
**HEATHFIELD SCHOOL
OBJECTION TO ROAD HUMP NOTICE**

**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor David Lyonette,
Transport Portfolio**

Responsible Director - Richard Alty, Director of Place

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. For Members to consider objections that have been received to the publication of a notice under the terms of Section 90a of the Highways Act 1980 to construct physical traffic calming in the form of road humps and speed cushions. These features form an integral part of the Heathfield School Safer Route to School scheme, which is part of the Local Transport Plan capital programme.

Summary

2. Darlington's Local Transport Plan seeks to tackle traffic congestion, improve accessibility and maintain its good record in travel safety through a programme of physical improvements to the highway. This is supported by a programme of education, information and publicity to inform residents of the travel choices available in Darlington.
3. Parental travel choice can cause significant congestion on the highway network at peak times and we are seeking to reduce its impact by encouraging increased levels of walking and cycling to school. Excessive and inconsiderate parking around schools can increase the potential for road traffic accidents and is a cause of considerable nuisance to residents. We aim to tackle this through providing safer environments around schools in which to walk and cycle, primarily through our safer routes to schools and school 20mph initiatives. These physical works are supported by our school travel plan, cycle and pedestrian training, road safety education and publicity programme.
4. School age children have indicated to us that one of the main reasons that they choose not to walk or cycle is their perception of danger caused by the speed and volume of traffic. This is particularly the case when travelling along, or crossing, busy roads. The Council has therefore undertaken a process of providing a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly near schools.

5. Heathfield School is located on The Broadway, a residential access road that links between Yarm Road and MacMullen Road. It is proposed to form a 20mph zone on The Broadway. The zone is intended to ameliorate parental and pupil concern regarding the speed of traffic and in so doing encourage more pupils to walk or cycle to school more often. It will, of course, also benefit residents with fewer cars travelling at excess speed.
6. It is proposed to provide full width road humps and speed cushions at appropriate locations on The Broadway. We try to minimise the number of road humps within 20 mph zones to reduce cost and their impact on residents. A plan showing the location of the proposed humps is attached at **Appendix 1**.
7. Objections were received from residents of The Broadway, the full content of which are provided in the main report together with the officer's responses.
8. Officers consider that on balance the scheme should proceed as advertised given that a majority of residents that responded to the scheme consultation were in favour. The terms of the objections are not considered to be substantive enough to warrant further changes to the scheme or the omission of traffic calming features.

Recommendation

9. It is recommended that:-
 - (a) The residents' objection to the construction of road humps be set aside.
 - (b) The proposals be implemented as advertised.

Reasons

10. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:-
 - (a) The residents' objections are not considered to be substantive for the reasons expressed in the main report.
 - (b) The scheme consultation process indicates that a majority of local residents support the proposed scheme.

Richard Alty
Director of Place

Background Papers

- (i) Heathfield School Engagement Report.
- (ii) Residents' letters of objection.

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Cc

S17 Crime and Disorder	Schemes are designed to take crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour issues into account where appropriate.
Health and Well Being	Sustainable transport schemes have health and well being outcomes.
Carbon Impact	The Local Transport Plan provides a framework for sustainable travel, which schemes are in line with.
Diversity	Disability groups consulted on schemes.
Wards Affected	Lingfield
Groups Affected	All groups.
Budget and Policy Framework	In line with Cabinet approved third Local Transport Plan 2011-2016.
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Measures to provide a safer living, walking and cycling environment have One Darlington benefits. Measures to encourage more efficient traffic movement have Perfectly Placed benefits.
Efficiency	The scheme has been designed to utilise full width road humps which are a relatively cost effective form of physical traffic calming.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

