

Investigation Report into Pedestrian Safety at and across the Delivery Service Area off Lord's Hill Centre East; serving those business within Units 1 to 17 Lord's Hill District Centre



Purpose of Report: To comply with a directive from the Planning & Rights of Way Panel at its meeting 23rd November 2010

SCC Officer: Dave Blakeway: Rights of Way Officer (Tel. 023 8083 3987)

Date of Report: January 2011

Aim: To present collated evidence relating to pedestrian and vehicular traffic movement at the site described above.

Objective: To inform the Planning & Rights of Way Panel as to the safety issues associated with pedestrian use of the right of way, (as determined by Panel, 23rd November 2010).

Summary: This investigation looked at three themes;

- i. Statistical data relating to reported / known incidents / accidents that have occurred in and around the Service Area;
- ii. Vehicular Traffic movement to and from the Service Area; and
- iii. Statistical data relating to pedestrian use of the footpath.

It has not referred to any records that may have been made by local businesses relating to such incidents which may or may not have been reported to the Health & Safety Executive as part of Health & Safety at Work Reporting Procedures.

Conclusions: That there has not been any serious incident or number of incidents to warrant the obstruction of the footpath.

That any inherent risk in using the original route had been accepted by users, irrespective of increased traffic movement over the last 25 years.

That risks associated with traffic movement, considered as high importance by the land owner / occupier, were not so severe as to warrant the closure of the route.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 An application was made to record a route as a public footpath on Southampton's Definitive Map and Statement – the legal record of public rights of way. The application and its supporting evidence were presented to Panel on 23rd November 2010.
- 1.2 At that meeting, the recommendation contained in the Panel Report was accepted, being that, on the balance of probability, a public right subsists, or is reasonable alleged to subsist, over the route and that it should be added to the Definitive Map & Statement, (Panel Minute 93).

- 1.3 In furtherance of that, Panel sought further information, being a report on the options available that would facilitate both the inclusion of the right of way on the Definitive Map.
- 1.4 In support of this, Panel also requested that a secondary report be submitted that considered the safety issue of pedestrian use of the footpath which had initially prompted the action of obstructing it in September 2009.

2. Statistical Data relating to Reported Incidents or Accidents

- 2.1 On the 24th November 2010, a request was sent to relevant officers within this Council, seeking data on Reported Incidents and Traffic Movement pertaining to the site.
- 2.2 Statistical data relating to any incident or accident in and around the Delivery Service Area is non-existent.
- 2.3 Records held by this Council or its Highways Partner, Balfour Beatty, are concerned with those incidents that occur on the public highway only and do not include any incidents that may have occurred on private land.
- 2.4 The only recorded accident occurring since January 2000 involved two vehicles at the junction of Hornchurch Road and Lord's Hill Centre East, when one vehicle failed to give way.
- 2.5 There are no recorded pedestrian incidents in Lord's Hill Centre East between the junctions of Hornchurch Road and Tangmere Drive.
- 2.6 The information above as supplied 7th December 2010 by Balfour Beatty / Southampton Highways Partnership.
- 2.7 The local beat Police Officer supplied data that solely contained anti-social and criminal activity in the immediate area and which did not include accidents involving pedestrians and vehicles, none being recorded.

3. Vehicular Traffic Movement to and from Service Area

- 3.1 Data that demonstrates the quantity and type of vehicular traffic movement initially proved non-existent.
- 3.2 There has not been any prior requirement to undertake a vehicle count and therefore reliance was placed on making enquiry of those businesses that use the Delivery Area.
- 3.3 On the 24th November 2010, letters were sent to the six businesses that abut the Service Area.
- 3.4 Requests for such data resulted in one response that detailed three deliveries a week.

- 3.5 In light of the lack of statistical data, it had been left to conjecture as to the volume of traffic which is alleged to have increased mainly due to the expansion of the Sainsbury's store and its Home Delivery Service.
- 3.6 However, following consultation on the findings of this report, traffic movement data applicable to J Sainsbury's was supplied and which indicates substantial flow over any given week:
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| Sunday: | 12 Vehicle Movements between 0900-1600 |
| Monday: | 26 Vehicle Movements between 0800-2200 |
| Tuesday: | 34 Vehicle Movements between 0800-2300 |
| Wednesday: | 34 Vehicle Movements between 0800-2300 |
| Thursday: | 34 Vehicle Movements between 0800-2300 |
| Friday: | 32 Vehicle Movements between 0800-2300 |
| Saturday: | 22 Vehicle Movements between 0800-2300 |
- 3.7 No Traffic Movement count has been authorised or carried out by the City Council as part of this investigation.

4. Statistical Data relating to Pedestrian Use

- 4.1 Statistical evidence relating to pedestrian use is extremely thin; being that no data was ever required or collated prior to the obstruction September 2009.
- 4.2 Following the installation of the barrier, there has been no use of the route, so a user-count cannot be established
- 4.3 The only evidence collated has been the review of User Evidence Forms and correspondence that were submitted as part of the application to have the route added to the Definitive Map & Statement.
- 4.4 Use of the route by all those submitting evidence in support of the Schedule 14 Application was on foot and that 24 witnesses have used the route for, at least, the last 20 years
- 4.5 This indicates that there has been an acceptance by users that the route entails the crossing of the Delivery Service Area concourse.
- 4.6 That acceptance seems to have been perpetuated by the land owners / occupiers in that they either carried out or allowed to be carried out the improvements and enhancements that had been made to the path during its existence.

5. Summary

- 5.1 There is no substantive, indicative data on any incidents or accidents involving pedestrians and vehicles that have been facilitated by use of the footpath, and no quantitative evidence regarding traffic movement.
- 5.2 There is evidence of use which accepts the apparent risk of crossing the main concrete concourse to and from the Service Delivery Area.

- 5.3 That with only the one minor incident that occurred in March 2009, this appears to be the sole reason for obstructing the route by installing additional railings across the gap.
- 5.4 That the risks to users of the original / obstructed footpath, considered as high importance by the land owner / occupier, were not so severe as to warrant the obstruction of the route.
- 5.5 That with the alleged increase of traffic movement, pedestrian safety is still very much at the forefront of the land owner / occupier regarding use of the footpath and which needs to be addressed when determining which option, (to record an alignment of a footpath on the Definitive Map), is acceptable to all parties.

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