

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO APPEALS & COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

3rd MARCH 2011

REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TURTON ROAD / WILLEY FLATT LANE, YARM – PROPOSED ENVIRONMENTAL TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEME

1.0 SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Member's views regarding outstanding objections received following the advertising of vertical deflection traffic calming features on Turton Road / Willey Flatt Lane in Yarm.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:-

- (i) Members given consideration to the objections 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, Yarm Town Council, the Yarm and Willey Flatt Residents Group and the objectors are informed of the Committee's recommendation.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The scheme was instigated by the Yarm and Willey Flatt Residents Group following concerns expressed by residents in the area with regard to the speed of some drivers on Turton Road and Willey Flatt Lane. The Residents Group worked along side Stockton Council's Community Engineer to develop the scheme, briefly comprising four sets of double speed cushions along the length of the roads, a speed cushion and build out at the southern end, together with relevant warning signs. 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 91 of respondents supported the scheme. In all 63 homes were consulted, with responses received from 33, of which 30 supported the scheme, with 20 being opposed.
- 3.3 The scheme was subsequently progressed through the relevant consultation procedure involving Ward Councillors, Town Council, Officers Traffic Group 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/35/10 in **Appendix 1**).

- 3.4 Although no funding was identified to implement the scheme in 2010/11, at their Spring 2010 meeting Western Area Transport Strategy (ATS) Stakeholders requested that the statutory consultations associated with the scheme be undertaken; with a view to possibly allocating funding in future years. (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 local press and on site on 11th November 2010. Following the publication of the statutory Notices, the Director of Law and Democracy received three letters of objection, though one has subsequently withdrawn. A copy of the outstanding objectors letters, from Mr J Swales, 57 Worsall Road and Mr P Stokes, 41 Eskdale Close, and subsequent correspondence are attached in **Appendix 2**.

4.0 OBJECTION DETAILS

- 4.1 **Mr J Swales** - No need for the scheme, problems are on Worsall Road, traffic calming features are unsightly, cause noise and damage to vehicles and are dangerous. Tax payers' money should be spent elsewhere.
- 4.2 **Mr P Stokes** - Scheme is unnecessary, expensive, traffic calming measures have no proven safety record, humps cause damage to vehicles, no evidence that the scheme is justified on road safety grounds, expenditure is unnecessary.

Discussion Response

- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 The Community Engineer has worked alongside the Yarm & Willey Flatt Residents Group to develop a traffic calming for Turton Road / Willey Flatt Lane and subsequently arranged a consultation exercise.
- 4.6 The extent of the consultation exercise included in all properties with frontages onto the roads, in line with standard practice, and was agreed with the Residents Group.
- 4.7 With regards to the specific points raised by both objectors:-
- As stated above, since 1993 developers are required to calm residential estate roads to ensure an average speed of 20mph via the road alignment and /or use of traffic calming features.

In response to an increasing number of requests to provide traffic calming on residential roads built prior to 1993, the Council developed the Community Engineer initiative.

The Turton Road / Willey Flatt Lane scheme was identified as the priority for the Yarm and Willey Flatt Residents Group. The scheme is supported by 91% of residents who responded to the questionnaire.

- Although this particular scheme was not prompted by the injury accident record, an injury accident involving serious injuries to a child pedal cyclist occurred on Turton Road in July 2010. The financial cost of collisions to society can be calculated using figures issued by the Department for Transport (DfT). The average cost of a collision in Stockton in 2009 was £107,539 per injury collision, rising to £215,170 for a serious collision. The cost of the scheme is estimated at £18,000.
- The traffic calming scheme detailed for Turton Road / Willey Flatt lane takes into account buses using the road and for the comfort and safety of passengers, speed cushions are proposed. Speed cushions were designed to allow emergency vehicles to straddle them; they are also the preferred vertical deflection measure on bus routes. If the features are negotiated at an appropriately low speed, no damage to vehicles should occur.
- Noise level differences which residents attribute to speed cushions tend to be well within limits put forward by British Standards and in research by organisations such as the Transport Research Laboratory. Complaints relating to noise have been found to be generated by a change in the character of noise rather than the noise levels becoming subsequently increased. It is hoped that the scheme will have a general calming effect on traffic along the lengths of the roads, and hence on traffic noise.
- DfT research indicates that for every 1mph reduction in average speeds as a result of traffic calming a 5% reduction in accidents can be anticipated. The reduction in vehicle speeds co-incidentally reduces the potential for injury accidents, or the severity of any accidents that may occur.
- With regard to B1265 Worsall Road, we are aware of residents' concerns with regard to speeding traffic. Although enforcement is a police responsibility, the Council have recently installed a Speed Indication Device and permanent camera signing to encourage lower speeds. These measures are not, however, appropriate to a road which is more residential in character, such as Turton Road / Willey Flatt Lane.

5.0 FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The scheme is a contender 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 Yarm & Willey Flatt Residents Group, working alongside Stockton Council's Community Engineer. A public consultation exercise has been carried out with local residents, and this resulted in a support role for the scheme of approximately 91%. The police and bus operators have no objections to the proposals.

Councillor Sherris has indicated his support for the scheme, Yarm Town Council have indicated they have no objections; responses were not received from the other Ward Councillors.

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 has resulted in two outstanding objections being received. The objectors have been invited to the Appeals Committee meeting.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The measures proposed should reduce traffic speeds which should in turn reduce the potential for accidents (or the severity of an accidents which do occur).

Corporate Director of Development and Neighbourhood Services

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Environmental Implications

The scheme should make the road a safer place for all road users in particular children, thus ensuring that the Borough continues to be a safe, healthy and attractive place in which to live and work.

Community Safety Implications

The provision of the traffic calming measures addresses the concerns of residents within the road with particular reference to speeding vehicles whilst improving public safety.

Background Papers

Scheme of Delegation Report TS.T.35.10
Letters from the objectors.

Education Related Item?

No.

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Yarm : Councillor's Jennie Beaumont, Jackie Earl and Andrew Sherris