

**NORTHFLEET AND GRAVESEND WEST NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM  
NOTES OF MEETING**

**Date Tuesday, 14 July 2009**

**Venue: Gravesend Grammar School for Girls, Pelham Road, Gravesend Kent, DA11 0JE**

**Present:**

**Chair:** Mr Leslie Christie, Kent County Councillor for Northfleet and Gravesend West Division

**Vice chair:-** Cllr John Burden, Gravesham Borough Council member for Northfleet South ward

Mr Harold Craske County Councillor for Northfleet and Gravesend West Division and GBC ward Cllr for Painters ash

**Coldharbour:** Cllr Susan Howes

**NORTHFLEET NORTH:** CLLR RONALD BOWMAN, CLLR TANMANJEET SINGH DHESI AND CLLR ANDREA WEBB

**Northfleet South:** Cllr John Burden, Cllr John Loughlin, Cllr Narinder-Jit Singh Thandi,

**PAINTERS ASH:** CLLR ADRIAN WARBURTON, CLLR LES HOWES

**Pelham:** Cllr Jane Cribbon, Cllr Derek Sales, Cllr Makhan Singh

John Pexton  
S Sangha  
Tony Chadwick  
Wendy Lane  
Peter Slaughter  
Will Farmer  
Jackie Denton  
Chris Wakeford

Transport Quarter project manager – GBC  
Assistant Director, Special Projects - GBC  
Principal Planning Officer – GBC  
Principal Planner (Policy) – GBC  
Transportation Engineer (KCC)  
Community Liaison Manager - KCC  
Community Engagement Officer - GBC  
Committee & Scrutiny Assistant - GBC

		<b>Action</b>
<b>A18.</b>	<b>Welcome - Mr Leslie Christie (Chair)</b>	
<b>A19.</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	
<b>A20.</b>	<b>Any Declarations of Interest</b>	
	None	
<b>A21.</b>	<b>Presentation by John Pexton -Transport Quarter project manager, Gravesham Borough Council, on the plans for the transport quarter, the area around Gravesend Station.</b>	
	The Forum received a presentation from John Pexton –Transport Quarter project manager – GBC on the plans for the transport quarter, the area around Gravesend Station.	
	The Transport Quarter was consulted on in 05/06. As a result of the consultation process what we had originally wanted to do was to put two	

way traffic into Darnley Road. The Victoria Centre was part of the plan but we had objections from that and it was removed from the plan.

As a result of the changes to the Masterplan we are still looking at a similar scheme, looking to complete the town centre, improve public interchange, improve access, create new jobs, additional parking spaces and the station will act more as a gateway to the town.

The plan is to divert the traffic away from the town centre going around the back of the civic centre, down to Rathmore Road. That allows us to join up the civic centre with the sensory garden creating a bigger public square and in terms of traffic in Windmill Street and Stone Street, this will be reduced. There will be at least another 100 spaces as with the high speed service starting more people will want to park in town. There will be a reverse flow of traffic in New Road.

### **Q&A Session**

Q: Why are we providing more car parks in Gravesend when Ebbsfleet has a large amount of parking spaces?

A: We are providing competition with cheaper parking in Gravesend. Ebbsfleet Station have reduced the charge from £11.50 to £8 per day but you can park all day in Gravesend for £3.20

Q. Reverse traffic in New Road. Will the time restrictions be the same as it is now?

A. Yes.

Q. Woodville Place does not seem wide enough to take constant flow of traffic?

A. Woodville Place has generous pavements which will be used to widen the road.

Q: Where is the funding for the Transport Quarter project coming from?

A: Department of Communities and Local Government are providing some funding and we are seeking alternative sources. £8m of funding from the HCO. Kent Highways Services will make a contribution to it and we are looking for alternative funding sources for the rest

Q. Where is traffic going which is going down New Road?

A. In terms of traffic flow it will go down New Road and hit Stone Street and turn right into Stone Street where it will go back into the one way system

Q: What will happen to the 'Bingo Block' area?

A: The future of that site is still being considered – it may turn into a housing development.

Q: Why create more car parking spaces? What about public transport?

A: We are trying to take traffic issues away from the town centre to free up space for pedestrians and public transport.

