

# MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

## EXECUTIVE REPORT

### SINGLE MEMBER EXECUTIVE DECISION

#### ACKLAM HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME: RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION EXERCISE

**Executive Member for Regeneration – Councillor Charles Rooney**  
**Executive Director for Economic Development and Communities – Kevin Parkes**

**18 March 2015**

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#### PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. This Report summarises the outcome of the public consultation exercise carried out in February and March 2015 to establish the level of support for a number of potential highway improvements designed to mitigate the impact of the redevelopment of the Acklam Hall site on the surrounding road network, and requests Executive Member approval for the recommendations arising from the public consultation process.

#### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that:
  - a) The local widening of Hall Drive at its junction with Acklam Road (Option 7) be progressed to the implementation stage; and
  - b) A further report be prepared, analysing the consultation responses in more detail and setting out a strategy that both addresses the existing traffic issues highlighted by the consultees and mitigates the potential impact of the Acklam Hall Development on the surrounding road network, in particular Church Lane and St. Mary's Walk.

#### IF THIS IS A KEY DECISION WHICH KEY DECISION TEST APPLIES?

3. It is over the financial threshold (£150,000)   
It has a significant impact on 2 or more wards   
Non Key

#### DECISION IMPLEMENTATION DEADLINE

4. For the purposes of the scrutiny call in procedure this report is

Non-urgent  
Urgent report

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| ✓ |
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If urgent please give full reasons.

