

Bishopthorpe Millennium Trust

(Reg. Charity No. 108845)

Bishopthorpe@Crossroads

Report on Street Audit and Household Survey
October 2004

Summary

Information was collected in September to October 2004 on people's views about the area around Sim Balk Lane and Main Street Bishopthorpe, in order to provide data for the creation of a Design Study of the area. This study, part funded by the City of York Council Ward Committee and the Trust, is intended to be used as a template for the environmental improvement of an area that had been identified by local people in previous consultations. The full story of this process is described at www.bishopthorpe.net/mt/crossroads.

A Street Audit, following guidelines issued by Living Streets (www.livingstreets.org.uk) in its DIY Community Street Audits publication, a household survey (see Appendix) distributed with the Ward Committee Newsletter, and a display and comments forms at the Library, were used to gather data. We estimate that the opinions of over 75 people have been collected. Everyone that returned a questionnaire wanted the area improved. Twenty-four people said they were willing to assist with the project.

People offered a wide range of suggestions as to problems and improvements that could be made. These were about improving maintenance of existing structures; reducing hard landscaping and greening the area; adding facilities; and improving pedestrian and vehicle access. The buildings are well-regarded in terms of their function, but improvements are sought in the way that they look and fit together.

Recommendations

No specific recommendations are made at this stage, as these will arise once an overall design has been agreed upon. However, it is recommended that this report is made available and circulated to each and any people or departments or organisations that may have interests in the area, including public and private property owners, local authorities and elected representatives.

Findings

This section merely summarise some key findings. Our research revealed much detail – some of it contradictory! This report should therefore be read in conjunction with the original data, and summaries of the methods used and the data, both of which are available on the [Crossroads](#) web site.

Surfaces and Obstructions

A wide variety of different materials are in use, and parts of the footway are degraded, and ponding of both road and pathway also results from the installation of the speed tables. The old bus stop, salt bins, walls around the library, and fences were noted as being in disrepair. Particular reference was made to the hard landscaped area around the Library, in front of the shops and in front of the Methodist Church. Dropped curbs for wheelchairs/prams are not in keeping, nor well installed. Kerb heights vary. Vehicles park on the footway.

Facilities and signage

Suggestions were made to remove the salt bin, add seating and planters, rationalise and improve all signage, improve the street lighting standards, perhaps with additional hanging baskets, improve information (historical and current) for visitors, and deal with fly-posting perhaps with a new notice board. Suggestions were made for using the garden by the library as a public (social and play) space, and also making use of the flagged area too. Car-parking is seen as a problem – it was suggested that there could be a pull in at the front of the library, and that access should be opened up for library vehicles at the rear too.

Maintenance and enforcement issues

Fly-posting, illegal parking (this includes on pavements, on the speed tables, across entrances and even on the build-out), poor surface maintenance (particularly of the Pinfold), poor building and boundary maintenance (in general and in contrast to the Methodist Church) were all highlighted.

Personal security

Two issues were mentioned: the perception of possible anti-social behaviour caused by young people using the seat by the old bus stop; and the difficulties for drivers emerging from School Lane where the sightlines are restricted by the Old school boundary fence and the road layout.

Crossing points and desire lines

The footway layout appears to favour crossing Main Street on the speed table outside the library, and Sim Balk Lane on the speed table. Neither of these

are on a natural desire line to walk, and people are clearly unsure about this. No obvious path for pedestrians lies between Sim Balk Lane and Copmanthorpe Lane/Appleton road. There are no dropped kerbs on the former, and no obvious path between School lane and Copmanthorpe Lane or Main Street...people have asked for pedestrian crossings, including traffic lights. In general, pedestrians – and there are many people with disabilities or infirmities in the village – come second to the traffic.

Road layout and space allocation

This has been subject to recent change to do with traffic calming – and not all people accept either the need or the methods used. Overall the effect has been (presumably within guidelines) to allocate much of the area to the needs of moving motorised traffic. This creates an emphasis on hard landscaping, street signs (clutter), and primary calming measures. The overall impression is of a road junction – even though the total area of land is much larger than this. One effect of the layout is that vehicles travelling east and turning into Sim Balk lane regularly cross the double white lines in the centre of the road, endangering oncoming traffic. The speed of vehicles coming from this direction has also been mentioned. At the same time, there is sometimes inadequate space for short-term parking or deliveries, and poor parking too leads to vehicles crossing the centre lines.

Aesthetics

A wide range of suggestions for 'greening' and improving the area were made. These included adding a special feature (a water feature for example) to act as a focus; improving maintenance standards; changing road and footway surfaces; changing the shop fascias; screening from view the gas control facility; and removal of unnecessary clutter.

Additional comments

Other comments were made by a number of individuals and related to altering the bus direction to provide a better bus stop; involving community groups in maintenance; a strong desire to retain (and extend) the library even though it is perceived as the least attractive building; and dealing with traffic and parking associated with the junior school.

Appendix

Household Survey

This year the Bishopthorpe Millennium Trust, the Ward Committee and the Parish Council are supporting a design study to determine how the area surrounding the junction of Main Street and Sim Balk Lane can be made more pleasant, more useful and more safe.

It is important that as many local people as possible give their opinions on what should (or should not) be done. This is your chance to give your opinion.

Please complete this questionnaire, and return it in an envelope to:
Millennium Trust, c/o City of York Council, FREEPOST YO330, YORK, YO1 9ZA
OR drop it in at Lister's Newsagents or Riley's Chemists.

1. What use do you make of the area at present? (Tick as many as you wish.)

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Drive through it	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use the Methodist Church	<input type="checkbox"/>
Walk through it	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use the Library	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rest there	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use the Sim Balk Lane shops	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use the Old School	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use the Archbishop of York's School	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)			

2. Would you like to see the area improved? YES / NO

3. In order to improve the area, in your opinion what features should be:

removed?	changed?
added?	kept?

4. Do you consider the area could be made safer for drivers and/or pedestrians?

YES / NO If so, how?

5. This project is being run by local people. They will need more help next year as the project moves forward. **Would you consider volunteering (next year)?** YES / NO

6. Please complete this section whether you would consider volunteering or not. If the opinions are those of more than one person, please write in all the names.

Name(s)
Address

Telephone

Email

Thanks for your help!