

**SPEAKERS PANEL
(PLANNING)**

13 December 2023

Commenced: 10:00am

Terminated: 12:45pm

Present: **Councillor McNally (Chair)**
Councillors Affleck, Bowerman, Dickinson, Owen, Quinn and Ricci

Apologies: **Councillors Boyle and Pearce**

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members of the Panel.

32. MINUTES

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting held on 22 November 2023, having been circulated, were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

33. OBJECTIONS TO THE PROPOSED TAMESIDE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH (ALT HILL LANE & HILL ROAD AREA, ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE)(PROHIBITION OF DRIVING)(EXPERIMENTAL) ORDER 2022

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods outlining the objections received to the proposed prohibition of driving order on Alt Hill Lane and Hill Road in Ashton-under-Lyne.

Members were informed that Alt Hill Lane was adopted highway in the Waterloo Road ward of Ashton-under-Lyne that formed part of a link between Lees Road (B6194) and Oldham Road (A627). The road was a typical country lane lined mainly with farmland and provided access to a working farm and approximately 50 dwellings. It was highlighted that the lane had very few footways and several sections of single width carriageway that could be daunting to negotiate and potentially dangerous when meeting a vehicle travelling in the opposite direction.

In comparison to most other roads within the borough, a high proportion of walkers, cyclists and equestrians regularly used both Alt Hill Lane and Alt Hill Road. Members were advised that feedback from residents and users of both routes suggested that these modes of sustainable travel had increased significantly since the roads had been closed on an experimental basis.

The Panel was informed that prior to the road closures being implemented, residents of Alt Hill Lane consistently reported to the Council the problems that they were experiencing with traffic, including speeding, 'rat running', congestion at peak times, conflicts between motorists, 'near misses' with vulnerable road users, property damage and a high incidence of 'damage only' incidents. Residents had provided evidence to substantiate their concerns and following onsite observations by the Council, as Highway Authority, it was agreed that some of sort intervention was needed.

It was explained that in December 2021 the Council wrote to the immediate residents of Alt Hill Lane and Alt Hill Road with regard to the introduction of a potential traffic calming scheme. The letter outlined various measures for controlling the traffic but it was ultimately deemed that a prohibition of driving order (road closure) on Alt Hill Lane would be the best measure to provide some realistic improvement.

As part of the initial engagement, residents were surveyed, firstly to gauge their support for a road closure generally and secondly to establish the preferred location for the road to be closed. Of the 52 questionnaires issued, 33 were returned. The results showed that the vast majority (88%) of residents who returned their questionnaires voted in favour of a road closure. Option 1 favoured a road closure from a point 67 metres west of Alt Hill Road for a distance of 150 metres in a westerly direction.

The reporting officer explained that 'Option 1' would be the preferred location for a road closure given that this section of Alt Hill Lane was single track, with no footway and a flagstone retaining wall that could make it difficult for vulnerable road users to avoid vehicular traffic. In addition, closing the road at the mid-section of Alt Hill Lane would likely lessen the impact of the diversion route for affected residents. Following feedback and comments from all parties, it was determined that further discussion was required.

On 13 May 2022, the immediate the residents of Alt Hill Lane and Alt Hill Road were invited to attend a residents meeting with officers from Engineering Services and the Waterloo Ward Members to discuss the matter further. Due to issues with 'Option 1', it was determined by a show of hands to trial a road closure at 'Option 2' (a road closure from Park Bridge Road to the access road leading to Westerhill) as it was the only workable option for Alt Hill Farm. It was considered that a closure at any point along Alt Hill Lane would be preferable to the current situation.

Following this meeting, it was advised that a Delegated Officer Decision Notice was duly drafted seeking approval from the Director of Place to introduce an experimental prohibition of driving orders on both Alt Hill Lane and Alt Hill Road, Ashton-under-Lyne. In October 2022, approval was given for the relevant legal processes to commence.

