

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal
Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 14 March 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Policy and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Transportation

SUBJECT: Petition requesting the building of a car park,
parking spaces and road widening, Gorsewood
Road & St. Martins Lane, Murdishaw, Runcorn

WARDS: Norton North & Norton South

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To report on a petition that has been received, requesting a car park be built, extra parking spaces be provided, and road widening take place at Gorsewood Road/St. Martins Lane, Murdishaw in the area of the central 'square' adjacent to the Health Centre, St. Martins R.C. Primary School and Gorsewood Primary School.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) the petitioner's request for a car park to be built, extra car parking spaces to be provided and for road widening to take place at Gorsewood Road/St. Martins Lane, Murdishaw in the area of the central 'square' adjacent to the Murdishaw Health Centre be refused, as the areas in question are not in the ownership of the Council; and**
- (2) the lead petitioner be informed accordingly.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 A 352 name petition has been received, requesting a car park be built, extra parking spaces be provided, and road widening take place at Gorsewood Road/St. Martins Lane, Murdishaw in the area of the central 'square' adjacent to the Health Centre, St. Martins R.C. Primary School and Gorsewood Primary School. A copy of the front pages of the petition, including a drawing prepared by the lead petitioner setting out the areas in question will be available at the meeting. Alternative plans of the area are attached, annotated to mirror the petitioner's drawing.
- 3.2 At school opening and closing times the Gorsewood Road/St. Martins Lane route, which gives access to the Health Centre and two primary schools adjacent to the central Gorsewood Road 'square' does become extremely busy and traffic has to proceed through the route at low speeds. There are inadequate parking spaces available for the number

of drivers wishing to reach the schools. However, over the five years 2006 to 2010, there were no reported road traffic accidents resulting in injury on Gorsewood Road or St. Martins Lane.

- 3.3 This Council promotes sustainable modes of transport to schools and continues to seek ways of increasing the proportion of children who chose to walk, cycle and use public transport. Increasing the volume of parking available and otherwise facilitating car transport to schools would be contrary to this approach.

4.0 EVALUATION AND RESPONSES TO ACTIONS REQUESTED

- 4.1 Construction of a new parking area as requested in the petition.

Clarification of the location for the requested car park has been sought from the lead petitioner and this is marked on Drg. No. 9088 attached. The area in question is not in the ownership of this Council, but is owned by Liverpool Housing Trust. The trust have been sent copies of the petition and other associated information, to enable them to consider the request. A verbal response has been received indicating the Trust is not in a position to finance construction of a new car park and a written response has been requested. Halton Council do not own any of the land in the immediate area.

- 4.2 Extension of existing car parking areas to provide extra spaces.

The areas in question are marked on the petitioner's drawing within and also on Drg. No. 9088 attached. These areas are not in the ownership of this Council, but are owned by Liverpool Housing Trust or Halton and St. Helens Primary Care Trust. Both organisations have been sent copies of the petition and other associated information, to enable them to consider the request. A verbal response has been received indicating neither is in a position to finance construction of new parking spaces, and a written response has been requested.

- 4.3 Carriageway widening as requested in the petition.

The area in question is marked on the petitioner's drawing within and also on Drg. No. 9088 attached. This area is not in the ownership of this Council, but is owned by Halton and St. Helens Primary Care Trust. The Trust has been sent copies of the petition and other associated information, to enable them to consider the request. A verbal response has been received indicating the Trust is not prepared to accede to this request and a written response has been requested. The Trust has agreed to cut back vegetation on the corner to improve sightlines across the corner.

- 4.4 Observations on Parking Situation.

Whilst the central "square" at the junction of St. Martins Lane and Gorsewood Road does become extremely congested at school opening and closing times, it is not felt that the carriageway needs

widening as the current traffic system operates acceptably, with the intended narrowness of the route serving to restrict vehicle speeds. Over the five years 2006 to 2010, there were no reported road traffic accidents resulting in injury on Gorsewood Road or St. Martins Lane.

4.5 Making the Gorsewood Road/St. Martins Lane Route One-Way.

This option was investigated with a view to improving traffic flows through the area at critical times, and consultation has been undertaken with Cheshire Police and ward Councillors. This proposal did not prove acceptable because it would have caused inconvenience to a large number of residents, could create congestion at the Gorsewood Road/Murdishaw Avenue or St. Martins Lane/Aldersgate Avenue junctions and removal of the likelihood of oncoming traffic would have led to an increase in traffic speeds. There is no proven history of traffic danger on this route, possibly because of the very low speeds at which traffic travels due to the frequent congestion near the central "square" by the Health Centre. Drg. No. 9089 in the appendix refers.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no policy implications.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct financial, social inclusion, best value, legal or crime and disorder implications resulting from this report.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People in Halton

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Children and Young People in Halton' priority.

7.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton' priority.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

This Council promotes healthy and sustainable modes of transport to schools and continues to seek ways of increasing the proportion of children who chose to walk, cycle and use public transport. Increasing the volume of parking available and hence facilitating increased car transport to schools would be contrary to this approach.

7.4 A Safer Halton

There is no established road traffic accident history on Gorsewood Road/St. Martins Lane that would justify extra parking or road widening. Introducing a one-way system would reduce the inherent safety of this route by permitting higher vehicle speeds.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

There are no direct implications on the Council's 'Halton's Urban Renewal'.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 The narrowness of the Gorsewood Road/St. Martins Lane road system and restricted parking space lead to reduced traffic speeds and there is no history of traffic accidents on this route. The recommendations seek to maintain this situation and there are no associated risks. No full risk assessment is required.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Petition	Traffic Section, Rutland House	Steve Johnson