LB) have not received any complaints about the potential accidents. LB has informed that buses on route 252 were temporarily permitted to park at the existing bus stop outside the Job Centre whilst the works at Hornchurch High Street were in progress. As the works have now been completed, buses do not park at existing stop.

Taking the last issue about cars turning out of Sainsbury car park in relation to buses parked at the existing bus stop in North Street, this arrangement has been in operation over several years. Buses generally wait very briefly to drop or collect passengers and it is up to the drivers exiting from Sainsbury's car park to ensure that it is safe for them to exit after the bus has departed.

Appendix C

Proposed layout drawings

QH083-of-201