

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO APPEALS & COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

24 JANUARY 2008

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

A1044 LOW LANE, LEVEN BANK ROAD, STOCKTON-ON-TEES - PROPOSED REDUCTION IN SPEED LIMIT FROM 60MPH TO 40MPH

1.0 SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' views on outstanding objections received following statutory advertising of the proposed speed limit reduction on A1044, Low Lane and Leven Bank Road between its junctions with Barwick Way roundabout and Glaisdale Road. It is not considered appropriate for the Head of Technical Services to consider the objections, as he would effectively be reviewing his own decision.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:-

- (i) Members give consideration to the objection raised and the comments of the Head of Technical Services.
- (ii) A recommendation on the merits of the objections is made to the Head of Technical Services.
- (iii) The local Ward Councillors and the objectors are informed of the Committee's recommendation.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The Council has a longstanding commitment to reducing the number and severity of collisions within the Borough. Therefore, as part of the Local Transport Plan a local safety scheme was approved on the aforementioned section of the A1044. The main recommendations of the study carried out by an independent consulting engineer were a reduction of the speed limit from 60mph to 40mph, additional streetlighting and improvements around the Hilton Lane junction to include a right turn ban from Barwick Lane (**Appendices 1 - 3** detail speed limits, signing and collisions).
- 3.2 For a summary of collisions please refer to the Cabinet Member Report at **Appendix 4**.
- 3.3 This scheme has been through the relevant consultation procedure, including local Ward Councillors, Town and Parish Councils, Sustrans, members of the public and the Police.

- 3.4 As a result, a Traffic Regulation Order for the reduction in speed limit was advertised in the Evening Gazette on 27th September 2007, with the objection period expiring on 19th October 2007. Following the publication of statutory notices, the Director of Law and Democracy received two letters of objection on 19th October 2007, from Mr D Botterill and Miss G Hesk, both residing at the same address. Despite further correspondence with the objectors (copies of correspondence in **Appendix 5**) the reason for objection remains unresolved.

4.0 DETAILS OF THE OBJECTIONS

- 4.1 The main grounds for both objections are that, “the proposed change to the speed limit is unnecessary and unjustified on the road in question, and the change will not achieve the objective of accident reduction, because the wrong causes are being addressed.” The correspondence from Mr Botterill sets out a detailed case based largely on Department for Transport Circular Roads 1/93. There was also included an Annex from Department for Transport Circular Roads 1/80. The Department for Transport Circular Roads 1/93 was superseded last year by Department for Transport Circular Roads 1/2006, though some of the material is similar.

RESPONSE

- 4.2 Mr Botterill refers to paragraph 5 of Circular 1/93, it states that, ‘specific speed limits cannot, on their own, be expected to reduce vehicle speed if they are set at a level substantially below that at which drivers would choose to drive in absence of a limit.’ This advice is being complied with as the speed limit reduction is not being undertaken in isolation, but as part of a wider scheme. This includes speed limit signs, on-road roundels, and a two-metre wide right-turn lane into Hilton Road and into the Fox Covert Public car park. There will also be hatching and red-surfacing to deter overtaking and provide visual narrowing, as well as additional gateway features. In addition there is anti-skid surfacing, and speed indicator display devices being introduced. It should also be noted that as part of a housing development scheme at the Cross Keys Public House there will be provision of a ghost right-turn facility into the site.
- 4.3 Mr Botterill again refers to Circular 1/93, which states ‘speed limits should be lowered only when a consequent reduction in vehicle speed can reasonably be expected. A survey of traffic speeds should indicate whether a lower limit will, in the absence of regular enforcement, be likely to result in lower actual speed.’ Speed surveys have been carried out both in the vicinity of the Fox Covert Public House junction and on Leven Bank Road. As set out in the Department for Transport Circular 01/2006 speed limits are now based on mean speeds rather than 85th percentile speeds. Results of the surveys showed that the mean speeds at the Fox Covert junction were 41mph and 43mph in the eastbound and westbound directions respectively. In addition the mean speeds on Leven Bank Road were 41mph and 39mph in the eastbound and westbound directions respectively. From the results of both speed surveys undertaken it would appear that a 40mph speed restriction along this section of the A1044 would be appropriate. Those drivers currently driving in excess of 40mph would be required to reduce speed to a more appropriate rate.
- 4.4 In addition, Mr Botterill also refers to the accidents that have occurred in this locality, and the subsequent causation factors, which contributed towards them. As stated earlier within the report SD/T/429 it has been found that speed is a factor in many of the collisions.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The estimated cost of the works is £88,000 and is to be funded out of the 2007/08 capital budgets.

6.0 POLICY CONTENT

The proposals are consistent with the Community Plan (to ensure a safer Borough), the Council's Road Safety Plan and Local Transport Plan.

7.0 CONSULTATION

The Local Ward Councillors have been consulted on the proposals and are in support of the proposed scheme, as are both Ingleby Barwick and Hilton Parish Councils. The Police have also been consulted and are in full support of the proposed scheme. A public consultation exercise was also undertaken and a total of seven questionnaires were received all supporting the proposed scheme, although one supported the scheme but not the reduction in the speed limit. Finally, consultation was undertaken advertising the restrictions on-site, and in the local press. This resulted in two objections being raised from local residents, who will be invited to address the committee in person or submit a written statement of case.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The proposed measures should assist in alleviating the current problem of collisions which currently occur along this section of the A1044, Leven Bank Road. Also reducing the speed limit from 60mph to 40mph should encourage lower vehicle speeds along this section of the A1044, with research showing that for each 1mph reduction in mean speed it can be expected to lead to a 5% reduction in road collisions.

Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services

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Environmental Implications

The scheme should reduce the potential for collisions thus ensuring that the Borough continues to be safe, healthy and attractive place in which to live and work.

Community Safety Implications

Address road safety problems contributing towards the safe passage of traffic along A1044 Leven Bank Road.

Background Papers

Plan detailing signing of new speed limit
Plan of A1044 and associated speed limits
Scheme of Delegation Report SD/T/429
Letters of objection dated 19/10/07
Plan of collisions along this section of the A1044

Education Related Item?

No.

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Ingleby Barwick East : Councillors K Faulkes, D Harrington and A Larkin
Ingleby Barwick West : Councillors K Dixon, L Narroway and R Patterson
Yarm Ward : Councillors J Beaumont, J Earl and A Sherris