

Bolton Council

Report to: Planning Committee

Date: 23rd October 2014

Report of: Director of Environmental Services

Report No:

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Report Title: Cawdor Street Area, Farnworth – proposed alley gating – objections

Non Confidential: This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

Purpose: To present for consideration a report on a proposals to close several routes which run through the Cawdor Street Estate under the 'alley gating' procedure.

Decision: The Director of Environmental Services recommends that having considered the views of residents and in consultation with Be Safe Bolton, the gating order is made as originally proposed.

Background Doc(s): Copies of the representations are held on file.

Background information

1. The proposed closure of the routes which run between Kilsby Close to Lorne Street, Cawdor Court to Kilsby Close, Campbell Walk to Cawdor Walk and Cawdor Street to Kilsby Close under the 'alley gating' procedure has been advertised in June 2014. The introduction of the closures and erection of lockable gates, often referred to as 'alley gating', is being carried out under the provisions of the Highways Act 1980 (Gating Orders) (England) Regulations 2006. The Council's policy on this was agreed by the Executive on 5th March 2007.
2. A highway assessment was carried out in regard to the footpaths to determine the suitability of the alternative route(s) in terms of walkability and safety.
3. In accordance with the guidelines set out in the agreed policy, residents in the area were consulted to obtain their views on the use of the footpath, whether or not it facilitates persistent crime or anti-social behaviour and whether they would support a closure. The proposal was advertised under Section 129A of the Highways Act 1980 and in addition, the views of other consultees, including the emergency services, statutory undertakers, the NHS trust/PCT and footpath societies were requested.

Consultation

4. In response to the consultation, the Council has received 4 objections to the gating order. There has been 1 objection to the route between Kilsby Close to Lorne Street (route No 5), one objection to the route Cawdor Court to Kilsby Close (route No 4), one objection to the route between 19 Campbell Street and 17 Cawdor Court (route No 1) and one objection plus representations from neighbours to the gating around Kilsby Close and Cawdor Court and these objections shall be dealt with separately.
5. Route No 5 (as shown on the plan) is between Kilsby Close and Lorne Street and has been objected to by a local resident (who does not provide an address) on the grounds that she is disabled and would have to walk further which would aggravate her condition. The resident also raises concerns about the scheme overall and suggests that the scheme would leave her property more vulnerable to burglary and fly tipping.
6. Route No 4 (as shown on the plan) is between Cawdor Court to Kilsby Close and has been objected to by the resident of No 24 Kilsby Close on the grounds that he will have difficulties in taking out his rubbish and cleaning his windows as he will not be able to access his back yard.
7. Route No 1 (as shown on the plan) is between Campbell Walk and Cawdor Walk and has been objected to by the resident of No 19 Campbell Court on the grounds that they would not be able to use the route and it would isolate them from travelling through.
8. Route No 6 (as shown on the plan) is between Cawdor Street and Kilsby Close has been objected to by the resident of No 6 Kilsby Close on the grounds that this will lead to an increase in anti-social behavior at the side of her property and will do nothing to tackle the anti-social behavior in the proximity to her property. The resident of No 6 Kilsby Close also has the support from neighbouring properties through the submission of a petition of 7 additional names.

Observations

9. The Safer Communities Team supports the gating of the footpaths due to the levels of crime and anti-social behaviour experienced by residents living in the area. The Vulnerability Localities Index (VLI) score for the Cawdor Street Area is 218 with 100 being the average for the borough. Greater Manchester Police support the gating proposal.
10. It is acknowledged that the proposed gated routes forms part of a network used by pedestrians travelling from East to West and North to South to local public amenities and that the ability to move about the estate will be limited. However, this is in the overall interest of reducing anti-social behavior and crime levels and assisting the Police in managing pedestrian movements in the area.
11. In respect of the objection to route No 5 it is assumed that the resident is directly affected by the proposal to gate the route. It is accepted that there may be some inconvenience to residents however this is outweighed by the benefit of installing the gates in reducing anti-social behaviour.
12. In respect of the objections to route No 4 it is accepted that the gated route would cause some inconvenience to the resident of No 24 Kilsby Close however the resident has been offered the provision of a key to allow movement along the route.
13. In respect of the objections to route No 1 it is accepted that the gated route would cause some inconvenience to the resident of No 19 Campbell Court however this is outweighed by the benefit of installing the gates in reducing anti-social behaviour.
14. With regards to the objections raised by the resident of No 6 Kilsby Close there is a firm proposal to install fencing along the edge of the footway which runs to the rear of No 6-8 Cawdor Court and the Car Park area which fronts No 8-16 Kilsby Close. This will separate the two areas and prevent pedestrians from accessing the estate from the car park area. This is in an effort to reduce the level of anti-social behaviour associated with Kilsby Close Car Park. The resident of No 6 has now been made aware of this and is satisfied with this proposal but would like to leave her concerns about the gating proposals on record at this time.

Other Interventions

15. Bolton at Home has recently been working closely with various agencies, such as the Local Neighbourhood Policing Team and Bolton Council, to address concerns relating to anti-social behaviour and crime on the Cawdor Street/Campbell Street estate.

Whilst this work is ongoing, Bolton at Home intends to carry out various environmental works and interventions in the near future.

These works have already included the removal of the play space situated at the side of 10 Cawdor Court, due to vandalism and anti-social behaviour. The play area has been removed and the area made safe, and in the coming months we will be asking residents for their ideas and views on what how the estate can be improved.

In addition, it is proposed that temporary fencing is erected on the perimeter of the Kilsby Close car park directly behind Cawdor Court in order to improve security for residents and their vehicles. This will also be reviewed in the coming months.

The estate has been on a high priority by the Police (2 Officers) who have been covering the patch and have been working closely with the local community. Police have funded raised beds at the side of 4 Cawdor Walk. There has also been media coverage in the local press about the estate due to the Anti-Social Behaviour issues.

16. In respect of fly tipping and environmental clean-up in the area the following activities have been undertaken:

Bolton council arranged removal of abandoned bins/ contaminated bins and gave advice on and raised awareness of recycling

BH caretakers removed fly-tipped items from around the estate

Housing Enforcement staff encouraged residents to dispose of waste in front/ rear gardens

The Radburn team carried out litter picking, edging off and cleared detritus around the estate

Bolton Council Enforcement team were there with their CCTV vehicle for a highly visible approach

17. Bolton Council, Bolton at Home and the Police have been working in partnership to draw up an action plan for the estate which is now in place. An architect has been commissioned to look at the potential environmental improvements to improve the look of the estate and to improve safety and security.

Views of Ward Members

18. Ward Members have been consulted on the report and recommendation and no comments have been received.

Financial implications and implementation

19. The estimated cost of the gating order is £3,000 including staff costs and legal fees. The installation of the gates are in addition to this and are estimated at this stage to be £10,000. This funding will be met from Bolton at Home. If approved, the gates will be installed as soon as the necessary legal processes have been completed.

Recommendation

20. The Director of Environmental Services recommends that having considered the views of residents and in consultation with Be Safe Bolton, the gating order be made as per the original proposal.