

Highways Committee

September 2010

**Proposed Traffic Calming Scheme
Unc 20.16 Hallgarth Lane, Pittington**



Report of Terry Collins, Director of Neighbourhood Services

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To advise members of representations received with regard to a traffic calming scheme on Unc 20.16 Hallgarth Lane, Pittington.
- 1.2 This report requests that Members consider the representations received in relation to the proposals and endorse the recommendation.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Members may recall that the proposed traffic calming scheme for Pittington was presented at the June 2010 Highways Committee and was approved for implementation.
- 2.2 Following that meeting a minor irregularity was discovered between the advertised drawing and legal description regarding the location of one set of speed cushions on Hallgarth Lane. The advertised drawing indicated the same positions to those provided during the consultations however the notice description included an incorrect house number.
- 2.3 Following discovery of the irregularity a further legal notice was produced for the location concerned and advertised between 19 August and 9 September 2010.
- 2.4 3 letters of objection have been received from the residents of the properties adjacent to the proposed speed cushions. Only one of the residents objected to the previous consultation and the issues raised by this resident were included in the previous report in June 2010.
- 2.5 The local Members Councillors Carol Woods and Maureen Wood are minded to support the scheme.

3.0 Representations

3.1 The topic of representation is reported together with the County Council's response. The three residents raised similar general topics.

3.2 Representation 1

Speed bumps will make the street unsafe as vehicles try to avoid them and parked cars

Response: The provision of traffic calming improves safety by reducing vehicle speeds. There is no evidence to suggest that the provision of speed cushions cause a reduction in road safety. Experience shows that traffic calming measures of this nature do not increase the likelihood of an accident, but have the reverse effect.

3.3 Representation 2

There have been no accidents so the bumps are unnecessary

Response: The scheme is considered to be a cost effective means of responding to the issues raised by residents. The national average cost of an accident is over £65k. If one accident is prevented, or the severity reduced as a result of the installation of this scheme, then it can easily be established as having been cost effective. A history of road traffic accidents at a location is not always a requirement for the introduction of traffic calming however the possible prevention of future accidents is obviously desirable.

3.4 Representation 3

The humps will reduce the on-street parking causing disruption for residents

Response: The existence of a speed cushion does not prevent vehicles from parking over it or in the vicinity of it. Therefore the proposed scheme should not reduce any on-street parking provision.

3.5 Representation 4

Noise and vibration from traffic travelling over the humps will affect properties and quality of life

Response: Research has shown that overall traffic noise is actually reduced when traffic calming is implemented on roads where the traffic flow consists mainly of light vehicles. The effect of the traffic calming measures should reduce vehicle speeds and therefore have a positive effect on road safety, especially for vulnerable users such as pedestrians. Traffic calming measures are generally viewed as

providing a welcomed improvement to road safety within residential areas.

3.6 Representation 5

There is no need for the cushions on the section of road

Response: The speed cushions are located at consistent spacing along the length of the road being traffic calmed. This is in accordance with traffic calming regulations and to generate constant vehicle speeds rather than a speeding up and slowing if the gaps were too large.

3.7 Representation 6

Speed cameras would be a safer and more sensible option

Response: It is not the policy of Durham Constabulary to use fixed speed cameras. Speed cameras should be used at locations where there is a history of speed related accidents. In County Durham the police use a mobile safety camera unit at such locations however Hallgarth Lane does not have a speed related accident history. In addition, fixed speed cameras are only effective over short distances as motorists often only adjust their speeds to pass the camera site.

4.0 Recommendations and reasons

- 4.1 It is recommended that Members consider the change to the legal notice and the representations and proceed with the proposals as originally intended by setting aside the further representations.
- 4.2 The presence of the traffic calming measures will reduce traffic speeds along the route to a more acceptable level thus increasing road safety. The benefits expected through implementation of the scheme outweigh the negative comments received to date.

5.0 Background papers

List as appropriate to comply with the Access to Information Act 1985.

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