The experimental prohibition of driving orders on Alt Hill Lane and Alt Hill Road were made on 7 December 2022 and advertised on 8 December 2022, with both road closures coming into effect on 20 December 2022. The prohibition of driving order on Alt Hill Lane had been achieved by the imposition of a 'modal filter' in the form of planters. Pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians were still able to pass the point.

The prohibition of driving order on Alt Hill Road had been achieved by means of 2-in-1 gates comprising of lockable field gates that could be opened by authorised users only and a self-closing gate equipped with bridleway handle and easy-access latch.

It was highlighted that during the six month consultation period, 58 formal objections to the experimental prohibition of driving orders on Alt Hill Lane and Alt Hill Road being made permanent were received by the Council. A representative from the 'Alt Lane Group' also submitted an informal petition signed by 66 people. A summary of the submitted objections was outlined to Members:

- A detrimental increase in both the speed and volume of traffic using Mill Brow and Alt Lane, Oldham.
- A displacement of traffic elsewhere on the road network.
- Inconvenience caused by the road closure.
- Concern regarding access for emergency service vehicles and response times.

- An increase in anti-social behaviour and illegal activities in the Park Bridge area.
- A claim that the road closures have or will lead to increased fly tipping within the area.
- Questioned the legal and democratic processes for the experimental prohibition of driving orders (road closures) and the apparent lack of consultation with both Oldham Council and the wider community.
- Concern that motorbikes and off road bikes were still using Alt Hill Lane.
- Concern that Alt Hill Lane would be difficult to navigate in the winter months in icy road conditions.
- Concern that house prices within the area would be affected.

Gordon Anderson, Head of Highways at Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, and Carolyn Blain, a local resident, addressed the Panel objecting to the application.

In response to the objections, the Head of Engineering Services explained that prior to Alt Hill Lane being close to through traffic, approximately 1,000 vehicles per day were using the road and it was therefore inevitable that the closure would result in traffic being dispersed elsewhere on the network where alternative routes were sought. Although no formal traffic counts had been commissioned to date, onsite observations at peak times suggested that there had been no significant increase in speed or congestion on Lees Road/Broadoak Road; St Albans Avenue/Gambrel Bank Road; or Cranbourne Road since the road closures were implemented or that any of these road were at capacity.

It was highlighted that since the experimental closures came into operation, there had no longer been reports of vehicles being driven at inappropriate speeds and there was no longer any congestion or conflicts between motorists as a consequence. In addition, there was a perceived improvement in air quality and heavy plant and HGVs were now using the more appropriate, strategic routes. Positively, there had been no reports of 'near misses' with vulnerable road users, 'damage only accidents' or damage to property from vehicle strikes.

Concerning fly-tipping, this appeared to have visibly reduced and there had been a perceived increase in road safety. Greater Manchester Police confirmed that to date, they had received no official reports of anti-social behaviour or any other illegal activities on Alt Hill Lane, aside from neighbour disputes and a report of damage to one of the planters.

Since the closure, it was reported that there had been a significant increase in walkers, cyclists and equestrians using both routes to access Park Bridge, Daisy Nook, Hartshead Pike and to link with Route 626 of the National Cycle Network.

As per Council protocols, the police, fire and ambulance services were all formally notified 10 days prior to the road closures on Alt Hill Lane and Alt Hill Road coming into operation, so that they could adjust their protocols accordingly. It was reported that, to date, no issues with regard to access or response times had been reported to the Council by any of these services. However, a resident of Alt Hill Lane brought a recent incident to Highway's attention and the Council made contact with the ambulance service to provide additional information for their route planning and navigation systems.

Members were informed that given the close proximity of the road closures to the Tameside/Oldham boundary, Tameside Council had been in regular contact with Oldham Council both prior to and after the experimental road closures were implemented to discuss the progress of the scheme. Despite maintaining their objection and expressing that it would be their preference for the physical measures along Alt Hill Lane and Alt Hill Road to be removed, Oldham Council were continuing to look for a practical solution to address the traffic issues on Alt Lane, Oldham.