<b>A22.</b>	<b>Group Sessions: Table discussions</b>	
<b>A23.</b>	<b>Summary of table discussions: Brief feedback from each of the tables on what were the priorities and issues identified</b>	
	<p><u>Table 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic flow – not going to be an improvement with current plans.</li> <li>• New Road needs better parking enforcement/management.</li> <li>• How will the Transport Quarter plans provide jobs?</li> <li>• Not much provision for cyclists. Need more cycling lanes.</li> </ul> <p><u>Table 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why extra car parking spaces when plenty of parking at Ebbsfleet instead of pushing to use public transport, although public transport is not always convenient.</li> <li>• The whole one way system needs to be considered</li> <li>• Parking on pavements needs to be addressed – better enforcement.</li> <li>• Not in favour of part-time pedestrian areas</li> <li>• Will open spaces outside the civic centre be designed to deal with ASB?</li> <li>• Disabled parking – where and how much?</li> <li>• Shopping – what are we doing to attract more businesses into town?</li> <li>• Who gets the money from the car parks?</li> </ul> <p><u>Table 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why does the traffic have to go all the way down Stone Street.</li> <li>• Will buses still go down Stone Street?</li> <li>• The whole system would need enforcement</li> <li>• Buses in one place is a good idea</li> <li>• Semi-pedestrianised areas - needs to be fully pedestrian or full traffic, otherwise this could be dangerous for pedestrians. Do not believe the current area that is semi-pedestrianised in New Road works well with shoppers and customers not expecting to see buses.</li> <li>• Provision needs to be made for Taxi ranks.</li> <li>• The plan to have buses in one place is a good idea.</li> <li>• Cycling areas should be considered.</li> <li>• Open spaces should discourage anti-social behaviour.</li> </ul> <p><u>Table 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why cant we have a Park &amp; Ride system for Gravesham instead of this? .</li> <li>• Are the parking bays equipped to deal with numerous buses?</li> <li>• Gravesham Court – illegal parking – needs enforcement</li> <li>• Is there a developer in mind to manage the car park?</li> <li>• Traffic flow is not going to improve</li> <li>• Stronger traffic enforcement needed in New Road</li> <li>• Where are the jobs coming from?</li> </ul>	

- Taxi rank – where will they be and which way will they go? Will they follow the buses?
- The whole area needs parking enforcement to work well.
- Cycle lanes and marking – will it be improved?
- Civic centre – it is not the most attractive building in the town and anything to improve it will be good.
- New one way system – could be worse than existing
- Woodville Place – not a lot of space – would be better to eat into the old Police Station site

Table 5

- Plans look good on paper but could be a different story in practice.
- Disabled parking needs to be considered.
- Poor quality shops in town – need to attract more business into the town centre.
- A combined Bus & Rail service pass should be considered.
- Shared space between buses & pedestrians is a concern.
- Improvements to the Civic Centre and surrounding area are most welcome.
- Should be looking at the whole road system before creating the Transport Quarter.
- Planning permission has already been given to the Police Station. It will provide accommodation.
- Parking on the pavements is a problem.

**Answers:**

- Traffic flow – looked at traffic flow use the entirety of the one way system. The system will be no worse than currently
- New Road – times will stay the same.
- In terms of what traffic will do – come along new Road, turn into Stone Street but do not anticipate increase in volume of traffic.
- It has not been decided about revenue on car parking but it is hoped there will be some income for the council. Not yet decided.
- The taxi rank will stay where it is currently. Have had a consultation with drivers and they have given a number of ideas on where they would like additional ranks.
- Shared pedestrian/bus space – not finalised design for entire scheme yet. Need to look at where kerbs are.
- Network Rail are extending platforms. They say they can get 12 carriages in there.
- Disabled parking is being considered. Gala block, reserve some space in multi-storey and space along Rathmore Road.

We know in the next 5/10 years that car use, if it continues the way it is, will make life very difficult for Dartford and Gravesham. One basic principle of the scheme is to encourage people to use public transport more, therefore the core of the scheme is the transport interchange. Predictions for 2018 are that it will be quicker to walk on the roof of the cars than travel in the cars.

	The second principle is to re-claim space for public pedestrian use rather than having cars.	
<b>A24.</b>	<b>Presentation by Tony Chadwick, Principal Planning Officer Planning &amp; Regeneration Services on the proposed new Controlled Parking Zones in Gravesend as well as an update on Northfleet Station.</b>	
	<p>The Forum received a presentation from Tony Chadwick, Principal Planning Officer – GBC on the proposed new Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) in Gravesend as well as an update on Northfleet Station. As of now trains are running every half hour to St Pancras from Ebbsfleet and taking 17 minutes and parking for commuters in the town will become an issue (because costs of parking in the town is cheaper than at Ebbsfleet) .</p> <p><b>Controlled parking zones</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cover a specific geographic area</li> <li>• Specify overall restrictions</li> <li>• No parking between 10am and 11am except for permit holders</li> <li>• Implemented by Traffic Regulation Orders</li> </ul> <p><b>Current timetable:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following CP2 route</li> <li>• Letter to residents w/c 20 July</li> <li>• TRO published 23 July</li> <li>• 28 days to object</li> <li>• Scheme will start after Christmas</li> </ul> <p><b>Northfleet Station:</b> Have for a long time wanted to connect Northfleet and the new Ebbsfleet Station. There are plans for a pedestrian tunnel that will cost £8.5M but are short of £3.5M. There is some hope that this money may come from Network Rail but this is not confirmed at the moment</p>	
<b>A25.</b>	<b>Discussions - Controlled Parking Zones and Northfleet Station</b>	
<b>A26.</b>	<b>Feedback from tables on issues raised</b>	
	<p><u>Table 1</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking permits – will there be a charge? How many will be available?</li> <li>• Enforcement required – how many enforcement officers do we have available to enforce?</li> <li>• Need CPZs in old Northfleet, especially around Fountain Walk because all the bus drivers park in this area leaving no where for residents to park.</li> </ul> <p><u>Table 2</u></p> <p>Comments on the tunnel idea at Northfleet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A tunnel to Northfleet station is not a good idea e.g. because of potential crime, fear of walking through etc A bridge or mono rail</li> </ul>	

