

Highways Committee

29 June 2010

Proposed Traffic Calming Back North Terrace, Seaham.



Report of Terry Collins, Director of Neighbourhood Services Cabinet Portfolio Member Councillor Bob Young.

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To advise members of the representations received with regard to a traffic calming scheme recently proposed for Back North Terrace, Seaham (see attached plan).
- 1.2 This report requests that members consider the representations to the proposals.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Representations have been made by the Parish Council, County Ward Members and members of the public from Back North Terrace, Seaham with regard to the issue of vehicle speeds and rat running resulting in pedestrian safety issues. It has been brought to the attention of the Council that a number of vehicles are using Back North Terrace to avoid using North Terrace. In addition, a children's playground is located within Hawthorn Square, off Back North Terrace, which results in pedestrian movement between North Terrace and Hawthorn Square.
- 2.2 Following these concerns a traffic calming scheme was entered onto the Local Member's Pool List of schemes for future consideration. The scheme will involve the installation of a series of 4 Road Humps along the length of Back North Terrace and the implementation of associated signage (x 4).
- 2.3 A consultation was undertaken with residents of North Terrace, Back North Terrace, Hawthorn Square, Tees Street, Back North Railway Street and Henry Street where all properties, a total of 139, were issued with details of the proposed scheme and invited to make comment. In addition, the statutory consultees such as the emergency services were also written to with regard to the proposals and inviting their comments.
- 2.4 Out of 139 letters sent out to residents, a total of 20 (14.5%) replies were received from individual properties. Of the 20 replies, 16 (80%)

were in favour, 4 (20%) were against, and the remaining 119 (85.5% of the original number of distributed consultation packs) are deemed to have no preference.

- 2.5 With regard to the statutory consultees, responses of support were received from the North East Ambulance Service, Seaham District Post Office, Durham County Council Design and Historic Environment and Durham Constabulary.

3.0 Public Representations

- 3.0 Since the respondents raised several different representations to the scheme, each topic will be reported together with the number of respondents who raised the particular issue and the County Council's response.

3.1 Representation 1

“Traffic calming is unnecessary / there is currently no problem / does not warrant such expenditure”

This point was raised by two respondents.

Response: The necessity or otherwise of a traffic calming scheme is somewhat subjective depending upon one's viewpoint. However, the County Council is confident that, if it is implemented, vehicle speeds will be reduced which will be an improvement in road safety terms, especially for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.

The scheme is being funded from Local Member's Allowance and 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 £70k. 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.

3.2 Representation 2

“The proposals are in the wrong place”

This point was raised by one respondent

Response: The proposed speed cushions were positioned in the most appropriate places that also took account of the many constraints along the road, such as driveways, access points, junctions and bends.

3.3 Representation 3

“Proposals would cause nuisance”

This point was raised by one respondent.

Response: The Highway Code advises in Rule 153 that motorists should reduce their speed when approaching traffic calming features that are intended to slow them down. Therefore the principle applies that if the speed cushions are negotiated at a reasonable speed, then they will not cause discomfort, damage or indeed constitute a nuisance/danger to any road user. It must be borne in mind that the proposals are based upon national guidance for the implementation of traffic calming measures and road safety benefits expected due to the proximity of the children's playground and the current rat-running along Back North Terrace outweigh the negative comments with respect to nuisance.

4.0 Statutory Representations

- 4.1 The North East Ambulance Service, Seaham District Post Office, Durham County Council Design and Historic Environment and Durham Constabulary responded offering their support to the proposals.

5.0 Local Member Consultation

- 5.1 The County Council Members, Councillors Charlie Walker and Bob Arthur, are minded to support the proposals.

6.0 Recommendations and Reasons

- 6.1.1 Members are recommended to endorse the proposal to set aside the representations and proceed with the scheme. The presence of the humps will discourage unnecessary through traffic and maintain an acceptable speed of traffic in vicinity to the children's playground.

7.0 Background Papers

Correspondence on Office File
Copies of correspondence have been placed in the Members' Resource Centre

Contact: David Battensby Tel: 0191 332 4404

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Funding will be provided by the County Councillor Local Area Measures Allowance.

Staffing

None

Equality and diversity

None

Accommodation

None

Crime and disorder

The proposal is likely to result in a reduction of some anti-social speed related offences, reduce the likelihood of unnecessary through traffic and improve road safety.

Environment

None

Human rights

None

Localities and rurality

As described in the Report

Young people

None.

Consultation

Consultation with affected residents in addition to statutory bodies.