

REPORT TITLE: Proposed Casualty Prevention Scheme on Woodhouse Hill, Central Avenue and Woodhouse Hall Road, Fartown (associated with the North Huddersfield Trust School Expansion)

Meeting:	Cabinet Committee - Local Issues
Date:	15 April 2025
Cabinet Member (if applicable)	Cllr Munir Ahmed
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	No Yes
<p>Purpose of Report : To consider the objections received to the advertised traffic calming scheme for Woodhouse Hill / Central Avenue / Woodhouse Hall Road, Fartown. This scheme is proposed to improve road safety, reduce the risk to pedestrian safety and support the expansion of North Huddersfield Trust School.</p>	
<p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prohibition of Driving Except Cycles advertised in (TRO) (No. 05) Order 2024 ○ The proposed waiting restrictions as advertised in (TRO) (Consolidation Order Providing On-Street Parking Places, Waiting, Loading and Stopping Restrictions and Migration to a 'Map-Based' Format) (Amendment No. 19) Order 2024, with the exception of Central Avenue, where it is recommended, as a result of the objections, to remove the advertised "No Loading At Any Time" element. <p>be made</p> <p>Reasons for Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed scheme has been developed to improve road safety and to further support safe and active travel to school. • The proposed scheme aims to reduce conflicting traffic / turning movements in a location that is at it busiest when vulnerable road user numbers are at their highest – on arrival and departure from school – thus reducing the road safety risk. • The scheme aims to reduce the speeds of vehicles, thus reducing the road safety risk • The proposed waiting restrictions will reduce congestion and current access issues experienced during the morning and afternoon peaks and reduce the opportunity for inappropriate and often dangerous parking practices. • The objections to the proposals do not outweigh the advantages 	
<p>Resource Implications:</p> <p>This scheme is jointly funded –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £70,000 - Approved Highways (Safer Roads) Capital plan CRST 2023 – 2025 funding, justified on the basis that this scheme will have a positive first year rate of return by preventing further instances of personal injury collisions from occurring at this location. • £50,000 – Education Capital funding allocation which will support the proposed school expansion. • All fees and construction costs are covered within the approved budgets. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the scheme is not implemented, then irrecoverable costs, already incurred, will be lost. 	
Date signed off by <u>Executive Director:</u> <u>David Shepherd</u>	28 March 2025
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance: <u>Kevin Mulvaney</u>	28 March 2025
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer): <u>Sam Lawton</u>	04 April 2025

Electoral wards affected: Ashbrow

Ward councillors consulted: Yes

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes – all personal information has been redacted from this report

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report relates to a casualty prevention scheme proposed principally to improve safety for pupils attending the North Huddersfield Trust [‘NHT’] School in Ashbrow, but also to provide road safety benefits for other users including residents. The NHT School is undergoing expansion, and as part of that process the Highway Safety Team were approached about improving the safety of pupils walking to and from school, and other highway problems experienced by the school.
- 1.2 There is a history of personal injury collisions [‘PICs’] occurring close to the school where road users were injured. In the five-year period leading up to the scheme identification July 2023 6 personal injury collisions occurred, one of which was classified as serious. 4 NHT School pupils have sustained injuries after being struck by vehicles in the vicinity of the Woodhouse Hill / Woodhouse Hill Road / Central Avenue junctions.
- 1.3 Other PIC types have occurred in this area, not involving school pupils that will also be addressed by this scheme, and they continue to occur with a further child pedestrian injury sustained last year, plus numerous anecdotal accounts of near misses.
- 1.4 Removal of traffic entering and emerging from Central Avenue will provide road safety benefit for pupils who pass through the junction on foot and prevent future PICs involving vehicles turning here, which have occurred in the past.
- 1.5 The new road humps would ensure that all vehicles on Woodhouse Hill slowed as they passed through this location, and traffic islands are to be provided and junction improvements at Woodhouse Hall Road to physically restrict traffic lane widths and further slow vehicles.
- 1.6 Residents currently using Central Avenue to access Woodhouse Hill in their vehicles would have to seek alternative routes.
- 1.7 ‘School Keep Clear’ markings (i.e. zigzags) would be provided on both sides of Woodhouse Hall Road, supported by the Traffic Regulation Order to legally prevent stopping during

school changeover periods 08:00 – 09:30 and 14:30 – 16:00 (enforceable by Council Officers). Additionally, loading would be prohibited along a 15m section of the turning head at the end of the cul-de-sac. These measures are being proposed to alleviate long-standing congestion, access and road safety problems reported by the school headmaster.

