

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO APPEALS & COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

11 JULY 2022

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES, ENVIRONMENT & CULTURE

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL, SOBER HALL AVENUE, INGLEBY BARWICK, TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEME

1.0 SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' views on unresolved objections received following the statutory advertising of a proposal to implement a traffic calming scheme on Sober Hall Avenue, Ingleby Barwick, consisting of 4 sets of speed cushions on the section of road between Blair Avenue and Round Hill Avenue.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- (i) Members give consideration to the objection raised by the 4 objectors and also to the comments of Community Services, Environment and Culture.
- (ii) The local Ward Councillors, Ingleby Barwick Town Council and the objectors be informed of the Committee's recommendation.
- (iii) The Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture consider the committee's recommendation.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The proposed traffic calming measures on the section of Sober Hall Avenue between Blair Avenue and Round Hill Avenue are a result of an investigation into alleged speed related issues on Sober Hall Avenue, Ingleby Barwick which was identified as a priority by the Ingleby Barwick West Ward Councillors to address concerns relating to speeding issues raised by local residents.
- 3.2 Sober Hall Avenue is one of the main feeder roads for the Sober Hall Estate and is part of a local bus route serving the area. No properties directly front Sober Hall Avenue. Access to residential properties located to the east, is via Sober Hall Avenue only. A large grass verge and footway is provided on the eastern side of the carriageway. A large, grassed/wooded area to the west, incorporating a cycleway/pedestrian footway runs parallel to the road.
- 3.3 An automatic speed survey was carried out on Sober Hall Avenue, north of Langleeford Way over a 7 day period to establish prevailing vehicle speeds. The survey was carried out in March 2019. The speed survey on Sober Hall Avenue indicates northbound and southbound average speeds are below police enforcement levels, however, 85%ile speeds for southbound traffic are above police enforcement levels. The 85%ile speed is the speed at which 85% of vehicles are travelling.

Sober Hall Avenue	Direction	Average Speed mph	85%ile mph
North of Langleeford Way	Northbound	26	32.8
	Southbound	30.6	36.1

- 3.4 The investigation, which included the length of Sober Hall Avenue from Blair Avenue southwards to Hawkridge Close identified a number of potential speed reducing options. The ward councillors chose to progress a traffic calming scheme to the north of Round Hill Avenue as this is the section of road that has received most residents' complaints. It is therefore proposed to introduce an environmental traffic calming scheme including the provision of 4 sets of speed cushions on the section of Sober Hall Avenue to the north of Round Hill Avenue. **(See drawing no.TM12/75 in Appendix 1)**. Regulatory advanced warning signs and SLOW road markings are also proposed on the approach to the traffic calming features.
- 3.5 Full carriageway resurfacing is to be carried out on the proposed traffic calmed section of Sober Hall Avenue prior to the commencement of works to implement the scheme.
- 3.6 A report, presented to the Cabinet Member and Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture on 19th May 2022 received approval by the Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture for progression of the necessary Traffic Regulation Notice associated with the Sober Hall Avenue traffic calming scheme.
- 3.7 A Notice for the proposed scheme was advertised in the Evening Gazette, Stockton's website and on site on 15 June 2022 with the objection period ending on 6 July 2022. Following the publication of the Statutory Notice, the Transport Strategy and Road Safety Manager formally received four emails of objection, attached at **Appendix 2**.

4.0 DETAILS OF THE OBJECTION/RESPONSE

A copy of the outstanding objections (including the council response) from Lee Copeland email leejasoncopeland@gmail.com dated 17 June 2022, Tim Bounds email tim.bounds@ntlworld.com dated 30 June 2022, Robin Allison email robin.allison@me.com dated 5 July 2022 and Mark Hodgson email inglebytoytown@hotmail.com dated 17 June 2022 are attached as **Appendix 2**.

Summary of concerns:

1. Failure to consult: Despite being a resident in the Sober Hall Avenue area no prior consultation or notice has been provided to affected residents.
2. Speed humps make sense in some places, but not everywhere. The road has a 30mph limit and crossing the humps at anything over walking pace, causes noise and damage to vehicles.
3. Putting in traffic calming measures would create a nuisance for drivers, create delays for emergency vehicles, and delay and create discomfort for Bus passengers – both the main bus routes through Ingleby use this road.
4. Sober Hall Avenue is clearly not a residential road – there are no houses fronting on to it. The measures proposed would be more appropriate for a residential street. Sober Hall Avenue is a well designed safe local main road, with good visibility, and the pavement is separated from the road by a wide verge. I'm not aware of any accidents or particular problems with the road. I cannot see what benefits would result from traffic calming.
5. The proposed speed humps will cause higher local noise and atmospheric pollution to the local area.

