

Contact Officer: Jodie Harris

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CABINET COMMITTEE - LOCAL ISSUES

Friday 8th October 2021

Present: Councillor Peter McBride (Chair)
Councillor Naheed Mather
Councillor Paul Davies

Co-optees

In attendance:

Observers:

Apologies:

- 1 Membership of the Committee**
No apologies were received.
- 2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**
The Committee approved the Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd June 2021 as a correct record.
- 3 Interests**
No interests were declared.
- 4 Admission of the Public**
All agenda items were considered in public session.
- 5 Deputations/Petitions**
No deputations or petitions were received
- 6 Public Question Time**
No public questions were asked.
- 7 Member Question Time**
No member questions were asked.
- 8 Proposed PUFFIN Crossing and Traffic Calming Measures, Fenay Lane and St. Helen's Gate, Almondbury**
The Committee considered a report presented by Dean Barker, Principal Road Safety Engineer – Highways Design and Road Safety in respect of 2 objections received to:

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- Kirklees Council Traffic Regulation [No. 18] Order 2021– Proposed Prohibition of Waiting, Loading and Left Turn, Fenay Lane and St. Helen’s Gate, Almondbury
- Kirklees Council Speed Limit [No. 108] Order 2021 – Proposed 20mph speed limits, Fenay Lane and St. Helen’s Gate, Almondbury

It was explained that Highway Safety proposed to construct a signalised ‘PUFFIN’ pedestrian crossing on Fenay Lane east of its junction with St. Helen’s Gate, and to impose a 20mph speed limit along St. Helen’s Gate between Fenay Lane and Arkenley Lane to meet planning conditions arising from an application to expand King James’s School, the subsequent crossing assessments and requests from Ward Councillors.

The Committee heard representations from the objectors who outlined their concerns and reasons for opposing the proposals. In summary, these included:

- That the introduction of double yellow lines outside 1 objectors residential property would prevent loading/unloading and drop off and pick ups at the property for a relative with a disability.
- The PUFFIN crossing was to be placed on a slope and there were concerns about the accessibility of this for disabled users.
- The quality and tread depth of the steps and the suitability of the handrail to enable pedestrians to use the steps safely.
- There was no timeline stated for the widening and realigning of the steps.
- The steps were not maintained by Kirklees and were overgrown with ivy. There were concerns that this was dangerous for pedestrians.
- That the steepness of St Helen’s gate combined with the location of the proposed crossing would reduce visibility for north bound traffic at school start and finish times and there were concerns about what risk this may pose to pedestrians.
- In respect of visibility issues, 1 Objector highlighted that safety mirrors (to be placed on bend on St Helens Gate) were requested in consultation and questioned why this feature was not mentioned in report.
- There were questions as to whether the location of the proposed PUFFIN crossing was to be placed on the primary walking route for students travelling to and from King James’s High School.
- It was asked if a detailed survey of students and the local community had been conducted to identify where they would choose to cross the road and if the principal of King James’s High School had been consulted with on the matter.
- There were concerns that the proposals to reduce the width of the road would reduce access for emergency services, HGV’s and local farmers.
- That notices of public consultation were late to be published on the website which did not allow enough time for responses.

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Dean Barker responded to the issues raised. In respect of concerns about the double yellow lines it was explained that there were no loading restrictions and that the introduction of the yellow lines would not affect deliveries and pick up/drop off to the property. In respect of the proposed crossings accessibility, the Committee were advised that the geography of the area was challenging, and it was noted that some pedestrians may have difficulty traversing the crossing in icy conditions. However, under normal circumstances most pedestrians would be able to traverse the crossing.

Responding to questions about the steps, Dean Barker explained that the Council did not have the structural engineering expertise to address realigning and widening, but there were plans to add anti-grip surfacing on the steps and an enquiry had been made with the Council's street lighting team to add a lamp column to improve safety.

Dean Barker reassured the Committee that visibility had been checked both horizontally and vertically for pedestrians as well as at the give way line for oncoming traffic. He accepted that during peak times, crowds of children waiting at the crossing may affect visibility for vehicles but estimated however, that drivers should always wait until they had full vision before pulling out into the road.