1.8 Initial discussions and agreement on a conceptual layout were undertaken with the Education Department, followed by consultation September 2024 with Ward Members, the Headmaster of NHT School and our statutory consultees (including other Council Departments and the Emergency Services), no objections were received. At the request of NHT School, parking/loading/stopping restrictions on Woodhouse Hall Road were added at this stage. The proposed layout subsequently used for public consultation has been included at Appendix A as Plan HS-25-66886-P01 RevB.

1.9 Consultation with residents was undertaken in October 2024, with 260 letters posted out to affected properties in the area, including a link to an electronic version of the plan and letter on the Kirklees Council website, with open access to all.

1.10 Four emails were received in response to that consultation, all of whom were unsupportive of the proposed closure of Central Avenue. Officers engaged with these consultees in early January, reiterating the reasoning behind the scheme and addressing the issues raised. Consultees were also advised of their right to formally object during formal advertisement if they still had concerns, and of how to do so. None of these residents chose to submit formal objections to the proposals.

1.11 **The Kirklees Council (Traffic Regulation) (Consolidation Order Providing On-Street Parking Places, Waiting, Loading and Stopping Restrictions and Migration to a ‘Map-Based’ Format) Order 2024 (Amendment No. 19) Order 2024**

(For the waiting & loading prohibitions on Central Avenue and Woodhouse Hall Road, and the stopping restrictions associated with the ‘School Keep Clear’ zigzag markings on Woodhouse Hall Road)

The Kirklees Council (Traffic Regulation) (No. 05) Order 2024

(For the prohibition of motor vehicles from Central Avenue at its junction with Woodhouse Hill)

The Kirklees Council Highways Act 1980 (Section 90 A-F) Woodhouse Hill and Woodhouse Hall Road

(For the road humps on Woodhouse Hill and Woodhouse Hall Road)

were advertised between 31st January 2025 and 28th February 2025, inclusive, and Plan **HS-25-66886-TRO** showing the orders as advertised is included as **Appendix B**.

1.12 During advertisement one objection was received relating to:

- **The Kirklees Council (Traffic Regulation) (No. 05) Order 2024**
- **The Kirklees Council (Traffic Regulation) (Consolidation Order Providing On-Street Parking Places, Waiting, Loading and Stopping Restrictions and Migration to a ‘Map-Based’ Format) Order 2024 (Amendment No. 19) Order 2024**

1.13 Officers are unable to fully resolve this objection without compromising the integrity of the scheme’s primary aim of preventing future collisions and injuries to school children.

2 Information required to take a decision

2.1 As a result of the formal objection that was received Officers have reviewed the need for loading and unloading restrictions on parts of the scheme, and have proposed, with CCLI approval, to remove this element of the proposed order

2.2 Objection – (Appendix C)

The objection is to the proposed prohibition of motor vehicles from Central Avenue at its junction with Woodhouse Hill, and proposed prohibition of waiting and loading on Central Avenue adjacent to Woodhouse Hill (as shown **Appendix B HS-25-66886-TRO**)

In summary, the grounds of the objection are: -

- That expansion of the NHT School and increased student and teacher numbers would lead to a significant increase in the number of cars (especially those dropping-off/collecting students), and that there is inadequate access included in the development plan, which is the responsibility of the Council, Developers and The NHT School. Existing problems, caused by parents inconsiderately parking in the area experienced during school changeover periods, would worsen.
- That there would be no benefits for the residents of Central Avenue outside of school hours. Residents currently parking cars along the sections proposed to be covered by waiting and loading prohibitions (who live adjacent and have no off-street parking), would have to park along the 'non-restricted' section of Central Avenue, causing problems for other residents and their visitors there. Unless the parking restrictions are policed, they will be disregarded.

Overall, the objectors do not consider that turning Central Avenue into a cul-de-sac and removing essential residential parking will benefit them, their neighbours, visitors, or school pupils, and therefore object to the changes and the removal of the opportunity to load and unload here.

