

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Highways Committee** held in Committee Room 2, County Hall, Durham on **Thursday 7 April 2022 at 9.30 am**

Present:

Councillor R Ormerod (Chair)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors D Boyes (Vice-Chair), A Bell, J Higgins, G Hutchinson, R Manchester, I Roberts, K Robson, A Simpson, A Sterling, F Tinsley, D Wood and P Jopling (Substitute)

Also Present:

Councillors J Atkinson and N Jones

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Duffy, J Howey, C Kay, D Oliver and M Wilson.

2 Substitute Members

Councillor P Jopling was present as substitute for Councillor D Oliver.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Robson declared an interest in the item Newton Aycliffe A167 50mph Speed Limit – Traffic Regulation Order 2022 confirming it was a road he used regularly.

5 Daddry Shield and Bridge End 30mph Speed Limit – Traffic Regulation Order 2022

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth to request approval to progress a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to introduce a 30mph speed limit throughout Daddry Shield and Bridge End (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Strategic Traffic Manager gave a detailed presentation that highlighted the traffic regulation order which included aerial photographs of the area and details of the proposal and enhanced measures.

The Traffic Management Officer, Durham Constabulary addressed the Committee in objection to the application. He advised that from the outset he had a good relationship with Durham Highways. He clarified that he was not objecting to the speed limit being reduced but that it should be reduced to 40mph rather than the proposed 30mph. The Police believed that 30mph was not credible and said 70% of people who sped would question the credibility.

He referred to the enhanced measures in the presentation which showed the dragons teeth and stated that due to the environment which included hedges and trees, a 30mph limit was not appropriate.

Furthermore, statistics showed that the average speed for the road was 37.2mph indicating that a 40mph speed limit would be more suitable and more likely to be adhered to. He added that there had been no accidents in the area for the previous four years and explained that introducing an incorrect speed limit could be dangerous.

He concluded that the speed limit should be reduced to 40mph not 30mph and stated that this speed limit would be easier to enforce and that 86% of drivers would comply.

Mr Hunter addressed the Committee in support of the application. He advised that he had lived in the area since 1977 and explained that the road was crossed regularly with livestock to gain access to fields and bridleways. He raised concerns regarding the noise from traffic and explained that accidents over the years had happened but as they were minor accidents they had not been officially recorded. He pointed out that the area of Daddry Shield was previously a 30mph zone and expressed his disappointment when previous letters detailing this were submitted to Durham County Council and the Police and were failed to be addressed. He hoped the application would be approved.

Dr Nattrass addressed the Committee in support of the application. She advised that she lived on a local farm with her husband and four children, commenting that she had a privileged position where she could see both ends of the road. She explained that there had been a noticeable increase in traffic and road users over the last 11 years and that the speed of road users had increased. She advised that her husband was a farmer and drove a tractor. She explained that despite moving

their livestock at times when traffic is naturally lower, they must still slow traffic down themselves. She went on to advise that she had seen first-hand several near misses and stated that her daughter had commented on the current speed limit of 60mph stating it was nearly as fast as a motorway.

Mr Pattinson addressed the Committee in support of the application. He advised that he had lived in the area since 1941 and that there had been a 30mph speed limit then when there were horse and carts on the road. He explained that there was a bus stop in the middle of village which was used by elderly people but that the view was limited due to the blind bends at either end of the road. He added that people with defected hearing were at further risk as they were unable to hear vehicles approaching, making the road dangerous to cross. He advised that if the speed limit was reduced to 30mph it would allow those crossing the road almost double the amount of time to do so increasing their safety. He informed members that that there had been accidents in the village advising that he had helped clean up after four of them.

Councillor Jopling noted that the application went against policy. She was sympathetic to the residents and understood it was upsetting for them but confirmed that consistency and fairness had to come into their judgement.

Councillor Sterling agreed with Councillor Jopling. She believed the speed limit of the road should be reduced to 40mph rather than 30mph and asked for clarification on the speed limit.

The Strategic Traffic Manager acknowledged that it was outside policy but only marginally. He clarified that residents would not accept a speed limit of 40mph, and he explained the engineering measures that were to be put in place. He advised that it was a trial case and that policies would be amended accordingly should the trial be successful.

