

Highways Committee

14 January 2009

Unc Barnes Road, Murton Proposed Traffic Calming



Report of John Richardson, Corporate Director, Environment

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To advise Members of the objection received with regard to a traffic calming scheme recently proposed for Barnes Road, Murton (see attached plan no. N82102/10).
- 1.2 This report requests that Members consider the objection to the proposals.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Residents of Murton have previously approached both the Local Member, Parish Council and County Council with regard to the issue of traffic congestion and other problems adjacent to the new Ribbon School at Barnes Road, Murton. Durham Constabulary has also raised this issue as an ongoing problem that requires attention.
- 2.2 Council officers met with representatives of the school and police to determine the most appropriate measures to both ease the congestion and improve the safety of the children, in addition to assisting the residents adjacent to the relocated schools.
- 2.3 Traffic restrictions and engineering works are proposed and the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders have been advertised and are ready to be introduced. These measures will not be subject to a Committee report due to there being no objections received against the proposals.
- 2.4 In order to reduce congestion it is proposed to remove the existing priority give way build out and replace this with a series of speed cushions in front of the school. The use of cushions will assist in keeping vehicle speeds at a low level whilst allowing a much freer flow of traffic than with the existing build out.

- 2.5 The County Council has worked with the bus companies to ensure that proposals for traffic calming are engineered to minimise the adverse effects on buses, drivers and passengers. As Barnes Road is a bus route, cushions are proposed to the design provided by the Integrated Transport Unit which allows a bus to straddle the cushion without having to mount it. Pairs of cushions are proposed for Barnes Road due to the narrowness of the road; the favoured triple cushion layout requires a road width greater than that existing.
- 2.6 The consultation for the scheme was undertaken and a number of representations were received. Further investigation and consultation were carried out and a number of minor changes were made to the proposals to accommodate the suggestions made by respondents. The bus company, Go North East, objected to the proposal of traffic calming both during the informal consultation and formal objection period.
- 2.7 Attempts were made to accommodate Go North East by investigating alternative measures and restrictions. However the alternative traffic calming measures were not considered appropriate for this location, therefore their objection remains outstanding.

3.0 Objections

- 3.1 The only outstanding objection is from Go North East and is against the provision of speed cushions along Barnes Road.

Objection

The provision of two pinch points with a cushion is preferable; due to the long lengths of road the vehicles will have to drive on the wrong side of the road as a result of parked vehicles.

Response

Alternative forms of traffic calming have been considered but discounted due to factors which would render them unsuitable for this location. The speed cushions are necessary to reduce vehicle speeds along Barnes Road which suffered from a speed problem prior to the provision of the pinch point and its removal would likely resurrect the problem.

The existing pinch point causes considerable congestion at peak periods and leads to unsafe driving practices at the times school children are going to or leaving school. In addition the location of the pinch point is close to the main school access road and often this is blocked due to the volume of vehicles held up at the pinch point. Durham Constabulary fully support the removal of the pinch point to alleviate much of the congestion problem they are constantly receiving complaints about.

The provision of pinch point and cushions at two locations would only serve to exacerbate the problem of congestion as two give way points will be required. The provision of two pinch points would also create parking difficulties for residents along this section of Barnes Road, who do not have any alternative parking provision, as parking restrictions would have to be introduced in front of properties; this would be required to ensure that the road does not become blocked by parked vehicles too close to the pinch points.

Comment / Objection

The two bus stops are incorrectly located as the one on the south side appears to cover an exit from the south side and both stops do not have clearway markings.

Response

The bus stops are not relocated in the proposals and remain in the exact positions as present with the exception of the north side stop being increased in length to adjoin the restrictions either side. The access on the south side is a redundant access to the former school site which is to be removed as part of the proposals and the ground reinstated. It is also proposed to introduce clearway markings as part of the scheme.

Objection

Due to the levels of parking outside the new school, the new low floor buses would have to mount at least two sets of cushions which would require a re-routing of the service bus away from Barnes Road.