6. Speed humps are a painful and uncomfortable attempt at supposed speed reductions on roads. These proposed speed humps are on the local bus route along Sober Hall.
7. The installation of speed humps also causes road subsidence/damage at the point of the hump. This can clearly be seen if you visit the Teesside industrial estate road system. The speed cushions can be seen to have caused the road surface to subside around a large number of them.
8. The speed humps that have been proposed to "Reduce speeding". Yet there is no evidence that speed humps will reduce speeding, as they only reduce a vehicles speed at the point of the speed hump.
9. If speed checks have been requested, please provide the evidence from police records and speeds of convictions issued. Speed monitoring data has not been shown to back up the evidence of speeding on Sober Hall Avenue. If monitoring has been carried out, please provide the data gathered.
10. Can Stockton Borough Council provide evidence of RTA's on Sober Hall Avenue, that show speeding to be the main cause of the RTA's.
11. The Number of speed humps proposed is excessive. How has the high number of speed humps been decided?
12. There is no mention of the cost associated with the installation of this proposed project but with the scope of the shown layout, this will be in excess of £100K to install. Sober Hall Avenue is already in a poor state of repair, with substandard repairs already been carried out, i.e. junction of Sober Hall Avenue and Blair Avenue. I would propose that the funds be better spent repairing the road network of Ingleby Barwick and allowing the Cleveland police to enforce the current posted speed limits.

Summary of responses:

1. The proposed scheme has been advertised in the local press and Notices were posted on site which allowed for a statutory 21 day objection period. It is only normal practice to consult residents about traffic calming proposals if their properties front the road in question, and as this is not the case for Sober Hall Avenue direct consultation with residents from neighbouring streets was not necessary on this occasion.
2. An appropriate speed for driving over speed cushions is less than 20mph, Transport Research Laboratory studies have shown that the speeds vehicles travel over speed cushions are around 14mph. Speed cushions are thereby one of the most effective traffic calming measures available to local authorities. Each 1mph reduction in average vehicle speed as a result of traffic calming has been found to reduce accidents by around 5%. The Government's traffic calming policies are evidence based and thereby undergo extensive tests and trials before they are introduced nationally. Regulations relating to the dimensions of road humps and speed cushions can be found in 'The Highways (Road Humps) Regulations 1999'. This legislation provides that the features must be between 25mm and 100mm in height. A height of up to 100mm is permissible although the Department for Transport recommends the use of 75mm high. The speed cushions proposed for Sober Hall Avenue are 75mm in height, \pm 10% tolerance. Provided the features conform to the dimensions specified in the Regulations, vehicles travelling over them at appropriately low speeds should not suffer damage and the Council, as the Highway Authority, would not be liable for any damage caused to vehicles.
3. The size of the proposed cushions allow larger vehicles to align and straddle the cushions to reduce any discomfort, the Bus Operators and emergency services have been consulted

on the proposals and have raised no objections. The proposed measures for Sober Hall Avenue are in line with traffic calming measures already implemented on Blair Avenue and Beckfields Avenue which are also bus routes serving the local area.

4. There have been 2 recorded pedestrian injury accidents on the section of Sober Hall Avenue between Blair Avenue and Round Hill Avenue within the last 3 years. One of which resulted in a slight injury and one in a serious injury. The proposed traffic calming would reduce vehicle speeds which in turn would improve pedestrian safety. Traffic calming has been found to be particularly effective at reducing vehicle speeds, as well as the frequency and severity of accidents.

5. It is acknowledged that the TRL 482 report referred to indicates the mean emission rates may increase, however, it was estimated that the increased emission rates were unlikely to have resulted in poor local air quality. It also states that, even though traffic calming generally results in increased emissions per vehicle it is unlikely that it would result in breaches of air quality standards. Furthermore, the improving performance of emission control technology with time means that, in the future breaches of the standards would be even less likely to occur as a result of traffic calming. Residential properties are at a far enough distance away from the proposed features to suggest that any increase in noise levels would be minimal and are not likely to be of practical significance.