## BACKGROUND AND EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

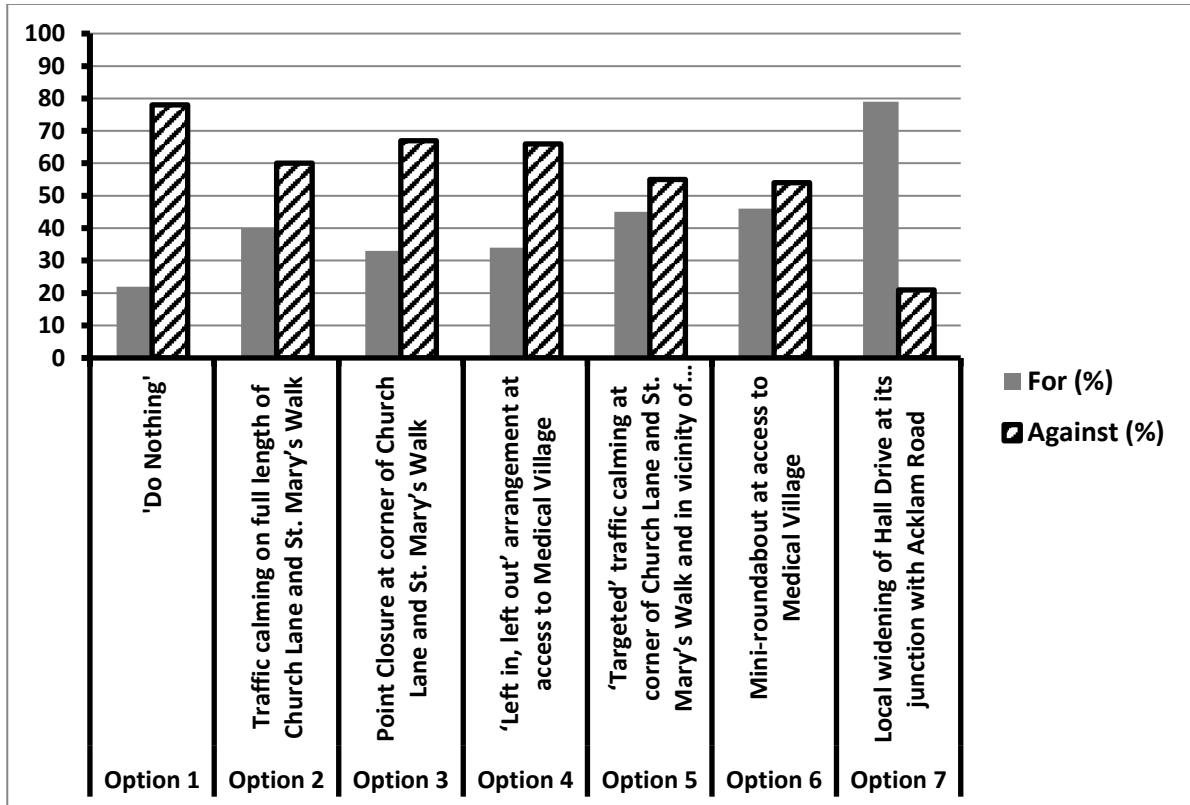
### Background

5. The public consultation and decision making process adopted in order to determine the highway improvements required in the Acklam area to mitigate the traffic impact associated with the redevelopment of Acklam Hall was approved on 2 February 2015 (Item no. 14/8 refers).
6. An extensive public consultation exercise was subsequently carried out during February and March 2015. This exercise included the following parties:
  - Acklam Ward Councillors;
  - Acklam Community Council;
  - St. Mary's Parochial Church Council;
  - Outwood Academy and Green Lane Primary Academy;
  - Key transport stakeholders, including the Police, emergency services and (in the case of Hall Drive) local bus operators;
  - Acklam Hall Limited; and
  - The occupiers of the 431 properties directly affected by one or more of the seven highway improvement options.
7. The consultation exercise was carried out through a combination of public meetings (Acklam Community Council), officer meetings (through the Middlesbrough Officers' Traffic Group and liaison with Acklam Hall Limited, St. Mary's Parochial Church Council, Outwood Academy and Green Lane Primary Academy) and a letter drop to the occupiers of the properties directly affected by one or more of the possible options. Although it was originally proposed to carry out the consultation exercise over a period of two weeks, the consultation period was subsequently extended to four weeks (i.e. from 9 February to 6 March 2015) in order to ensure that the many parties affected by the different highway improvement options had the opportunity to express their views.

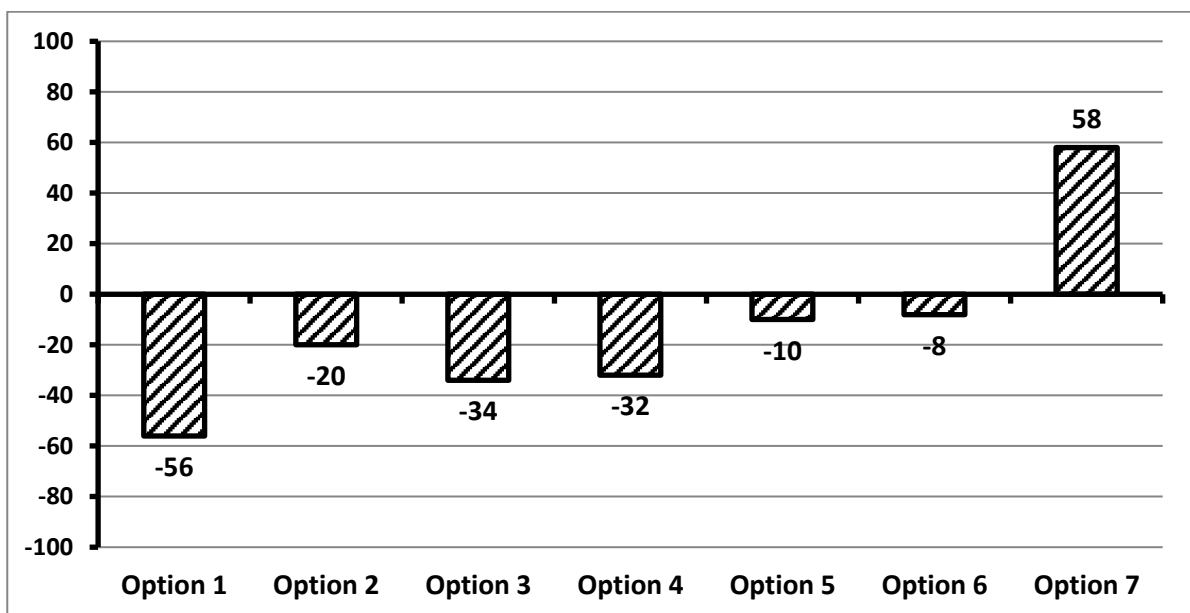
### Results of Consultation Exercise

8. A total of 131 responses were received from the occupiers of properties directly affected by one or more of the different highway improvement options by the closing date of 6 March 2015. This represents a response rate of 30%. A significant number of responses were also received after the closing date, and responses were still being received at the time that this Report was written.
9. **Figure 1** below summarises the responses received by the closing date, whilst **Figure 2** shows the 'net approval rating' for each of the seven options, i.e. the difference between the percentage voting in favour and the percentage voting against. As can be seen, there were two clear areas of consensus:

- a) 'Do nothing' (Option 1) was not seen as an acceptable way forward, with only 22% respondents voting in favour and 78% voting against; and
- b) Of the remaining options, only Option 7 – the local widening of Hall Drive at its junction with Acklam Road – received widespread support, with 79% of respondents voting in favour and 21% voting against. None of the five possible options on Church Lane and St. Mary's Walk received a positive net approval rating, with the majority of respondents voting against in each case.



