

SOUTH PETERSFIELD RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

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To: Greater Cambridge Partnership

21 March 2022

From: [REDACTED]

Ref: Mill Road Spring 2022 public consultation

South Petersfield Residents Association would like the following points to be considered as part of the consultation on the future of Mill Road:

Context

- A. Mill Road is the focus of a large residential community, as well as being a destination for shopping, meeting, drinking, dining, religious worship, and more.
- B. Large numbers of people walk, cycle and e-scooter through Petersfield, both east-west along Mill Road, and north-south via Tenison Road, Devonshire Road, St Barnabas Road, Gwydir Street, Kingston Street, Sturton Street, Ainsworth Street and York Street.
- C. Many of these trips are to and from the railway station and local schools.
- D. Petersfield north of Mill Road is a long-established Low Traffic Neighbourhood, with no through-routes for motor vehicles.
- E. By contrast, Petersfield south of Mill Road is heavily used as a through-route for motor traffic between:
 - a. Hills Road/railway station and north-east Cambridge, principally via Devonshire Road, Mill Road and Brooks Road.
 - b. Hills Road/railway station and north Cambridge, principally via Tenison Road, Mill Road and East Road.
- F. In particular, it should be noted that traffic moves between Hills Road and East Road via Tenison Road and Mill Road, seemingly to avoid congestion and traffic lights on Hills Road and Gonville Place. If that 'rat run' remains open, it will become more attractive if Mill Road carries less traffic west of Tenison Road in future.
- G. A significant number of taxis also use Mawson Road, Covent Garden, Cross Street, Felton Street, Mill Street and Wilkin Street as shortcuts.

Safety of people walking and cycling – traffic

- H. High levels of motor traffic on Tenison Road and Devonshire Road conflict with the large numbers of people who walk and cycle along these roads.
- I. Crossing Mill Road between Devonshire Road and Kingston Street is especially challenging for people walking or cycling.
- J. The pavement on the east side of Devonshire Road is very narrow, which forces people frequently to step into the road.
- K. Despite recent changes in the Highway Code, many drivers do not give way to pedestrians crossing side roads along Mill Road. This is particular concerning at Tenison Road, where drivers turning right into Tenison Road tend to pay attention only to oncoming motor traffic, and not to look out for pedestrians.

- L. When the bus gate was in place on the bridge, there was very little motor traffic on Mill Road at the Devonshire Road–Kingston Street junction, and very little on Devonshire Road. It was notable how many families with young children then cycled along Devonshire Road and Kingston Street. Very few did before or now.
- M. Ditchburn Place on Mill Road is home to a large community of elderly people, for many of whom Mill Road is an intimidating and dangerous environment to venture into. Drivers do not always stop for pedestrians about to cross the zebra crossing outside Ditchburn Place.
- N. Some through-traffic on Tenison Road and Devonshire Road exceeds the speed limit by a dangerous margin.

Safety of people walking and cycling – obstructive parking

- A. There are very frequently cars parked on the pavement on the south side of Mill Road that are not loading or unloading. They are stopped there purely because it is more convenient for the driver than to use the Gwydir Street car park.
- B. The police do not enforce obstructive parking offences.
- C. Civil enforcement officers are rarely able to enforce these parking offences because the driver typically returns to the car within the permitted grace period.
- D. Vans and lorries also park on the pavements to unload because drivers believe they would be causing a more serious obstruction by parking entirely on the road.

Public health – pollution

- E. The high volume of motor traffic, in particular on Tenison Road, emits relatively high levels of air pollution, which affect a large number of residents and other people walking and cycling through the neighbourhood.
- F. No level of PM2.5 particulates or nitrogen dioxide pollution is deemed safe, in particular for babies, infants and children, for whom there is growing evidence that exposure to toxic pollutants and particulates causes lifelong damage to vital organs.¹

In light of the above, we ask GCP to:

- 1) Set clear objectives for the Mill Road scheme that include:
 - Improve safety for people, of all ages and abilities, walking and cycling on Mill Road and adjoining residential streets.
 - Reduce air pollution in Petersfield and Romsey (without increasing it elsewhere).
 - Reduce traffic speeds and volumes on Mill Road and adjoining residential streets.
 - Respect, retain and enhance the unique social, cultural and historical heritage of the Mill Road area.

¹ See <https://theconversation.com/air-pollution-science-shows-theres-no-safe-limit-heres-how-laws-must-change-167223> and <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/apr/21/reduce-air-pollution-levels-uk-to-who-limits-says-coroner-ella-kissi-debrah>

- 2) Include Station Road, Tenison Road, Great Northern Road and Devonshire Road in the emerging road network hierarchy, as these are currently strategically important roads, carrying large volumes of through-traffic.
- 3) Commission and publish an ANPR survey to identify traffic routes and volumes for motor vehicles using Mill Road and connected residential streets. We recommend placing ANPR cameras at:

Essential:

- Tenison Road, between Station Road and Great Northern Road
- Tenison Road, between Great Northern Road and Tenison Avenue
- Mill Road, between Mortimer Road and Gonville Place
- Mill Road railway bridge

To provide a fuller picture:

- Tenison Road, between Felton Street and Mill Road
 - Devonshire Road, between Travis Perkins and Mill Road
 - Glisson Road, between Hills Road and Lyndewode Road
 - Coleridge Road, between Greville Road and Mill Road
 - Mill Road, between Suez Road and Madras Road
- 4) Establish detailed needs of all local businesses on Mill Road for deliveries – frequencies, times, volumes and flexibility for receiving stock deliveries, and serving customers, especially those purchasing bulky and/or heavy consignments of goods.
 - 5) Model combinations of modal filters at:
 - Mill Road railway bridge
 - Mill Road, between Mortimer Road and Gonville Place
 - Mill Road, between Coleridge Road and Brooks Road
 - Tenison Road, between Great Northern Road and Tenison Avenue
 - 6) Consider exempting only Cambridge-licensed hackney carriages (i.e. the most well-regulated taxis) to use any bus gates installed in the area.
 - 7) Consider exempting holders of a Blue Badge who are resident in Petersfield and Romsey to use any bus gates installed in the area (i.e. provide a means by which they may register their own vehicle, or that of a carer).
 - 8) Allocate spaces for loading bays in the safest locations. If the volume of traffic is reduced sufficiently, then loading bays can be in the carriageway, requiring minimal, if any, incursion into the pavement to ensure vehicles can pass safely.
 - 9) Provide more cycle parking in side-roads along Mill Road where there is space to do so safely. This will avoid obstructing the busy pavements along Mill Road.
 - 10) Develop an action plan with the rail industry to build an eastern entrance to Cambridge station to improve access to the station, and reduce motor traffic on Hills Road, Station Road, Great Northern Road, Tenison Road, Devonshire Road, St Barnabas Road and Mill Road.