Response

The design of the cushions is in accordance with the design provided by Integrated Transport Unit following consultation with the bus companies. This design allows a bus to be aligned such that it does not have to mount the cushion. It may be possible to provide bollards at the edge of the footway to dissuade parking on one side for the outer two sets of cushions, thus allowing the buses to straddle a cushion at each location.

4.0 The Fire Service and Durham Constabulary both responded offering their support to the proposals.

5.0 Local Member Consultation

5.1 Councillor Alice Naylor and Councillor Alan Napier, the Local Members, have been consulted and are minded to support the proposal.

6.0 Recommendations and Reasons

- 6.1 Members are recommended to endorse the proposal to set aside the objection and proceed with the scheme.

Background Papers

Correspondence on Office File

Copies of correspondence have been placed in the Members' Resource Centre.

Contact: Dave Battensby Tel: 0191 332 4404

Appendix 1: Implications

Local Government Reorganisation

None

Finance

Funding will be provided by Building Schools for the Future programme.

Staffing

None

Equality and Diversity

None

Accommodation

None

Crime and Disorder

None

Sustainability

Improved pedestrian environment due to reduced vehicle speeds.

Human Rights

None

Localities and Rurality

As detailed in the report.

Young People

None

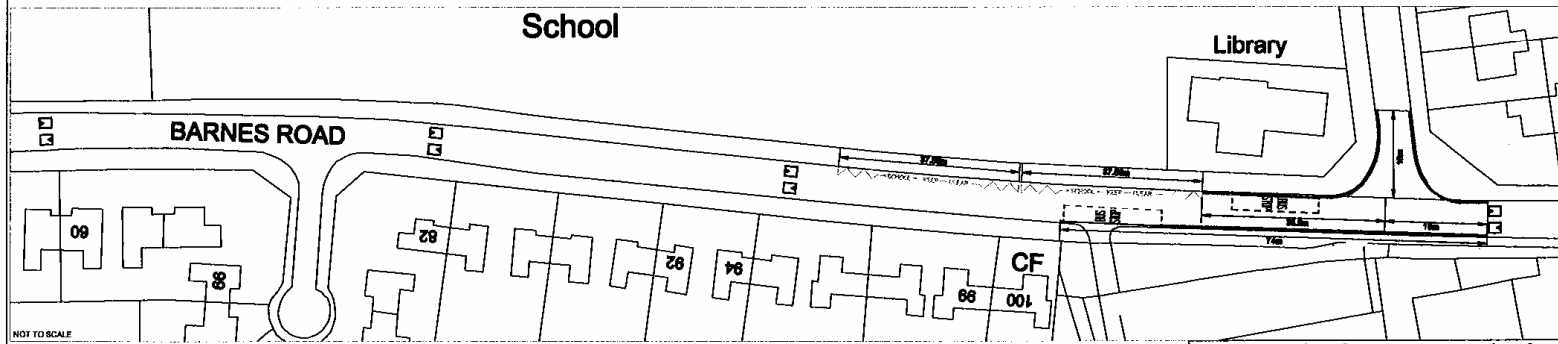
Consultation

Consultation with affected residents in addition to statutory bodies.

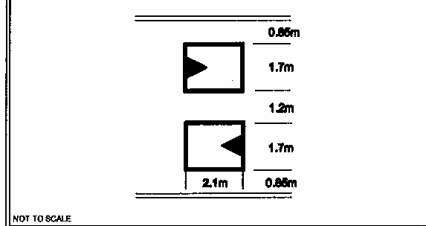
Health

None

SITE LOCATION:



SPEED CUSHION LAYOUT:



NOT TO SCALE

KEY: Proposed speed cushion location Proposed double yellow lines Proposed 'School Keep Clear' markings

Rev	Amend	Approved By			Description Of Amendments
		Name	Date	Sign	
		M. Haldenby	07/08		

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Project N84305 - Barnes Road, Murton	
Drawing Scheme Layout	
Scale As shown	Project/Drawing No. N82102/10
Rev.	