Councillor Bell advised that he was familiar with the area and accepted that a speed limit of 30mph was necessary for the road due to the built-up environment, blind bends, tractors, and livestock on the road. He added that motorcycles in the dales were an issue and that these travelled at considerable speed. He stated that the residents needed to be listened to and **moved** the application to be approved in line with the officer's recommendation.

Councillor Robson observed that people drove electric cars which are especially difficult to hear. He noted the concerns raised regarding crossing the road and the speed of motorbikes and emphasised the need to protect people's safety. He confirmed he was in support of the application.

Councillor Higgins confirmed that he welcomed the trial, and he acknowledged the residents accounts of minor accidents in the area. He **Seconded** that the application be approved in line with the officer's recommendation.

Councillor Tinsley understood the rationale for the trial but raised concerns regarding the speed limit. He suggested there be an evaluation following a two-year period to establish whether the speed limit is correct, and it be increased to 40mph if necessary. He advised that this was not included in the recommendation and asked if it could be amended at this stage.

The Strategic Traffic Manager clarified that if the application was approved, the speed of vehicles would be regularly monitored. In terms of an evaluation, he explained that if it concluded that the speed limit should be increased to 40mph, the speed limit would then need to be re-advertised and the statutory consultation process started which could result in objections. Councillor Tinsley accepted this but believed it would provide the Committee with the evidence needed to make an informed decision.

Councillor Boyes raised his concerns regarding the speed limit being 30mph and stressed that it was not credible and could be dangerous. He sympathised with residents but believed reducing the limit to 30mph would cause problems as people who were unfamiliar with the area would naturally drive faster. He believed a speed limit of 40mph would be more appropriate and confirmed that he rejected the application.

Councillor Manchester advised that he was familiar with the road and believed a speed limit of 30mph was credible. He confirmed he was in support of the application.

Councillor Wood commented that he did not know the area of Daddry Shield but that he had seen an image and noted that properties were close to the front of the road and that there were streetlights and therefore a speed limit of 30mph appeared to be appropriate. He went on to ask where the average reading of 37.2 mph was taken. It was established that this was taken to the west of the village near the A689. He commented that this was the least built-up area. Further to this he pointed out that a reduction in speed would result in a reduction in accidents and therefore confirmed that he was in support of the application.

Councillor Bell suggested that additional pictures showing the built-up area would have been beneficial for those members not familiar with the area and felt that this would have demonstrated the need for a speed limit of 30mph. In terms of an evaluation, he raised his concerns regarding the cost implications to officers and the Police.

Further to this, Councillor Sterling noted that it would be difficult to change the speed limit in the future, particularly if residents were satisfied with it, and stated that it was important for the decision made to be final.

The Solicitor (Planning and Development) clarified that the proposal was for a permanent traffic regulation order, not a temporary one and clarified that it was for a speed limit of 30mph not 40mph.

Upon a vote being taken it was

Resolved

That the proposal in principle, to proceed with the implementation of the 30mph application be endorsed. With the final decision to be made by the Corporate Director under delegated powers.

6 Newton Aycliffe A167 50mph Speed Limit - Traffic Regulation Order 2022

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth to advise members of the objections received to the consultation concerning changes to the speed limit Traffic Regulation order (TRO) on A167, Newton Aycliffe and asked members to consider the objection made during the informal and formal consultation period (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Strategic Traffic Manager gave a detailed presentation that highlighted the traffic regulation order and included aerial photographs of the area and details of the proposal and location plan.

The Strategic Traffic Manager highlighted the objection received from Mr Snowball who was unable to attend the meeting. Mr Snowball explained that reducing the speed limit would limit the traffic flow and increase journey times and stated that he did not accept the rationale for change. The Strategic Traffic Manager noted that additional e-mails had been received from Mr Snowball and that the content had been shared with the Committee prior to the meeting. In response to the objection the Strategic Traffic Manager confirmed that a toucan crossing was to be introduced which would increase the number of pedestrians and cyclists crossing the road. He also advised that the current mean speed of vehicles was 48mph and stated that a speed limit of 50mph was therefore appropriate.

