

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO APPEALS & COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

15 DECEMBER 2010

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

MIDDLETON AVENUE, THORNABY – PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEME

1.0 SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Member's views regarding an outstanding objection received following advertising of vertical deflection traffic calming features on Middleton Avenue in Thornaby.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:-

- (i) Members given consideration to the objection raised and the comments of the Head of Technical Services.
- (ii) A recommendation on the merits of the objection is made to the Head of Technical Services.
- (iii) The local Ward Councillors, Thornaby Town Council, the Bassleton & Bader Residents Association and the objectors are informed of the Committee's recommendation.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The scheme was instigated by the Bassleton & Bader Residents Association following concerns expressed by residents in the area with regard to the speed of some drivers on Middleton Avenue. The Residents Association worked along side Stockton Council's Community Engineer to develop the scheme, briefly comprising five round top speed humps and a chicane. The matter was discussed at numerous of their meetings, which are advertised and open to all residents. A full consultation exercise with affected residents, comprising a letter drop including plan, questionnaire and pre-paid reply envelope, was then undertaken.
- 3.2 The results of the consultation exercise indicated that approximately 78% of respondents supported the scheme. In all 288 homes were consulted, with responses received from 91, of which 71 supported the scheme, with 20 being opposed.
- 3.3 The scheme was subsequently progressed through the relevant consultation procedure involving Ward Councillors, Town Council and police and approved as a contender for future funding by the Head of Technical Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration of Transport (see Scheme of Delegation Report TS/T/19/09 in **Appendix 1**).

- 3.4 Although no funding was identified to implement the scheme in 2009/10 or 2010/11, at their Spring 2010 meeting Eastern Area Transport Strategy (ATS) Stakeholders requested that the statutory consultations associated with the scheme be undertaken; with a view to possibly allocating funding at their Autumn meeting. (The ATS process involves local transport stakeholders, including Ward Councillors, in four areas of the Borough – based on the Renaissance area boundaries – being allocated an annual budget to spend on transport priorities in their area).
- 3.5 As a result, a Notice of Works for the round top road humps was advertised in the Evening Gazette and on site on 7th August 2010 with the objection period expiring on 28th August. Following the publication of the statutory Notices, the Director of Law and Democracy received two letters of objection, though one has subsequently withdrawn. A copy of the outstanding objectors letters, from Mr & Mrs Miller, 4 Middleton Avenue are attached in **Appendix 2**.

4.0 OBJECTION DETAILS

- 4.1 The main grounds for objection is that Mr & Mrs Miller consider that there are only 33 residences on Middleton Avenue, who are most directly affected by the scheme, and that the level of support from these residents is not sufficient to progress the scheme. Mr & Mrs Miller consider that it was not appropriate to consult residents in the Housing Association properties at the southern end of Middleton Avenue or side roads at the northern end.

Mr & Mrs Miller also indicate that if the scheme does progress, they do not want a speed hump within 50 metres of their property, and state they will hold the Council responsible should any accident occur.

Discussion Response

- 4.2 Since 1993 developers are required to traffic calm residential estate roads to ensure an average speed of 20mph via the road alignment and / or use of traffic calming features. Developers have indicated that this is a positive selling point for prospective buyers, particularly those with young children.
- 4.3 In response to an increasing number of requests to provide traffic calming on residential roads built prior to 1993, the Council developed the Community Engineering initiative. The Council's Community Engineer is authorised to work alongside Parish/Town Council's and formally constituted residents groups to develop environmental traffic calming schemes for their area.
- 4.4 The Community Engineer has worked alongside the Bassleton & Bader Residents Association to develop a traffic calming for Middleton Avenue and subsequently arranged a consultation exercise.
- 4.5 The extent of the consultation exercise included all properties accessed via Middleton Avenue, in line with standard practice, and was agreed with the Residents Association.
- 4.6 Mr & Mrs Millers concerns with regards to the number of responses received are valid, it would be beneficial if the response rate was higher as it would give a more representative result. However, as with elections, all of the affected residents have been given a chance to give their views, and the results have to be accepted as a true representation. Approximately 78% of respondents supported the scheme.
- 4.7 When frontagers with a 'Middleton Avenue' address are considered in isolation, 23 residents responded, 14 (61 %) in favour of the scheme and 9 (39 %) against.

- 4.8 The results of the consultation exercise were reported to the Residents Association who confirmed their support. Both local Ward Councillors have also indicated they support the proposals.
- 4.9 Middleton Avenue is adopted highway maintained at the public expenses, modifications to the public highway, necessary for wider public safety, do sometimes change conditions that local residents are used to. The proposed round top road humps would be installed to current standards and specification, and as such the Council would not be liable for any damage which occurred. To revise the proposed road hump locations at this stage would require re-advertising, and this course of action is not recommended.
- 4.10 Given the objections received, Eastern ATS stakeholders resolved not to allocate 2010/11 monies towards the scheme at their Autumn meeting.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The scheme is a contender for funding from 2011/12 budgets.

6.0 POLICY CONTENT

The proposals are consistent with the Council's Local Transport Plan and Sustainable Community Strategy.

7.0 CONSULTATION

The scheme was developed by the Bassleton & Bader Residents Association, working alongside Stockton Council's Community Engineer. A public consultation exercise has been carried out with local residents, and this resulted in a support rate for the scheme of approximately 78%. The Police and emergency services have no objections to the proposals. The local Ward Councillors have indicated their support, and the scheme has been approved by the Head of Service in consultation with the Cabinet Member.

Finally, statutory consultations involving advertising on site and in the local press were undertaken. This resulted in one outstanding objection being received. The objectors will be invited to the Appeals Committee meeting.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The measures proposed should reduce traffic speeds to a level appropriate for a residential road, thereby reducing the potential for accidents.

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 a safe, healthy and attractive place to live.

Community Safety Implications

Addressed road safety concerns amongst the local community.

Background Papers

Scheme of Delegation Report TS/T/19/09.
Letters from the objectors from 4 Middleton Avenue.

Education Related Item?

No

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Village : Councillors Ian Dalgarno and Mick Eddy