



Stockton-on-Tees

BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEVELOPMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

Technical Services

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12951

26th November 2010

Dear Ms Brown,

THE BOROUGH OF STOCKTON ON TEES, SURBITON ROAD, STOCKTON ON TEES, PROPOSED SPEED CUSHION

Further to your letter of objection dated 12 November 2010 regarding the above advertised proposal, which was formally received by Legal Services and forwarded onto Network Safety for reply.

As you will be aware from previous correspondence on this matter, the proposal to install a speed cushion follows the recommendation made in the independent Road Safety Audit to complete the speed reducing feature.

I consider it would be advantageous to summarise the grounds of your objection raised in previous correspondence dated 1 August, 11 October and 12 November 2010 and to discuss the issues and the associated response on a point-by-point basis. The summary is as follows:

TRAFFIC SURVEYS

Issue

The traffic survey was conducted to the south of Culross Grove this is nowhere near the existing chicane/proposed speed cushion. The survey was only done for a portion of time and therefore does not provide a full picture of what happens each day.

Response

The pre-scheme and post-scheme automatic speed surveys were indeed conducted to the south of Culross Grove. Methodology behind this was it was considered an appropriate point to gain the higher vehicle speeds since it is the only straight section of Surbiton Road, between numbers 216 and 182, with wide grass verges and good forward visibility.

Ms M Brown
290 Surbiton Road
Fairfield
Stockton on Tees
TS19 7SA



An automatic vehicle survey logs speeds and volumes in both directions over a continuous 7 day period. The post construction speed survey was conducted at the same location in order to compare 'like for like' results from quantitative data sets and accurately gauge the effectiveness of the traffic calming scheme.

As previously indicated the analysis of the speed survey results show average speeds have reduced by 6.7mph north bound and by 1.1mph southbound.

ACCIDENT DATA

Issue

From the quoted accident statistics how many occurred at the northern end of Surbiton Road in the vicinity of the proposed speed cushion? The traffic calming request list (Appendix 14 in the published Road Casualty Review) shows there were no reported injury accidents on Surbiton Road in 2007, 2008 and 2009 so why was the scheme constructed in 2010?

There is going to be a major accident at this feature in the future, there have already been damage only incidents. More obstacles for drivers to negotiate will exacerbate the potential for accidents.

Response

A feasibility study to conduct site investigations and analyse accident and speed survey data was conducted in 2008, proposals were drawn up and a public consultation exercise was subsequently conducted. The accident data used in the feasibility study process was for the 5 years preceeding the study (2002 - 2007). The scheme was approved in September 2008 by the Head of Technical Services and appropriate Cabinet Member. Funding was allocated to the scheme at the start of the financial year 2009/10, and construction began in August 2009. The Road Casualty Review 2009 refers to accident statistics in the latest 3 year period, therefore 2007 to date.

There were 2 slight and 1 serious accident at the first bend encountered upon entering Surbiton Road from Bishopton Road West between 2002 - 2007. This is in the vicinity of Kirkwall Close and due to the accident record in this locality it was felt that a speed reducing feature was necessary in order to reduce the risk of further accidents occurring.

The independent Road Safety Audit also recommends that this feature be completed, and the installation of the speed cushion achieves this. Following its implementation it is anticipated that vehicle speeds will reduce further still, particularly southbound. The speed reduction would ensure potential for accidents is reduced, or that the severity of any that do occur will lessen. It is worth noting that for each 1mph reduction in average vehicle speed as a result of traffic calming, injury accidents reduce by around 5%.

CONSULTATION

Issue

Residents were consulted on the proposal to install an additional single speed cushion and those views were not taken into consideration. A decision to proceed has already been made.

Response

The original consultation exercise in 2008 had a 45% response rate with 338 households returning their reply slip. Of those, 251 (75%) were in support, 85 (25%) were not in support and 2 were undecided. As you are aware 13 households were consulted on the proposed new speed cushion, 6 replies were returned of which 5 were opposed and 1 was in support.

I appreciate this latest exercise was mis-represented and residents should have been informed/advised of the new speed cushion rather than consulted. I apologise for the confusion this may have caused and the internal procedure has now been modified to accommodate / prioritise the

Road Safety Audit process / recommendations and these will now be presented to residents for information rather than as a consultative exercise.

The statutory advertising of the new speed cushion ended on 18 November 2010 and there are a total of 3 formal objections for consideration.

DRIVER BEHAVIOUR

Issue

Cars do not give way as directed which will be made worse by a speed cushion because drivers on one side will have to slow down giving chance for the other side to put their foot down.

Motorists drive around the chicane on the pavement to pass cars rather than give way. A better solution would be to remove the chicane and have speed cushions installed up to the table top junction.

Response

It is expected that vehicle speeds will reduce as a result of implementing the speed cushion. A speed cushion would physically deter northbound drivers trying to negotiate the feature before an approaching southbound vehicle because they will have to reduce speed due to the impending speed cushion. The cushion should also contribute towards reducing instances of vehicles mounting the footway, but if this persists bollards will be considered.

To remove the existing build out, re-construct the carriageway and install a set of two speed cushions would incur additional unnecessary costs since the existing feature could be completed by the installation of a single speed cushion. A proposal to install speed cushions along the length of Surbiton Road was investigated at the feasibility study stage at residents' requests. This would have resulted in 12 sets of 2 speed cushions which was rejected by the emergency services and bus operators and was subsequently withdrawn.

Please would you consider the information provided, in this and previous correspondence. The next stage of the process is to ask you to consider your objection in terms of if you wish to uphold or withdraw your objection to the proposed single speed cushion. If you wish to uphold your objection, the matter will be referred to the Council's Appeals and Complaints Committee for consideration. As a formal objector, you will be invited to attend the Committee meeting and be given every opportunity to present your case to the Committee Members. I understand you have already received notification from Democratic Services that an Appeals and Complaints Committee has been arranged for 15 December 2010 and this item is provisionally on the Agenda, although if all unresolved objections are withdrawn the item can be removed from the Agenda.

Please could you complete the attached reply slip indicating your intentions and return it by 6 December 2010. A pre-paid envelope is attached for your convenience.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely


Simon Milner
Network Safety Manager

Encl.

CC: Councillor M. Perry
Sue Wilkinson, Legal Services, Municipal Buildings

Councillor W. Woodhead