

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the **Highways Committee** held at County Hall, Durham on
Wednesday 29 September 2010 at 10am

Present:

Councillor G BLEASDALE

Chair

Members of the Committee:

Councillors Arthur, A Bainbridge, Burn, Foster, Hancock, Hugill, Naylor, Robinson, Shiell, T Taylor, Thomson, Tomlinson, Wright and R Young

Officers:

D Wilcox (Strategic Highways Manager), D Wafer (Business Manager, Regeneration & Economic Development), P Holding (Legal Adviser), S Thompson (Professional Assistant), A Leadbeater (Section Manager), D Battensby (Area Traffic Engineer) and D Roberts (Democratic Services)

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Maslin, Morgan, Stradling, and Woods

A1 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

A2 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2 September 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

A3 Objections to proposed B6282 Speed Limit Order

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development advising of objections received from residents of Etherley Grange following the advertising of a proposed new speed limit order for the entire length of the B6282 road.

The report summarised the background to the proposal, which was the result of a review of speed limits on the full length of the B6282, taking into account factors such as the existing measured mean speed driven on the road, length, type and amount of development and accident history. Following publication of the proposed Traffic Regulation Order eight objections had been received to the retention of the existing 40mph through Etherley Grange.

The report outlined the reasons for proposing to retain the 40mph speed limit, including the measured mean speed (39.3mph), the characteristics of the area and of the highway and the comparatively low accident rate (2 recorded personal injury accidents over the last three years).

The objections raised were detailed in the report and the Committee was also addressed by Mr K Carter, objector. Mr Carter emphasised that safety was of paramount concern to the residents of Etherley Grange. He referred to his personal experience of living there, including a number of traffic accidents and 'near misses' which, whilst not recorded due to there being no 'personal injury', should serve as a warning to the Committee that the existing 40mph speed limit was inappropriate. With regard to whether or not Etherley Grange should be regarded as a 'village', he argued that it should be and that a 30mph speed limit would therefore be appropriate. He also referred to the narrow footway on this stretch of road, which meant that pedestrians and wheelchair users were particularly vulnerable.

In responding to the points made by Mr Carter, and to questions from members, the Strategic Highways Manager agreed that safety was paramount but reiterated the reasons for recommending that the 40mph speed limit should be retained; the built environment of Etherley Grange meant that it did not constitute a 'village' according to Department of Transport guidelines, which also recommended that the speed limit should be aligned to the mean speed driven on the road. It was noted that the police supported retention of the 40mph speed limit but would be likely to object to a reduction to 30mph.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal to retain the existing speed limit of 40mph on that part of the B6282 road passing through Etherley Grange, Bishop Auckland be not supported.

A4 Bus Stops – Harmire Road, Barnard Castle

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development advising of representations received with regard to the proposed introduction of two bus stops at Hillcrest and 25 Harmire Road, Barnard traffic.

The report summarised the background to the proposal, which had been made following a request from Barnard Castle Town Council, the original request having been made by a member of the public. Following a Bus Stop Consultative Meeting it was agreed that the safest and most convenient locations would be on the boundary of numbers 25 & 27 (western side of the road) and on the boundary of Hillcrest and Penhill (eastern side of the road). Following consultation with those living in properties directly affected by the proposals, two objections had been received (from the occupants of Penhill and 25 Harmire Road). The objections were detailed in the report and the Strategic Highways Manager also referred to a further email received from the occupier of Penhill which restated his objections. It was noted that, in response to the objections, it was now proposed to situate the bus stop on the eastern side of the road wholly on the frontage of Hillcrest, the occupier of which had registered approval of the original proposal. It was noted that local members were supportive of the proposal.

RESOLVED:

That the objections be set aside and that bus stops be installed as outlined in the report.

A5 Proposed Traffic Calming Scheme: C60 Margaret Street, Ludworth

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services advising of representations received with regard to the proposed introduction of a traffic calming scheme on C60 Margaret Street, Ludworth..

The report summarised the background to the proposal, which had been made following representations by local members and the parish council about speeding. It was noted that local members and the police were in support of the proposal.

One objection to the proposal was received as the result of a consultation exercise and this was referred to in the report, together with the Council's response. It was noted that the objector had reiterated his concerns in a recent email.

RESOLVED:

That the representations be set aside and that a traffic calming scheme be introduced on C60 Margaret Street, Ludworth, as outlined in the report.

A6 Proposed Traffic Calming Scheme: Unc. 20.16 Hallgarth Lane, Pittington

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services advising of representations received with regard to a proposed traffic calming scheme for Unc. 20.16 Hallgarth Lane, Pittington.

Members were reminded that a traffic calming scheme for Pittington had been approved for implementation at the Committee's meeting in June 2010. Following this, however, a minor discrepancy had been found between the advertised drawing and the legal description of the location of one set of speed cushions on Hallgarth Lane. This had necessitated the publication of a further legal notice, which had in turn resulted in two additional objections being received; these were summarised in the report.

Mr Storey was present at the meeting and outlined his objections to the proposal; he noted that there had been no accidents on Hallgarth Lane itself and he did not believe that there was a problem with speeding either. He argued that noise and vibration caused by traffic passing over the speed cushions would be a nuisance and that vibration would cause damage to neighbouring houses and the road itself. He alleged that some people had been driven to move out of houses close to speed humps and that research showed that fuel consumption and emissions rose in vehicles negotiating speed humps/cushions. He also claimed that they could cause damage to cars, caused discomfort for drivers and passengers with back problems and delayed emergency vehicles. He concluded that there were 'better and cheaper' means of traffic calming and suggested that these should be explored.