Panel was advised there was no evidence to suggest that property values within the area had or would be positively or negatively affected by the road closures.

The reporting officer explained that during the six-month consultation period, the Council had also received 77 expressions of support for the scheme to be made permanent. Those that wrote in support of the schemes expressed their gratitude for the road closures, which they said had resolved the long-standing traffic issues on Alt Hill Lane and restored the area to a rural haven that both residents and leisure users could now enjoy.

Lee Woods, a local resident, addressed the Panel in support of the proposals.

Regarding funding for the proposals, the reporting officer advised that the total cost of implementing the scheme, inclusive of material costs was £12,000. This was funded from capital monies associated with Traffic Regulation Orders. The cost of advertising a permanent scheme would be approximately £300.

RESOLVED

That the Panel review the objections and comments received during the six-month consultation period for the experimental prohibition of driving orders on Alt Hill Lane and Alt Hill Road, Ashton-under-Lyne and that the experimental orders be made permanent.

34. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Panel gave consideration to the schedule of applications submitted and it was:-

RESOLVED

That the applications for planning permission be determined as detailed below:-

Name and Application No:	23/00680/FUL Cube Homes in partnership with Great Places
Proposed Development:	Redevelopment of the site for 50 dwellings together with associated parking, access, internal roads, landscaping, drainage, and all associated works. Former Mossley Hollins High School, Huddersfield Road Mossley
Speakers(s)/Late Representations:	The Planning Officer advised that since publication of the agenda, two further objections to the proposals had been received relating to traffic and too many properties being built on green areas. It was recommended that an updated badger walkover of the site be carried out immediately prior to the commencement of works. Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU) had reviewed the report and confirmed that they had no objections subject to a precautionary survey of the site and surrounds for badgers being undertaken prior to any site work or groundworks commencement. It was further advised that since publication two of the plans had been updated. The proposed site layout plan had been

	<p>amended to include an annotation referring to the continuation of the proposed wall parallel to the existing kerb line fronting Huddersfield Road, which was also subject to a 278 agreement and stopping up order. A further annotation had also been proposed to show an area of a stepped footpath link to the PRow to the south. The boundary treatment layout plan had also been amended to state the above.</p> <p>Mark Brakspear addressed the Panel objecting to the application.</p> <p>Poppy Oakey addressed the Panel on behalf of the applicant.</p>
Decision:	<p>That planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions as detailed within the submitted report and the completion of a section 111 agreement under the Local Government Act 1972 to require the completion of a section 106 agreement.</p>

Name and Application No:	<p>18/00159/OUT</p> <p>Trustees of Mrs E Bissill's Marriage Settlement Reversionary</p>
Proposed Development:	<p>Outline application for proposed residential development (with means of access to be considered, all other matters reserved).</p> <p>Land to the west of Huddersfield Road (between Hey Farm Estate and Mossley Hollins High School), Mossley</p>
Speakers(s)/Late Representations:	<p>The Highways Officers advised that at 7.10 the stated traffic movements into and out of the proposed development were incorrect. It was advised that the correct figures that the development was expected to generate were an additional 78 trips in the AM peak and an additional 106 in the PM peak. This equated to an additional 1.3 vehicular movement per minute in the AM peak and 1.8 vehicular movements per minute in the PM peak. The additional traffic generated by the proposal could be adequately accommodated on the local highway network without any detrimental impact.</p> <p>The Planning Officer advised that since the report had been published:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Objections had been received from Jonathan Reynolds MP and Councillor Tafheen Sharif. 2. That condition 19 be amended to the following: "A clear view shall be provided at the junction of the proposed access road into the development with Huddersfield Road. Its area shall measure 2.4 metres along the centre of the proposed access and 100 metres along the edge of the roadway on Huddersfield Road measured to a nearside track offset of 500mm. It must be kept clear of anything higher than 0.6 metres above the edge of the adjoining roadway or access, on land within the applicant's control". 3. That an additional condition be added relevant to the eradication of any invasive species found within the site prior to development.