Local member, Councillor Atkinson addressed the Committee and felt it was sensible to decrease the speed limit of the road to ensure the safety of road users and pedestrians.

Councillor Robinson from Great Aycliffe Town Council addressed the Committee in objection the speed limit being reduced to 50mph. He advised that he had submitted his objection but that it had not been registered. He explained his objection was to reduce the speed limit of the road to 40mph rather than 50mph. He explained that vehicles race on the southbound lanes, and that included in the

objection he submitted, were photographs of the aftermath of an accident showing the wreckage of two cars.

He stated that people used the pedestrian island to cross the road and did so with children, dogs, and motorised scooters and that this was dangerous due to the speed of the vehicles. He expressed that the speed limit from the A167 junction to the entrance of Aycliffe village needed to be 40mph to encourage motorists to travel at an appropriate speed to ensure a safer village and safer environment.

The Strategic Traffic Manager clarified that the proposal was to reduce the speed limit of the road to 50mph, not 40mph. It was clarified by the Solicitor (Planning and Development) that the proposal could not be amended.

In response to a question from Councillor Boyes regarding the toucan crossing, the Strategic Traffic Manager confirmed that this was part of a wider scheme and was not included in the recommendation to be voted on.

Councillor Boyes advised that a speed limit of 50mph was credible for the area and **moved** the proposal in line with the officer's recommendation. This was **seconded** by Councillor Tinsley.

Councillor Robson confirmed that he lived in the area and had used the road since 1968. He commented that speeding was an issue, and this was due to the road leading to the A1 motorway. He agreed that the speed limit should be reduced to 50mph.

Councillor Jopling noted that she agreed with the officer's recommendation.

Upon a vote being taken it was

Resolved

That the proposal in principle, to proceed with the implementation of the 50mph TRO be endorsed. With the final decision to be made by the Corporate Director under delegated powers.

7 Framwellgate Moor, Pity Me, Brasside and Newton Hall Parking & Waiting Restrictions Amendment Order 2022

The Committee received a report of the Corporate Director of Regeneration, Economy and Growth to advise Members of objections received to the consultation concerning changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in Framwellgate Moor, Pity Me, Brasside and Newton Hall and asked that members consider the objections made during the informal and formal consultation period (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Strategic Traffic Manager gave a detailed presentation which included site location plans, aerial photographs and photographs of the sites and details of the following restrictions:

- To introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions (double yellow lines) on both sides of the junction of Raby Road/Alnwick Road. Six objections were received in the informal and formal consultation phase.
- To introduce 'no restricted bays (Monday-Saturday 8am-6pm, 1 hour no return 2 hours)' on the northern edge of the turning head and 'no waiting at any time' restrictions (double yellow lines) either side of these bays. Two objections were received in the informal and formal consultation phase.
- To introduce 'no waiting at any time' restrictions (double yellow lines) on both sides of the junction of Pit Lane/Hutton Way. Four objections were received in the informal consultation phase.
- To amend the existing 'restricted waiting' (Monday-Friday 8am-9am and 3pm-4.15pm) restrictions to 'restricted waiting' (Monday-Friday 8am-9am and 2.30pm-4pm) restrictions on Newton Drive. One objection was received in the formal consultation phase.

The Strategic Traffic Manager outlined the objections received along with the responses that had been provided.

Mr Roberts, local resident, addressed the Committee in objection to location one, Raby Road/Alnwick Road (introduce no waiting at any time restrictions) and advised that he had lived on Raby Road since 1973. He explained that the proposal was mooted sometime ago and that it was rejected by Durham County Council due to most residents objecting to the scheme and noted that this was still the case.

In reference to the survey undertaken, he pointed out that he had only received one survey 18 months ago and advised that he only become aware of the new proposal when he read about it on a lamppost, with this he proceeded to inform residents who were also unaware of the proposal.

He explained that he had submitted a Freedom of Information (FOI) request in relation to the junction which concluded that there were no reported accidents, no reported near misses, and no reported complaints. He added that the Police had not made any contact with him regarding parking problems at the junction.