In Response

A Transport Assessment was carried out as part of the planning application to expand the school. This established that there would be a potential overall increase of 55 vehicles arriving in the morning and a similar number in the afternoon. The aim of the scheme is to improve road safety and reduce the number of existing and expected vehicle trips, but to increase walking and cycling trips.

Officers recognise the issues experienced by residents in the area during school changeover periods, particularly those caused by inconsiderate parking by parents – as this is experienced outside almost every school locally and nationally. However, they do not accept that these problems would be significantly worsened by the relatively small increase in numbers of students (150 / +16%).

The primary aim of the scheme is to use engineering changes to reduce the likelihood of future collisions between vehicles and school pupils.

Our Road Safety team are however actively working with NHT School and all other schools across Kirklees, to promote and encourage active travel modes for pupils to reduce inconsiderate parental parking behaviour when transporting students.

Historical records evidence problems experienced by pedestrians (particularly children) on Woodhouse Hill in this area, with a number being injured, however, inconsiderate parking by parents was not a contributory factor. The collisions history does show that the existing priority give-way traffic calming feature on Woodhouse Hill and turning movements at the Central Avenue junction have been contributory.

On that basis removing vehicle turning movements from this junction would improve pedestrian safety and prevent future collisions involving turning vehicles. The replacement of the priority give-way feature with wide, humped crossings on Woodhouse Hill would improve student safety when crossing, and the crossing near Central Avenue could not be provided safely close to this strong student crossing desire line, if the junction remained open.

Officers do not support the view that the closure would not benefit residents of Central Avenue. A proportion of drivers using the road are doing so to pass through this area and would migrate elsewhere. With only vehicles accessing this section of Central Avenue outside of school changeover periods being the few fronting residents, the street will become much quieter and overall speeds would also reduce. This would benefit residents living along here in terms of noise, pollution and road safety. We accept that room for on-street parking would reduce, however, there is adequate space to the northwest of the proposed restrictions to accommodate any relocated residential parking.

On considering the objections to the loading and unloading restrictions, Officers do not now consider that loading restrictions will be necessary on Central Avenue. As shown Appendix E - Plan HS-25-66886 – CCLI. It is therefore recommended that the draft order is modified to remove this restriction

- 2.3 Officers are required to be mindful of Regulation 9 of the 1996 Regulations when objections are received to any order. If that order has the effect of restricting loading and unloading and those parameters set out in within Regulation 9 (3) are met, in full, then a Public Enquiry will be required to determine those objections.

With this in mind, it has been established that, if the draft order is modified, and approved as such, then, under Paragraph 9(3), the objection becomes irrelevant, and there is no mandatory requirement for a public enquiry

Regulation 9 then gives the Council the discretion to hold a Public Enquiry to determine any and all other objections. Given that the hearing and determination of objections in Kirklees, is done in a public forum, that being Cabinet Committee Local Issues, where the objectors can make representation, Officers are confident that the objections are sufficiently aired, and that no purpose would be served by holding a public inquiry

If the scheme is approved and implemented, we will be deploying parking officers to the area to enforce the new restrictions, particularly immediately after construction when users are first becoming accustomed to the changes.

3 Implications for the Council

3.1 Council Plan

This scheme is aimed at contributing to our Council Plan by providing a safer, cleaner environment for all road users on the highway network in the vicinity of North Kirklees Trust School, thus ensuring our children get the safest access to education and thus the best start in life.

3.2 Financial Implications

This scheme is jointly funding from existing approved capital plan allocations - £120,000.

If the scheme is not implemented, then irrecoverable costs, already incurred, will be lost.

3.3 Legal Implications

This scheme has been consulted on and advertised as legally required by:

- The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
- The Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure)(England and Wales) Regulations 1996 (1996 Regulations) and
- The Highways (Road Hump) Regulations 1999,

Under Sec 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 the Council has to have regard to

- a) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;
 - b) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected and (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles, so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the roads run;
- bb) the strategy prepared under [section 80](#) of the [Environment Act 1995](#) (national air quality strategy);
- c) the importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles; and
 - d) any other matters appearing to the local authority to be relevant

Under Regulation 9(1) of the 1996 Regulations, the Council must consider whether to hold a public inquiry before approving and making the order objected to. As it is recommended to modify the draft order to reduce the restrictions on loading and unloading, if accepted, there is no *obligation* to hold a public inquiry (Reg 9(3) of the 1996 Regulations) but it is still for the Council to exercise its discretion in this respect.

all of which, where relevant, are considered in the report above and below.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

Under Sec 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 the Council has to have regard to, amongst other things,

- the strategy prepared under [section 80](#) of the [Environment Act 1995](#) (national air quality strategy);
- Kirklees Air Quality Strategy and Action Plan 2019 commits to improvements to congested junctions and supporting / encouraging active travel and modal shift on journeys to school.