	<p>4. It was recommended that the section 106 agreement secured the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15% affordable housing; • £50k contribution to improved dining facilities at Mossley Hollins High School; • £220k contributions to off-site green space improvement to include Mossley Park, The Roaches, Egmont Street and other pocket parks within Mossley; and • £182k to upgrade the existing public rights of way network. <p>Councillor Jack Homer, Ward Member, and John Pywell addressed the Panel objecting to the application.</p> <p>Andrew Newsam addressed the Panel on behalf on the applicant.</p>
Decision:	That planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions listed within the report and the amended conditions above, and the completion of a section 106 agreement.

Name and Application No:	<p>20/00293/FUL</p> <p>Mr Juma Gull Arsala</p>
Proposed Development:	<p>Change of use from engineering works (use Class B2) to distribution and storage warehouse (use Class B8) – retrospective.</p> <p>Ryecroft Engineering Co Ltd, Ryecroft Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, OL7 0BS</p>
Decision:	That planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions as detailed within the submitted report.

Name and Application No:	<p>23/00347/FUL</p> <p>Kenny Waste Management Limited</p>
Proposed Development:	<p>Retrospective application for a change of use from commercial vehicle breaker, repairs and sales to waste transfer station, including the erection of a washing plant, waste operations shed, extension to existing building, erection of weighbridges and office, and improvements to Groby Road North.</p> <p>4 Groby Road North, Audenshaw, M34 5HG</p>
Speakers(s)/Late Representations:	<p>Paula Bentley addressed the Panel objecting to the application.</p> <p>Paul Sedgwick addressed the Panel on behalf of the applicant. Paul Eagleton, Director of Kenny’s Waste Management Limited, answered questions from the Panel in relation to the application.</p>

Decision:	That planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions as detailed within the submitted report. The Council would also ensure monitoring of improvements to the road surface.
Name and Application No:	23/00770/FUL Zenobe Energy Limited
Proposed Development:	Development of battery storage facility, associated infrastructure, earthworks and means of access. Land off Printworks Road, Cocker Hill, Heyrod, Stalybridge
Speakers(s)/Late Representations:	<p>The Planning Officer advised that since publication of the agenda there had been amendments to conditions 6 and 11 within the submitted report.</p> <p>Condition 6 and the Highway section of the report incorrectly referenced temporary reinforcement of a railway overbridge. The Officer clarified that the temporary reinforcement would be required to the River Tame overbridge on Spring Bank Lane, as HGVs would not utilise the railway overbridge adjacent to Wakefield Road due to an existing weight limit in place. Condition 6 was therefore recommended to be amended to reflect this.</p> <p>The applicant queried the requirements of condition 11 (archaeological works), and noted it would be difficult to carry out trial trenching due to past altered land levels across the site. Officers recommended the condition be updated to remove the reference to trial trenching, which was acceptable to the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit.</p> <p>Jonathan Maginness address the Panel on behalf of the applicant.</p>
Decision:	That planning permission be granted, subject to the conditions as detailed within the submitted report and the amended conditions above.

35. APPEAL DECISIONS

Application Reference/Address of Property	Description	Appeal/Cost Decision
APP/G4240/W/23/3317768 Parsonage Fields Farm, The Mudd, Littlemoor Road, Mottram, SK14 6JN	Proposed extension and sub-division of dwelling to create 2 no. dwellings.	Appeal allowed.

36. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair advised that there were no urgent items of business for consideration by the Panel.

37. CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

The Chair informed Members that Melanie Hale, Head of Planning, would be leaving Tameside Council later this month. The Chair extended his thanks to Melanie for her support and hard work at Panel and Members echoed these comments.

38. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED

That the next meeting of the Panel would take place on 17 January 2024.

CHAIR