

Portland Road Pavement and Safety Audit April 14 2008

Portland Road and Clarendon Forum

The Portland Road and Clarendon Forum is a Neighbourhood Action Group made up of Local Councillors, local business and community representatives, local Service Providers, Police, School and other stakeholders. Meetings are held bimonthly and are attended by around 30 people. The Forum requested a detailed look at the state of Portland Road, inspired by a recent University led consultation in the area in which the condition and regeneration of the road was prioritised by local people as an area for change and improvement. A summary of the findings of this consultation report is available from Jo Martindale at Joanna@martindale.org.uk if requested.

General Condition

The condition of the pavements in Portland Road is generally very poor. Successive digging up of the pavements has left them in a full patchwork state, with many areas with dips, hills and holes. Paving slabs have been replaced by tarmac, which has not been resurfaced for many years. This has led to one local businessman describing the area as a 'tertiary' shopping area. The appearance of the area lets down the vibrancy and individuality of the local shops, which are valued highly by local people. There is a local feeling that this shopping street is not maintained as it would be in the town centre and that a lower level of service is being received. The only smooth stretch of tarmac is outside the Gala Bingo Hall.

**What is the planned maintenance for resurfacing the tarmac?
Is consideration being given to replacing tarmac with more attractive paving slabs?**

Weeds

All along Portland Road large weeds are growing between the paving, along the sides of the shops and even in the tarmac.

The frequency of weed control needs to be increased

Greening and Trees

Recent tree planting in the area has been partially successful but many of the new trees have not survived and the remaining trees could do with some work. There is no kerbing around the new trees and the earth area below them is full of weeds. Residents have expressed their desire for a greener feel to the Street. If the Gala development goes ahead some greening of that area will be undertaken as part of the planning 106 agreement but this is the only new greening proposal of which we are aware.

Are there any plans for additional greening of this road?

Pavement Safety

A number of areas are in such poor condition that they are totally unsafe. Specific examples are outlined later in the report. It should be noted that the worst of the problems are located outside Ingram Crescent. This is a Council estate, which houses primarily older and disabled people who are more likely to be affected by the poor condition of the pavements. These repairs were first highlighted in the Neighbourhood Action Plan for the area undertaken in 2003, yet nothing has changed between then and now and the same repairs are still outstanding. Of particular concern are all the cable and water drains, many of which are raised or sunken making the pavement uneven.

It is requested that immediate action is taken on the unsafe areas of pavement as identified in this report, particularly those areas which have been outstanding since at least 2003.

Road Safety

A number of safety issues were raised at a recent Forum meeting.

- 1) Speed of vehicles along Portland Road. There are no cameras or proper speed signs along Portland Road. This is in contrast to the two roads running parallel (ie New Church and Old Shoreham Roads). This has led to speed being a significant problem. There have been fatalities due to speed on Portland Road notably when several young women died in a speeding car in 2003.
- 2) The Pedestrian crossing outside the Portland Pub remains a concern. Often cars do not seem to see this busy crossing. Measures to make it more visible were taken following a fatality on the crossing and lights and visibility shades were added.

The lines need repainting.

We suggest that consideration is given to installing a traffic island at this crossing point.

- 3) The two Resident's associations at Ingram Crescent have identified that the crossing outside their estate is at the wrong point for their residents leaving the estate on foot. The footpath leads to the road at a point some 50 metres from the crossing, a long way for an older person who wishes to use the shops opposite; Their ability to cross is further hampered by the parking of large vans and lorries along Portland Road. This has worsened since Parking controls were introduced in the Poets Corner end of the Road and has been raised as a significant safety issue by MURSAN (the RA for the sheltered housing there).

Private Ownership of the Pavement

Parts of the pavement near to the shops is privately owned by the freeholders of the shops. These areas are meant to be maintained by the shop keepers but this is not always achieved.

It also means that cars are parked on the pavements in front of shop premises and these cannot be touched by the Police or Traffic wardens. This dangerous

situation came to a head recently when a car went through a pavement in front of the Chemist shop and created a huge car sized hole, which is now being repaired. Following our audit we reported a car to the Police that had no car tax and bald tyres that was parked in front of a local restaurant, blocking the pavement for pedestrians.

Consideration should be given to bringing the private areas back to Council ownership.

Perhaps pillars could be erected to prevent this nuisance parking?

Specific Safety Issues found:

- Ree Evan/Titian Road topend: area outside shop badly cracked.
- Portland Carriage Company: very cracked and bumpy.
- Off the Fence: tarmac raised and problem with drain
- Nut and Bolt Store: uneven tarmac
- Rutland Gdns and Westbourne St: Tree roots leaving pavement cracked and raised.
- Rutland Road huge hole on build out outside Master Tiles.
- Kismet Tandoori: Gas pipe causing trip hazard.
- Pottery House Café: 12 holes left from scaffolding there.
- West Hove School: The paved area outside the School on Portland Rd is very cracked and there is a large rusty crash barrier which is no longer necessary outside a disused gate.
- Public loos: Pavement outside very cracked.
- Grange Road: Loose and cracked paving slabs.
- Hopscotch Nursery: Cracked paving outside.
- Ingram Crescent: The whole area all along from IC East to IC West is full of deep rivulets where earth is visible through the tarmac. There are a number of deep holes in this area. Water stop cocks are badly exposed by the shrinkage of the tarmac.
- 280 Portland Road: Uncovered water hole.
- Portland gate: CATV cover trip hazard
- St Heliers Ave: Broken and raised Kerb corner on both sides. These have been painted around.
- Hogarth Road: problems around GPO cover.

The above is just a selection of the various hazards we encountered.

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