The Strategic Highways Manager responded to these comments and emphasised that he believed that the proposed traffic calming scheme would help to reduce the levels of speeding in the area.

RESOLVED:

That the amended legal notice be noted and that the additional representations be set aside to allow the scheme to proceed as agreed at the last meeting of the Committee.

A7 Proposed Parking Restriction (No Waiting/Loading At Any Time) Unc. Black Road, Langley Moor

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services advising of representations received with regard to the proposed introduction of parking restrictions on Unc Black Road, Langley Moor.

The report summarised the background to the proposal, which had been made following expressions of concern about parking close to the junction with the A690 after the provision of a cash point at this location. The situation had been further exacerbated since Tesco had imposed restrictions on the use of its car park, which had resulted in some displacement of vehicles onto Black Road.

A public consultation exercise resulted in 5 objections (a total of 10 responses had been received from 28 properties that had been sent letters) and these were summarised in the report, together with the Council's response. The local member and the police were supportive of the proposal.

One of the objectors, Mr Bone, addressed the Committee; he noted that parking difficulties had only been experienced since Tesco had imposed a waiting limit on vehicles parking in the store car park, which had resulted in the displacement of parked vehicles onto Black Road.

The Strategic Highways Manager responded to these comments and to questions from members; he agreed to investigate the possibility of some nearby open space being utilised for car parking.

RESOLVED:

That the representations be set aside and that a parking restriction (No Waiting/Loading At Any Time) be introduced on Unc Black Road, Langley Moor, as outlined in the report.

A8 Proposed Traffic Calming: Unc. Helford Road & Southway, Peterlee

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood Services advising of representations received with regard to a proposed traffic calming scheme for Unc. Helford Road & Southway, Peterlee.

The report summarised the background to the proposal, which had been made following representations about vehicle speeds. The scheme would involve the installation of a series of speed cushions on Southway and a combination of cushions and humps on Helford Road.

A public consultation exercise resulted in 9 objections (from a total of 327 letters sent to residents) and these were outlined in the report, together with the Council's response. It was noted that local members and the police supported the scheme.

RESOLVED:

That the representations be set aside and that a traffic calming scheme be introduced on Unc. Helford Road & Southway, Peterlee, as outlined in the report.

A9 Objections to the (Seaham) (Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting and Prohibition of Loading/Unloading) Traffic Regulation Order 2010

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development advising of objections received to the above Order, the effect of which would be to re-advertise existing restrictions in advance of the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE).

Members were reminded that CPE had been introduced in Durham District in October 2008, with a view to its introduction in the north of County Durham in 2010 and in the south in 2011. CPE meant that the local authority was responsible for enforcing on-street parking controls instead of the police and enabled the Council to issue Penalty Charge Notices in respect of parking contraventions. CPE also allowed the Council to link parking enforcement (on-street and off-street) with other transport priorities such as reducing congestion and promoting road safety.

As a result of the formal advertising of the above Order, which reflected current restrictions, 11 objections had been received. These were summarised in the report together with the Council's response. The Strategic Highways Manager reported that a number of the objectors had reiterated their objections by email since the committee report on this matter had been circulated. He noted that, where further information/clarification had been requested, this had been provided.

RESOLVED:

That the objections be set aside and that the Traffic Regulation Order be implemented as advertised.

A10 Objections to the (Chester le Street & Birtley) (Prohibition and Restriction of Waiting and Prohibition of Loading/Unloading & parking Places) Traffic Regulation Order 2010

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development advising of objections received to the above Order, the effect of which would be to re-introduce existing restrictions in advance of the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE).

As a result of the formal advertising of the above Order, which reflected current restrictions, 3 objections had been received. These were summarised in the report together with the Council's response. The Strategic Highways Manager reported that one of the objectors had reiterated and elaborated on his objections by email since the committee report on this matter had been circulated.

Police Inspector Cook addressed the meeting on behalf the police, who had lodged an objection with regard to the proposed removal of loading restrictions at Ropery Lane, Lindisfarne Avenue/Roman Avenue and Cone Terrace. Inspector Cook noted that the police, whilst generally supportive of the Order and of the Council's desire to cut down on 'street clutter' (road signs etc), had specific concerns about the aforementioned locations; he outlined their concerns in respect of each one. Members then had an opportunity to comment/ask questions and the Strategic Highways Manager responded accordingly.

RESOLVED:

That, with the exception of the restrictions in place at Ropery Lane and Lindisfarne Avenue/Roman Avenue, the objections be set aside and the Traffic Regulation Order be implemented as advertised.

A11 Transit 15: Responses to public consultation for schemes at A167 Barley Mow and A691/C62 Kaysburn Roundabout

The Committee considered the report of the Corporate Director, Regeneration and Economic Development advising of feedback received following consultations on two Transit 15 schemes involving changes to the existing road layouts at:

- A167 Barley Mow Improvement
- A691/C62 Kaysburn Roundabout Improvement

Members were reminded that Transit 15 was the major public transport project to be implemented during the final year of the current local transport plan (LTP2) and the early years of the successor plan (LTP3). As previously agreed, members were to be kept informed of progress across the whole project, hence the current report.

The background to each of the schemes referred to above was summarised in the report, together with the responses received in each case. It was noted that no objections had been received from local members in either case and that the emergency services generally were supportive of the schemes.

RESOLVED:

That the response to the public consultation in respect of the Transit 15 schemes referred to above be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.30pm

CHAIR