

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD

27 May 2014

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 REVIEW OF NOISE ATTENUATION M20 JUNCTIONS 4 TO 5

Summary

This report details the reply received from the Highways Agency(HA) to comments sent to them in May 2013, in response to their consultation on the identification of the M20, Junctions 4 to 5 being an 'Important Area' for the purposes of noise action planning.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Following the original round of noise mapping in 2006, measures were put in place by the HA to reduce the impact of road traffic noise on local residents between Junctions 4 and 5 of the M20. These measures included resurfacing the carriageway with low noise material and the installation of noise barriers along the most seriously affected parts of the locality.
- 1.1.2 In 2012 the H A carried out a further review of this area as part of a national review and sought comments from the Council on the proposed outcomes
- 1.1.3 As detailed in the report to the meeting of this Board in May 2013, in preparing our response we consulted local Members, Tracey Crouch MP as well as reviewing the position of the existing barriers against the location of properties that were identified as continuing to be adversely affected by road traffic noise from the M20.
- 1.1.4 We identified the following locations, where residents continue to suffer from motorway noise and responded to the H A requesting additional barriers be provided to improve protection to residents in:
- Willow Road;
 - Lunsford Lane;
 - Cygnet Close;
 - New Hythe Lane (including 249 and 251);

- the Greenacres Estate;
- west of Station Road, Aylesford and
- the future residents on the Preston Hall and Royal British Industries sites.

A map showing these locations is provided in **[Annex 1]**.

1.2 Highways Agency Response

- 1.2.1 A letter was received from the HA in October 2013 acknowledging that our comments had been formally recorded and stating that it was their aim to complete their reviews of the responses submitted by the end of December 2013.
- 1.2.2 In February 2014, the HA advised that their investigations were completed before Christmas, but their Chief Highways Engineer had raised some additional queries, in respect of this “Important Area”, which were currently being finalised and they would reply in full imminently.
- 1.2.3 The letter detailing the HA’s response to our letters in May 2013 was received on 1 April 2014. A copy of the letter is attached to this report **[Annex 2]**.
- 1.2.4 In summary, the letter states:
- The HA conclude that Location1, Willow Road, is the only site identified by this review as a potential suitable location for an additional noise barrier. The map provided by the HA detailing the exact location is attached to this report **[Annex 3]**.
 - In response to our query about maintenance of the existing barriers, the letter advises that this issue has been referred to the area Asset Team who confirms that this stretch of the M20 is due to be resurfaced in 2016. The team are looking into whether this work can be brought forward due to the current condition of the carriageway.
 - Funding is being sought to carry out repairs to the barriers in 2016/17.
 - No consideration has been given to our request for an additional barrier west of Station Road in Aylesford.
- 1.2.5 On 11 April a response was sent to the HA, a copy is attached at **[Annex 3]**.
- 1.2.6 Further to our letter, a reply was received from the HA on 2 May, a copy is attached at **[Annex 4]**.

1.2.7 In summary, the letter states:

- In respect of Station Road West, the outcome of their investigation is that it is unclear whether the erection of a barrier in this location would provide benefit to the residents.
- Wider investigations are being undertaken for the two “Important Areas” 5977 and 5986. They are being considered as potential locations for a smart motorway. A ‘smart motorway’ uses the hard shoulder as a permanent running lane and, combined with pioneering technology, its aim is to reduce congestion and ease traffic flow.
- A master plan is currently being compiled for 2015 – 2021 by the HA. Further clarification on future works will be provided once the details of this master plan are confirmed, in about six months’ time.

1.3 Legal Implications

1.3.1 There are not any specific legal implications for the Council in completion of this work, but it is our role to endeavour to protect our residents from adverse environmental impacts.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.4.1 None arising from this report.

1.5 Risk Assessment

1.5.1 By not continuing to make the H A aware of the continuing adverse impacts to residents, the opportunity to influence further improvements to this section of the M20 may be lost.

Background papers:

Nil

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