11. The speed and volume of traffic is often raised by residents as an issue that affects their communities and the travel choices they make. In particular, the speed of traffic on residential roads is a cause for concern not only in terms of highway safety but also because of the impact that it has on residents' quality of life. School age children have indicated to us that one of the main reasons that they choose not to walk or cycle is their perception of danger caused by the speed and volume of traffic. This is particularly the case when travelling along, or crossing, busy roads. The Council has therefore undertaken a process of providing a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly near schools.
12. We normally try to provide 20 mph zones across a wide area in order to have a consistent speed limit and to encourage drivers to travel in a safe manner and at a speed that does not affect the quality of life of residents. We therefore propose to introduce a 20 mph zone over the area shown on the **Appendix 2**. To do this we propose to provide full-width road humps on The Broadway. We try to keep the number of road humps within 20 mph zones to the minimum to reduce cost and their impact on residents whilst maintaining low vehicle speeds.
13. It is also proposed to take the opportunity of improving dropped kerb provision in the area to improve access to services for residents with mobility impairment, the elderly and parents/guardians with push chairs. A review of access protection markings has also been carried out.
14. The proposed traffic calming measures, backed up with appropriate signs and road markings, would provide a self enforcing 20mph zone. This is an approach we have taken elsewhere in Darlington and is proven to effectively slow traffic down, providing a safer environment in which to live and in a number of cases reducing the number of casualties arising from road traffic accidents.
15. Cars do make a noise as they go over humps and can, on occasions, result in vibration.
16. The works to install the humps will unfortunately cause some disruption to residents as construction works proceed and may, on occasion, necessitate the imposition of "one-way" working or road closures and a temporary reduction in on-street parking availability so that the works can be carried out in a safe manner. There will be no permanent reduction in on-street parking provision as residents can park across the features.

Outcome of Consultation

17. Residents affected by the proposals were hand delivered a consultation letter and were asked to complete a questionnaire on the proposed measures and reply using a pre-paid envelope. The consultation documents were sent to approximately 90 dwellings and 37 residents responded, a response rate in the region of 41%.
18. Of those responding, 27 (73%) considered that traffic speeds and volumes were a problem. In respect of the proposed scheme, 22 (59%) were in favour with 15 (41%) against. There

were a number of changes to the scheme in response to the objections received at that time. The extent of the eastern end of the 20mph zone and the location of the associated traffic calming measure has been amended. The traffic calming feature is now proposed in front of Nos. 91 and 93 The Broadway. In addition, the feature is intended to be a full width road hump as this section of road is not a bus route. We consulted the four properties in the immediate vicinity of the proposed hump and received objections from Nos. 91 and 93 The Broadway. These residents have asked that their objections to the scheme be carried forward to any resulting legal process and are included below. The extent of the western end of the proposed 20mph zone has also changed with the 20mph now proposed to start just to the north east of The Broadway/The Causeway junction. The pair of cushions outside of 77 The Broadway have been relocated further to the west adjacent to a gap in the housing. Verge hardening is also proposed around the green area to stop the verge from being damaged.

19. The proposed road humps and speed cushions require Road Hump Notices to be published advising the fact that the Council is proposing to install road humps. Residents were notified of their right to formally object to the Road hump and speed cushion element of the scheme in a letter to residents outlining the outcome of the consultation process.
20. The notices were published in the Northern Echo on 14 December 2011. The closing date for objections was 11 January 2011. Notices were also placed on site. The initial site notices were incorrect and the correct ones were erected and maintained for a period of 21 days. Objections were received from residents of The Broadway and the table below details the different issues raised and responses from officers.

Issue	Officer Response
<p>I'm deeply annoyed that a 20mph sign is proposed to be placed directly by my drive in a position which will be of great inconvenience to me. Could common sense prevail and utilise the street lighting post (20 yards prior to my house between 122 & 124. In turn this would be a cost saving suggestion as you have adoptive responsibility for street lighting as well.</p> <p>(Resident of 120 The Broadway)</p>	<p>It as been agreed with the resident and the residents at 118 The Broadway to position the sign in the verge in line with the boundary of 118 and 120 The Broadway.</p>
<p>Strongly object to proposed speed ramp outside 91/93 The Broadway on the grounds of extra noise generated. Suggested an anti-clockwise one way system or a chicane either on the bend or immediately before with the restriction on the North side of the road. This would eliminate the hazards of turning left out of</p>	<p>The need for a traffic calming feature in this location was highlighted by another resident who lives on the bend 30-40m to the east of the proposed hump location. The resident indicated that his boundary wall/fence had been destroyed on two occasions by drivers who then left on foot. Comments from other residents suggested that drivers, on occasion, "race" each other</p>