	<p>would be more suitable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tunnel under Northfleet Station – general opinion was no because of vandalism and safety concerns. It will be used as a toilet.</li> <li>• With underpass or bridge people will park their car in Northfleet and walk to Ebbsfleet. This may cause a problem for parking in Northfleet.</li> </ul> <p>CPZs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforcement is a big issue where parking is concerned.</li> <li>• Permit needs to be secure and not abused.</li> </ul> <p><u>Table 3</u> CPZs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will there be a visitors scheme for parking?</li> <li>• Permits – will there be a charge?</li> <li>• Parking zones – how much, how long will permits last?</li> <li>• How long they would last and whether per house or per number of cars. Can they be passed to visitors?</li> <li>• Problems for local businesses – make businesses responsible in terms of their workforce.</li> <li>• Businesses should be held responsible for permits and penalties issued for improper use.</li> </ul> <p><u>Table 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long would the permit last?</li> <li>• Need a survey into how many local people are parking in the town – Sandy Bank being used by commuters.</li> <li>• Force bus service to do review to alleviate car use. There has not been a review of public transport in Gravesham for over 10 years. Need to press KCC to see if they will do a major bus survey on usage.</li> </ul> <p><u>Table 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are potential problems here with people who live outside the town.</li> <li>• CPZ a good idea but zone should be radial away from the station. Local Businesses should be responsible for the permits for their own workforce. If any permits were abused then their right to a permit taken away</li> <li>• Controlled parking zone will force people to park further away and walk into town or the station. Need CPZs further out as well.</li> </ul> <p><b>Answers from Tony Chadwick</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northfleet Station – there would be problems with a ramp for a bridge because of the height that the bridge would be and access for the disabled</li> <li>• A permit would last for 5 years. There would be a charge</li> </ul>	
A27.	<b>Question time - general questions regarding GBC and KCC to Members and Officers present</b>	
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	<p><b>Members and Officers present</b></p> <p>Q. What is happening with planning conditions imposed on the gypsy and traveller site at Springhead Road? The planning conditions were meant to be implemented before the travellers moved in. A. Pressing for conditions to be implemented.</p> <p>Q. St Botolphs had to cancel their summer fayre as it clashed with a public event being organised by the County Constabulary. The event is held at a Police Station where people are kept under lock and key. Does it involve in any way entertainment? We need to consider whether they should hold such an event. We need to ask them to avoid conflicts like this. A. Public bodies should try and work with the local community and that is a message we will pass back to the Police Authority.</p> <p>Q. A2 activity park – when it was first proposed we were assured by Kent Highways and GBC that no motorised traffic would be allowed on the site. Motorbikes are whizzing up and down the footpaths at the back of Dogwood Close. Told that Kent Highways have no jurisdiction over its security and we should contact GBC to get something done. Children and walkers use it and there is a safety issue. A. The Planning Authority for the park is KCC. The matter comes before Reg Board of GBC at the end of this month. Cllr Craske will take comments back. The A2 was a trunk road which is now being de-trunked and the result is that it is still a highway and it is the responsibility of the Highways agency but they are responsible for the tracks but not the land around it. We are aware of the issues. Complaints must be forwarded to the Police to enforce.</p> <p>Q. Students using Colyer Road for parking. Residents have been trying to get traffic calming. Because the school is now being re-built we also get heavy goods vehicles along the road and there is also a cycle path. Have put in petitions for traffic calming but would like to know what is happening and why those vehicles are allowed to use the road when it would be more sensible to go along Vale Road and Thames Way? A. Assured by Ray Dines that the contractors are using Vale Road and Thames Way. There is a weight limit on Vale Road. Major construction from the school is using Vale Road.</p> <p>Q. Cyclists on pavements in the town centre and Perry Street – someone is going to get hurt. They are not just young children, they are adults. A. It is an enforcement issue and should be brought to the attention of the Police. PACT meetings are held every two months on a ward basis and the public are encouraged to attend to draw up policing priorities for the area. This is an opportunity for residents to look at priorities.</p>	
<p><b>A28.</b></p>	<p><b>Future Discussion Topics: Brief discussion on topics to consider at future meetings</b></p>	

Tuesday, 14 July 2009

	Would like the amended planning application by Edinburgh House for the Heritage quarter in town	