In terms of engagement and consultations, Dean Barker explained that there were a number informal and formal surveys carried out which identified that the desire lines for school children was where the crossing was proposed to be located. The emergency services were also consulted with as well as the Councils Planning team throughout the process.

Responding to the question about restricting HGV access, Dean Barker advised that a survey would need to be undertaken which provided reasonable reason to restrict HGV's in the area. He also explained that adding restrictions would affect deliveries to the school and properties in the area. In respect of publication of notice of the consultation on the website the Committee were reassured that publication on the website was not a legal requirement, and the correct notices were posted within the correct timeframes.

Councillor Bernard McGuin asked if any alternative to a crossing point was considered, suggesting the option to close off a road near the school during peak times. Karen North, Principal Technical Officer (Highways Design and Road Safety) responded to explain that due to capacity issues caused by the Covid-19 pandemic the option had not yet been considered but there were plans to trial this approach in the future.

Councillor Alison Munro raised concerns about the loss of parking space as a result of the proposals and requested that alternative parking provision was provided for residents. Karen North explained that once the development works had completed a reassessment of parking provision would take place and the suggestion to introduce a residents parking scheme using the existing car park or the land at the top of Blacksmiths Fold would be considered.

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The Committee emphasised that the key point of the proposed measures was the safety of school children but noted that the geography of the area meant that there were limited options available. Having considered all the information presented, the Committee were confident that Officers had listened to residents' concerns and were satisfied that the scheme would create a much safer route for residents. However, the Committee was assured that Council Officers would take an ongoing approach to monitor and review the success of the scheme as well as continuing to work with and listen to residents to address and alleviate concerns.

RESOLVED: It was agreed that the proposed PUFFIN Crossing and Traffic Calming Measures, Fenay Lane and St Helen's Gate, Almondbury be implemented as advertised.

9 **Objection to the proposed traffic calming features on Cumberworth Road, Skelmanthorpe**

The Committee considered a report presented by Karen North, Principal Technical Officer (Highways Design and Road Safety) in respect of an objection received in response to the proposed traffic calming features on Cumberworth Road, Skelmanthorpe.

Planning permission had been granted for the erection of a residential development of up to 190 dwellings at land to the north of Cumberworth Road.

As a part of this the following traffic calming measures were proposed:

- Construction of 4 no. road humps;
- The relocation of the current 30 mph speed limit further along the road.

The proposed schemes were aimed at reducing and maintaining the speed of traffic travelling into and through the residential area and past the development to 30 mph. The traffic calming proposals were publicly advertised between 5 July 2021 and 2 August 2021, and during that period 2 objections were received.

The Committee noted the written representations from the objectors who outlined their concerns and reasons for opposing the proposals. In summary, these included:

- Concerns about snowploughs/ Winter maintenance vehicles being unable to traverse speed humps during winter weather.
- Vehicles leaving Skelmanthorpe having to give way to oncoming traffic.
- Unnecessary air and noise pollution as a result of increased traffic and vehicles speeding up and down in between speed humps.

In response, Karen North explained that whilst there was a risk posed by any traffic calming measure on a route during winter weather, the requirement to close a traffic calmed road due to icy conditions/snow was low where as if the traffic calming features were not introduced, the benefits of reducing speeds here, at all times of the year would be lost.

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The Committee were further advised that the scheme was designed in accordance with guidance to deter drivers from speeding up and slowing down between speed bumps and in response to the alternative suggestions made by objectors, the Committee were advised that:

- The installation of a 20mph speed limits would require average speed recordings to be no more than 24mph and therefore traffic calming measures would be required alongside a speed limit.
- Reducing the road width to introduce a pinch point was a well-used horizontal traffic calming feature. However, forward visibility on the section of road concerned was excellent and whilst most drivers would slow and stop to give way to oncoming traffic, potentially some drivers may accelerate to speeds above the speed limit to avoid giving way.
- Mobile speed cameras were enforced by the police and were used in areas where there were a high number of collisions. They are not provided as an alternative to the installation of traffic calming features or to maintain the adherence to the speed limit in such circumstances.

RESOLVED: The Committee considered all the information received both verbally and in writing and it was agreed that the proposed traffic calming features on Cumberworth Road Skelmanthorpe be implemented as advertised.