Issue	Officer Response
<p>the T-junction at the South East corner of the Green due to restricted sightlines because of parked vehicles.</p> <p>Also strongly objects to verges being hardened, would prefer a total ban of anyone parking on any verges, either on the Green or outside properties overlooking the Green (claims it is only visitors to school who park in this way).</p> <p>(Resident of 93 The Broadway)</p>	<p>round either side of the green. The hump should reduce the occurrence of this dangerous driving behaviour.</p> <p>The road hump will be likely to create additional noise as cars go over it. The hump will be constructed to Department for Transport guidelines and as such it is considered that the additional noise will be within tolerable levels. It should also be borne in mind that the presence of the hump will make the section of road in front of No 93 less attractive and therefore may reduce traffic flow, though it is acknowledged that this may not be the case with school related traffic.</p> <p>We have looked at providing a one way system around the green but feel that it will be likely to be abused, particularly by the type of drivers who damaged the property wall/fence. We have also looked at using chicanes but these would have too big an impact on parking.</p> <p>The Council has a statutory duty to maintain the highway. The verges are becoming damaged as a result of cars parking on them and will very likely become a maintenance liability in the future. Verge hardening will protect the Council from future maintenance costs and potential third party claims arising from slips, trips and falls. We could impose waiting restrictions around the green but that would just displace the parking, replicating the same problem further down the road. It is considered that verge hardening is a pragmatic solution in this location and is the best method of managing a difficult parental parking problem.</p>
<p>Objects to speed hump between 91/93 The Broadway due to noise from traffic hitting hump. Feels traffic calming should start from junction with McMullen Road and along The Broadway South to reduce cars taking a short cut through The Broadway and speeding around the Green. Believes raised junction areas would be more beneficial outside 122 and</p>	<p>The need for a traffic calming feature in this location was highlighted by another resident who lives on the bend 30-40m to the east of the proposed hump location. The resident indicated that his boundary wall/fence had been destroyed on two occasions by drivers who then left on foot. Comments from other residents suggested that drivers, on occasion, “race” each other round either side of the green. The hump should</p>

Issue	Officer Response
<p>124; at the corner of 102 and 85 & 87 around the Green.</p> <p>Also objects to hardening verges which will encourage parents to park making it more difficult to move of their drive way.</p>	<p>reduce the occurrence of this dangerous driving behaviour.</p> <p>The road hump will be likely to create additional noise as cars go over it. The hump will be constructed to Department for Transport guidelines and as such it is considered that the additional noise will be within tolerable levels. It should also be borne in mind that the presence of the hump will make the section of road in front of No 91 less attractive and therefore may reduce traffic flow, though it is acknowledged that this may not be the case with school related traffic.</p> <p>The cost of the scheme is being met from the primary school redevelopment budget and is set at £25,000. This is insufficient to treat the whole of The Broadway. Speed surveys and accident analysis also suggest that other areas of the town are higher priorities for this type of area wide traffic calming.</p> <p>Raised junctions are particularly expensive given the significant construction involved and the need to accommodate drainage gulleys.</p> <p>The Council has a statutory duty to maintain the highway. The verges are becoming damaged as a result of cars parking on them and will very likely become a maintenance liability in the future. Verge hardening will protect the Council from future maintenance costs and potential third party claims arising from slips, trips and falls. We could impose waiting restrictions around the green but that would just displace the parking, replicating the same problem further down the road. It is considered that verge hardening is a pragmatic solution in this location and is the best method of managing a difficult parental parking problem.</p> <p>The verge hardening will at least enable cars to partly pull off the carriageway. This will move parked cars away from the resident's driveway and should assist the resident pull off the driveway. We have also agreed to place white access protection markings for any residents that</p>

Issue	Officer Response
(Resident of 91 The Broadway)	require them, which will also assist manoeuvring off the driveway.
<p>Objection to verge hardening, feels it is totally unacceptable that part of the Green should be lost to provide parking.</p> <p>(Resident of 79 The Broadway)</p>	<p>The Council has a statutory duty to maintain the highway. The verges are becoming damaged as a result of cars parking on them and will very likely become a maintenance liability in the future. Verge hardening will protect the Council from future maintenance costs and potential third party claims arising from slips, trips and falls. We could impose waiting restrictions around the green but that would just displace the parking, replicating the same problem further down the road. It is considered that verge hardening is a pragmatic solution in this location and is the best method of managing a difficult parental parking problem.</p> <p>The verge hardening will be just that and will not reduce the amount of open space on the green.</p>