6. The size of the proposed cushions allow larger vehicles to align and straddle the cushions to reduce any discomfort, the Bus Operators and emergency services have been consulted on the proposals and have raised no objections.

7. Stockton Borough Council actively respond to and repair any potholes/damage classed as actionable defects as and when required and have done many and continue to do so in the Ingleby Barwick area. We have also carried out programmed patching in some areas along with continued carriageway resurfacing schemes. Carriageway resurfacing on the proposed traffic calmed section of Sober Hall Avenue would be carried as part of the proposed scheme.

8. Speed cushions are one of the most effective traffic calming measures available to local authorities. Each 1mph reduction in average vehicle speed as a result of traffic calming has been found to reduce accidents by around 5%.

9. Sober Hall Avenue is not a police core site for speed enforcement, but it is a complaint site and targeted enforcement is carried out periodically. The last police speed enforcement action was carried out in June 2021 which resulted in 4 offences.

10. The proposed traffic calming measures have been community lead and have not been based on accident information. However, there have been 2 recorded pedestrian injury accidents on the section of Sober Hall Avenue between Blair Avenue and Round Hill Avenue within the last 3 years. One of which resulted in a slight injury and one in a serious injury. The proposed traffic calming would reduce vehicle speeds which in turn would improve pedestrian safety. Traffic calming has been found to be particularly effective at reducing vehicle speeds, as well as the frequency and severity of accidents.

11. The number of speed cushion proposed follows the Department for Transport guidance on the distance suggested between the features, which should be no more than 100-150 metres apart, with the optimum spacing of 75m to avoid drivers adopting an aggressive style of driving, with heavy braking and acceleration between humps.

12. The scheme is to be funded through the Ingleby Barwick West Ward allocation of the Ward Transport Budget; this budget is provided to spend on transport priorities within the ward that would not be eligible for funding from the core road safety budget. The Ingleby Barwick West Ward Councillors have therefore been active members in the scheme's

development. The carriageway resurfacing would be funded from the Local Transport Plan allocation.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The estimated cost to provide 4 sets of speed cushions and the associated signing and lining is estimated to be £35,000. To be funded from the Ingleby Barwick West Ward Transport Budget allocation.

6.0 POLICY CONTENT

The proposal is consistent with the Council's Local Transport Plan and Safer Communities Strategy

7.0 CONSULTATION – see Appendix 3

The Officers Traffic Group, local Ward Councillors, Ingleby Barwick Town Council, Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture and Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport were consulted on the proposals.

The Officers Traffic Group - bus operators queried the vicinity of the features to bus stops. Response - the proposed speed cushions would be located at a suitable distance of approx. 15m from bus stops.

Local Ward Councillors - the Ingleby Barwick West Ward Councillors are supportive and have been active members in the scheme's development.

Statutory consultations for the proposed Traffic Regulation Notice involving advertising on site, Stockton's website and in the local press were undertaken; this resulted in four outstanding objections being received. The objectors will be invited to the Appeals Committee.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The proposed measures will ensure that vehicles are driven at an appropriate speed at all times on the section of Sober Hall Avenue between round Hill Avenue and Blair Avenue. The proposed traffic calming would reduce vehicle speeds which in turn would improve pedestrian safety. Traffic calming has been found to be particularly effective at reducing vehicle speeds, as well as the frequency and severity of accidents.

It is requested that the Committee recommend the objections are over-ruled to address the speed related concerns and the traffic calming measures are implemented as proposed.

Corporate Director of Community Services, Environment and Culture

Contact Officer : **Ann McLone**
Telephone : **01642 526772**
Email Address : **ann.mclone@stockton.gov.uk**

Environmental Implications

The measures proposed should ensure a safe and attractive environment for local residents.

Community Safety Implications

Addresses speed related road safety concerns.

Background Papers

Scheme of Delegation Report CS.10.22, Sober Hall Avenue Findings report

TRL report no. 482 <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/17301234.pdf>

TRL report no. 417 <https://trl.co.uk/uploads/trl/documents/TRL417.pdf>

Education Related Item?

No

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Ingleby Barwick West : Councillors Ken Dixon, Kevin Faulks & Ross Patterson