

**DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the Highways Committee** held at the County Hall, Durham on **Wednesday 11 March 2009 at 10.00 a.m.**

**Present:**

**Councillor D Morgan** in the Chair

**Members of the Committee:**

Councillors Arthur, Bailey, A Bainbridge, A Bell, Burn, Burnip, C Carr, Gittins, Hugill, Hunter, Maddison, Magee, D Marshall, B Myers, Naylor, C Potts, Rodgers, Shiell, Southwell, Stradling, Todd, Tomlinson, Walker, Wilkes, Wood, Woods, Wright and Zair.

**Other Member:**

Councillor Shield.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Bell, Farry, Hancock, Maslin, and B Wilson.

**A1 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2009 were considered. The minute, amended to record the attendance of Councillor D Maddison, was agreed as a correct record.

**A2 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor C Carr as a resident of Great Lumley in relation to item A3, and as Chairman of the Licensing Committee in relation to item A4.

**A3 Unclassified Cambridge Drive, Great Lumley- Proposed Traffic Calming**

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director, Environment regarding the traffic calming scheme proposed for Unclassified Cambridge Drive, Great Lumley (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Chairman advised that Councillor Willis, the Local Member, unfortunately could not be present at the meeting, however, had asked that her concerns about the proposals be made to the Committee. A copy of her letter of objection was circulated to the Committee (for copy see file of Minutes). The Corporate Director, Environment read the letter to the Committee.

In relation to the concerns raised by the Member, the Corporate Director, Environment advised that although the accident on Cambridge Drive was a number of years ago, speed of vehicles on that stretch of road remained high. In his opinion chicanes at this location would not have the same effect as road humps. Chicanes had been installed in many areas, however, many of these had been revisited and alternative methods of traffic calming introduced. The Corporate Director, Environment pointed out that they had consulted 191 people about the proposals, however, he was not aware of the circumstances of the person that Councillor Willis advised had not been consulted. The Corporate Director, Environment advised that the road is adjacent to a field used by young people which creates a hazard as they cross this busy section of the highway. Councillor Willis advised that the report should be amended to reflect that she is against the scheme but would support an alternative scheme i.e. chicanes.

Councillor A Bell, the Local Member, advised of his support to the scheme. He pointed out that the survey indicated that over 50% of vehicles were travelling above 30 mph. The road was used as a through road, and in the past police vehicles used this as a training route. He pointed out that people go through the gaps in the hedge to access the playing field, and then when coming back, have to cross the road which is immediately adjacent to the field. Often their visibility when crossing the road is hampered by parked vehicles. He supported the scheme and does not want another accident on this stretch of road.

Councillor C Carr questioned whether the Committee should delay making its decision until it had undertaken a site meeting, as suggested by Councillor Willis.

Councillor Wilkes enquired whether there had been any other measures undertaken on this road in order to prevent speeding.

Councillor C Walker advised that there were a high number of children and young people being killed in the county, and that measures should be taken to prevent accidents on this road. Councillor Walker advised that in his opinion chicanes were not the answer as there were some in his ward which were causing problems.

Councillor Southwell questioned whether a zebra crossing would be appropriate and more effective and went on to suggest that if the land was owned by the County Council a fence be erected next to the hedge. He sought clarification on the number of people that had been consulted as not all seemed to be accounted for in the report.

Councillor D Marshall questioned whether it was possible to have other types of traffic calming such as colour surfacing and rumble strips. He sought clarification on the funding of this scheme.

The Corporate Director, Environment advised that the request for a site visit from Councillor Willis had been very recent. However the Corporate Director, Environment suggested that Members of the Committee could see very clearly the situation with the photos and plans which he had shown. A joint funding package for this scheme had been agreed between the two Local Members. The Corporate Director,

Environment advised that if Councillor Willis no longer wished to fund the scheme from her Member Allowance the whole cost could be met from the other Local Member. The Corporate Director, Environment explained that officers had assessed the situation and having borne in mind the high speed of vehicles on that road, speed humps was the only measure that he considered would be suitable.

Councillor Tomlinson enquired whether there was any formal access into the playing fields, and if so then they may be able to do something about crossing between the hedge.

The Corporate Director, Environment advised that the speeding of traffic was through the whole village and not just by the hedge adjacent to the football field. Therefore it would not be possible to introduce one single measure such as a zebra crossing. He pointed out that rumble strips result in considerable noise and he would presume that residents would not be in favour. Whilst we receive many reports for traffic calming, few would display such existing vehicle speeds. He provided clarification on the number of residents that had been consulted.

Councillor A Bell confirmed that the land was privately owned. He pointed out that speed surveys were available and could let Members have them if they so wished.

Councillor Southwell enquired about the comments from the police.

The Corporate Director, Environment explained that as indicated in paragraph 2.8 of the report, the police were in support. He went on to read out their letter of support from the police. He explained that they have not attempted to introduce any other form of traffic calming on this road as officers had determined that in this location speed cushions was the most appropriate.

**Resolved:-**

The report together with the recommendations included therein be approved.

**A4 Section 115- Highways Act 1980 Application to Place Tables and Chairs on Highway Outside 1 Market Place, Bishop Auckland**

The Committee considered a report of the Corporate Director, Environment regarding the application to place tables and chairs on an area of the highway outside 1 Market Place, Bishop Auckland (for copy see file of Minutes).

The applicant, Mr Devgan of the Queens Head Hotel, was present to answer any questions.

Members questioned the times that the tables and chairs would be placed on the highway, whether it would interfere with the market in the town centre, would the area be designated, and would it cause an obstruction. The Corporate Director, Environment advised that there are some tables and chairs in the market place area which has been operating well without causing an obstruction. The proposed tables and chairs would not be in use on a market day, the designated area would be

delineated by a portable barrier, and taken down on market days. He went on to advise that a wider regeneration of the area was planned and this would fit into that.

Mr Devgan pointed out that the licence granted was from 9 a.m. until 2 a.m., the tables and chairs to be used until 2 a.m. was therefore appropriate. They would not be able to use tables and chairs on a Thursday and Saturday which were the market days. He pointed out that this would attract to the area a high class clientele, and which is intended would fit in with the renaissance project that is intended for the town centre. The market place stalls are erected and taken down on the market days so it would not have a knock on effect to the day before or after.

Councillor Wilkes enquired about the cleanliness of the area. Mr Devgan advised that they would keep the area clean and tidy and this was part of the conditions attached to the granting of the application.

Councillor Bailey suggested that Members should see the list of conditions attached to this application before the Committee made a decision. He questioned whether plastic glasses would be used, as from his experience of working in the trade they may be used at first however these conditions may slip.

Councillor Woods pointed out that polycarbonate glasses are used in public houses in Durham City on a Friday and Saturday nights and it is very difficult to see any difference between those and glass. She welcomed the application and was pleased that the derelict building would be tidied up and it would be a start to the regeneration of the area.

The Committee considered that although the conditions of the application being granted were not attached to the report, they had sufficient information to be able to make a decision on a matter which affects the highway as it is not a licensing application.

Councillor C Carr asked that in future the Committee have sight of the conditions that would be attached to any similar application.

**Resolved:-**

1. The report together with the recommendations included therein be approved.
2. Any future reports have attached the conditions that would be applied to the granting of the application.