Considering the results of the survey which indicated that six households objected with one in favour, and with the information obtained from the FOI request, he asked why the issue for restricted parking had been proposed again stating that it was not justified.

Furthermore, he explained that he parked his car 10 metres from the junction where roads intersect at right angles to road directions and confirmed that this was a recommendation from the Highway Code and from Police advice. He added that yellow lines would not solve the problem explaining that cars would park further down Alnwick Road which would further restrict the view.

He concluded that the issue with the road was not parking, and advised it was down to the speed of drivers. He added that delivery driver vehicles were also an issue and that their parked vehicles impaired the view of drivers but that the proposal would not solve this issue. He urged members to reject the proposal.

Mrs Kneale added that no reported complaints had been received and therefore could not understand the rationale for the proposal.

The Strategic Traffic Manager confirmed that ballot cards were sent to all directly affected frontages and this had resulted in six objections and one in favour. Mr Roberts rejected this and stated that ballot cards were only received for the first consultation along with detailed drawings indicating where the yellow lines would be. He insisted that ballot cards and drawing had not been received for this proposal and advised that the measurements of the yellow lines had changed from the original drawings received. He commented that the legal department had not conducted the survey correctly and confirmed that he was to raise a formal complaint.

The Solicitor (Planning and Development) confirmed that there was a formal complaints procedure that could be followed. Mrs Kneale confirmed she too would be submitting a complaint.

Councillor Tinsley believed that the proposal for Newton Drive would be beneficial due to the schools in the area however disagreed with the other proposals due the areas being residential adding that the residents were not in favour. He advised that it could create conflict between residents due to cars being displaced and questioned whether there was the resource for the restrictions to be enforced. He confirmed he did not support the proposal.

Councillor Boyes asked for clarification whether members were to vote collectively on all four parts. The Solicitor (Planning and Development) clarified that the order could be amended if it included more than one part and confirmed the proposal could be reduced to vote on the three residential areas separately if members felt this was necessary.

In relation to Raby Road/Alnwick Road, Councillor Sterling advised that she knew the area well and confirmed visibility on the road was poor due to cars being parked on the junction and on the path. She noted that all the houses on the road had a driveway and that there was ample parking. She **moved** the proposal in line with the officer's recommendation.

In relation to Lund Avenue, Councillor Bell asked whether there would still be sufficient space for vehicles to turn around. It was confirmed that there was sufficient space. In terms of Raby Road/Alnwick Road, he questioned the proposal due to the objections received from residents.

Councillor Simpson confirmed that he knew the area well and agreed that driving in the estate was difficult and agreed that something needed to be put in place.

Councillor Jopling commented that the estate was busy especially around school drop off and pick up times which created a danger and confirmed that she supported the proposal.

Councillor Boyes sympathised with the residents but accepted that there were a lot of cars on the estate which had created a parking issue. He commented that public safety and traffic safety had to be considered and confirmed that he supported all four recommendations

In terms of location four, Newton Drive, Councillor Wood asked whether the yellow lines would be repainted. The Strategic Traffic Manager confirmed that they would.

Councillor Wood commented on the contentious issues that surrounded Raby Road/Alnwick Road referencing the confusion around the consultation, the results of FOI request and the objections from residents and asked if any more detail could be provided for the proposal.

The Major Project Team Leader confirmed that he was involved in 2019 and had been forwarded an email from the local member regarding problems with parking and that this had led to the initial proposal. He confirmed that several objections had been received at the time and that the matter was being monitored. He advised that the local member had recently brought the matter back to their attention and it was now being addressed.

The Strategic Traffic Manager clarified that the report included concerns raised by residents and the local member. It was established that the local member was not present at the meeting.

Councillor Sterling **moved** the proposal to endorse all four parts included in the recommendation. This was **seconded** by Councillor Boyes.

Upon a vote being taken it was

Resolved

That the proposal in principle, to amend the Framwellgate Moor, Pity Me, Brasside and Newton Hall Parking and Waiting Restrictions Amendment Order 2021 be

endorsed. With the final decision to be made by the Corporate Director under delegated powers.