As this scheme aims to significantly reduce the volume and speeds of vehicles using the affected section of Central Avenue, reduce congestion in this area, and support active travel, this will have a positive effect on Climate Change and Air Quality, and is in line with our current Strategy

3.5 Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)

Not applicable

4 Consultation

Statutory consultees were approached, and no concerns were raised.

Directly affected residents were consulted by Highway Safety. Of the 260+ residents originally consulted one has objected the proposals.

All three Ward Councillors and the School were consulted, and all support the scheme.

5 Engagement

Officers successfully engaged with 4 residents who made contact during the original consultation period – the objection subsequently received to the formal advertising of the proposals was not from any of those 4 residents.

6 Options

6.1 Options considered

1. Do nothing
2. Replace the existing priority give-way feature adjacent to the Woodhouse Hill / Central Avenue junction with an uncontrolled crossing on a raised plateau and implement waiting restrictions to reduce inconsiderate parking.
3. Replace the existing priority give-way feature with a formal humped zebra crossing and implement waiting restrictions to reduce inconsiderate parking.
4. Prevent vehicle movements at the Central Avenue junction, replace the priority give-way feature with an uncontrolled crossing positioned on a raised plateau and implement waiting restrictions to reduce inconsiderate parking.

Except for Option 1, all options required elements of formal advertisement to be undertaken to support successful implementation.

6.2 Reasons for recommended option

Option 4 is recommended along with the necessary TRO's as it provides a more holistic and affordable approach to preventing injury collisions, and would reduce inconsiderate parking and rat running, and better support active school travel.

It is further recommended that that the 'No Loading At Any Time' parking restrictions on Central Avenue are removed from the proposals and the objection to the 'No Waiting At Any Time' be overruled here, and the Prohibition of Driving Except Cycles advertised in (TRO) (No. 05) Order 2024, and the Prohibition of Waiting and Loading on Central Avenue as advertised in (TRO) (Consolidation Order Providing On-Street Parking Places, Waiting, Loading and Stopping Restrictions and Migration to a 'Map-Based' Format) (Amendment No. 19) Order 2024 (**Appendix D1 and D2**) be implemented as advertised, with the exception of the loading restrictions being removed from Central Avenue, (**Appendix E**) allowing the expected road safety benefits to be realised.

Removing the loading and unloading restrictions from Central Avenue will result in making the objections to these proposals frivolous as the other lengths of loading and unloading restriction on both sides of the road at the end of the cul-de-sac are within the allowed limits of 15 metres on both sides of the road.

Consideration has been the Section 9(1) of the 1996 regulations and determined that, based on the revised proposals, if accepted, the objection does not meet the test to require a mandatory Public Enquiry. By hearing and determining these objections at Cabinet Committee Local Issues this section of the regulations is satisfied.

Councillor Munir (Portfolio Holder – Environment and Highways) fully supports officer recommendation

7 Next steps and timelines

If the objections are considered and overruled, the prohibition of motor vehicles and waiting restrictions and detailed loading restrictions will be implemented as advertised, alongside the other scheme proposals, during the school summer holidays commencing late July 2025.

If CCLI members uphold the objection in whole or in part, the prohibitions will not be implemented, and an alternative scheme would have to be conceived, carried forwards through consultation and advertisement and implemented at a future date, with the costs incurred to date lost.

8 Contact officer:

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9 Background Papers and History of Decisions

None

10 Appendices

Appendix A - Consultation Plan HS-25-66886-P01 RevB.
Appendix B – Full Scheme TRO proposals HS-25-66886-TRO
Appendix C – Objection (redacted)
Appendix D1 and D2 – Posted TRO notices
Appendix E – Amended proposals – As recommended

11 Service Director responsible

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