**Figure 1: Summary of Responses Received by 6 March 2015**



**Figure 2: Net Approval Rating (%) for each Option**

10. As well as being asked to express their preference for or against each of the seven possible highway improvement options, the occupiers of the affected properties were also given the opportunity to comment on any or all of the options in more detail. This opportunity was taken up by many of the respondents. Whilst many of the respondents highlighted their concern about the potential impact of the redevelopment of the Acklam Hall site on the surrounding road network, many more highlighted a variety of existing traffic issues, including the volume and speed of through traffic on Hall Drive, Church Lane and St. Mary's Walk and the prevalence of on-street parking on St. Mary's Walk and Hall Drive on Saturdays and Sundays associated with Cleveland Juniors and Marton Football Clubs respectively.
11. The various highway improvement options were presented to the meeting of Acklam Community Council held on Thursday 29 January 2015. However, although the various options were discussed at length, the only option that was supported by the majority of the attendees was the widening of Hall Drive at its junction with Acklam Road (Option 7). This mirrors the outcome of the wider public consultation exercise detailed above.
12. Of the remaining consultees, neither the Police nor the emergency services raised concerns about any of the possible options, whilst the bus operators did not raise any concerns regarding Option 7 (there are no scheduled bus services on either Church Lane or St. Mary's Walk). St. Mary's Parochial Church Council objected strongly to both Options 3 and 4 due to the potential impact of both options on accessibility to St. Mary's Church, and also raised concerns about the adverse impact of both Option 2 and Option 5 on funeral corteges, favouring Option 6 instead. Acklam Hall Limited supported Option 5 and Option 7.

## **Discussion**

13. It is clear from the high response rate to the consultation exercise, and the number of additional comments received, that resolving existing traffic issues is seen as a high priority by the occupiers of properties in the vicinity of Acklam Hall, many of whom feel that the additional traffic generated by the redevelopment of the Hall site will impact negatively on an already congested network, particularly during the morning and evening peak periods.
14. Given that 'do nothing' is not seen as an acceptable way forward by the majority of respondents, and given the number and complexity of the issues raised, further work needs to be carried out to analyse the consultation responses in more detail and develop a strategy that both addresses the existing traffic issues and mitigates the potential impact of the Acklam Hall Development on the surrounding road network, in particular Church Lane and St. Mary's Walk. It is, therefore, recommended that a further Report be prepared on this basis and submitted for consideration by the Executive Member for Regeneration later in the year.
15. Notwithstanding the above, Option 7 – the local widening of Hall Drive at its junction with Acklam Road – was supported by the majority of the respondents, with a net approval rating of +58%. It is, therefore, recommended that this option be progressed to the implementation stage.

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IA)**

16. The potential impact of the consultation methodology, together with each highway improvement option or combination of options, has been assessed through the preparation of an Impact Assessment Level 1: Initial Screening Assessment. This impact assessment found that there were no concerns based on evidence gathered to date that the proposed options could have a disproportionate adverse impact on a protected characteristic or community cohesion.

## **OPTION APPRAISAL**

17. A total of six potential highway improvement options were identified through a series of meetings held with Ward Councillors and residents' representatives in the period prior to the public consultation exercise. Five of these options would affect traffic using Church Lane and St. Mary's Walk, whilst the remaining improvement would affect traffic using Hall Drive. There is scope to combine two or more options on Church Lane and St. Mary's Walk, depending on which outcomes emerge as priorities through the public consultation process.

## **CONSULTATION AND IMPLEMENTATION**

18. As set out in paragraphs 5 to 15 of this Report.

## **FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND WARD IMPLICATIONS**

### **Financial**

19. A total of £148,900 has been secured for improvements to the local highway network through Section 106 contributions associated with the planning approvals for the Acklam Hall Development (£129,900) and the recent housing development by Miller Homes Limited (Sanctuary Close) on the former Swedish Mission Field on Church Lane (£19,000). All costs associated with the options identified for implementation through the consultation process will be met from these contributions, which must be drawn down within five years of the practical completion of the developments in each case.
20. The cost of Option 7 – the local widening of Hall Drive at its junction with Acklam Road – has been estimated at £30,500. This estimate includes the cost of diverting known statutory undertakers' services, but excludes costs associated with the possible diversion of an existing gas main on the south side of Hall Drive.

### **Ward Implications**

21. All of the potential highway improvement options affect roads within the Acklam Ward. The local Ward Councillors have been fully involved in the public consultation process.

### **Legal Implications**

22. Any legal issues associated with the preferred highway improvement options identified through the consultation process will be dealt with via the Council's established procedures.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

23. The Executive Member for Regeneration is recommended to approve the implementation of Option 7 (the local widening of Hall Drive at its junction with Acklam Road), together with the preparation of further report, analysing the consultation responses in more detail and setting out a strategy that both addresses the existing traffic issues highlighted by the consultees and mitigates the potential impact of the Acklam Hall Development on the surrounding road network, in particular Church Lane and St. Mary's Walk.

## **REASONS**

24. To mitigate the impact of traffic associated with the Acklam Hall development on the safe and efficient operation of the surrounding road network.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

25. Single Member Executive Decision Report dated 2 February 2015 (Item no. 14/8 refers).

**AUTHOR:** Rob Farnham

**TEL NO:** 728188

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**e-mail:** [rob\\_farnham@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:rob_farnham@middlesbrough.gov.uk)

**Website:** <http://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk>