

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET – 20TH SEPTEMBER 2007

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

**OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT AND TRAFFIC CALMING SCHEME -
SERPENTINE ROAD AREA, LISCARD (LISCARD WARD)**

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report considers objections received to the proposed 20 mph speed limit order and traffic calming scheme for Serpentine Road area, Liscard.
- 1.2 This report recommends that Cabinet note the objections and that the 20 mph speed limit and traffic calming scheme be approved for implementation as advertised.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At Cabinet on 26 July 2007, it was resolved that a 20 mph speed limit order and traffic calming scheme be introduced within the Serpentine Road area subject to statutory advertisement.
- 2.2 The attached plan shows the location and extents of the proposed 20 mph zone and traffic calming features. The proposed 20 mph zone incorporates Serpentine Road, Chepstow Avenue, Bristol Avenue, Brompton Avenue, Martins Lane, Hawarden Avenue, Chatsworth Avenue, Eaton Avenue, Central Park Avenue, Ferndale Avenue, Empress Road, Rydal Bank, Bryn Bank, The Grange, The Mount, and Oxford Road.
- 2.3 During the advertisement period, two letters of objection and one letter of support have been received to the proposal.

3.0 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Public Notices were erected on site on 11th July 2007 advertising the intent to introduce a 20 mph zone and traffic calming scheme. Letters were also distributed to all properties affected by the proposals on 11th July 2007. A public display of the scheme was available for viewing throughout the objection period in Wallasey Town Hall.
- 3.2 The formal closing date for objections was 3rd August 2007.
- 3.3 Two letters of objection and one letter of support have been received.
- 3.4 Consultations with the Emergency Services have been carried out and no objections to the proposals were received.

4.0 OBJECTIONS

- 4.1 Both objectors raised the same objections on a number of issues as follows:-
 - 4.1.1 Both objectors are concerned about the speed of vehicles using Serpentine Road.
 - 4.1.2 Both objectors believe that a road closure should be implemented in Serpentine Road.
 - 4.1.3 Both objectors are opposed to the construction of speed humps but welcome the introduction of a 20 mph Traffic Regulation Order.
- 4.2 The two objectors also raised individual objections which are summarised as follows:-

- 4.2.1 The first objector is concerned that a boundary wall has been breached five times. The objector submitted additional information regarding damage to their vehicle as a result of a vehicle accident outside their property on 6th August 2007.
- 4.2.2 The first objector believes that road traffic has increased in Serpentine Road since the introduction of Satellite Navigation Systems.
- 4.2.3 The first objector believes that traffic conditions in Martins Lane should not be linked to Serpentine Road. The objector believes that other possibilities should be investigated for Martins Lane such as a one-way system.
- 4.2.4 The first objector believes that a full investigation has not been undertaken to explore the possible solutions for traffic calming in Serpentine Road.
- 4.2.5 The second objector refers to a previous report, which states that there should be no significant displacement of traffic into the surrounding roads adjacent to Serpentine Road. Therefore the objector believes therefore that there should be no need to traffic calm the side roads.

5.0 RESPONSE TO OBJECTION

5.1.1 Vehicle Speeds

A speed survey in Serpentine Road has revealed that the 85th percentile speed is 32mph.

The proposed traffic calming measures in Serpentine Road have been designed in accordance with the guidelines set by the Department for Transport and should reduce vehicle speeds to 20mph, thus enabling the introduction of a 20mph Traffic Regulation Order.

5.1.2 Road Closure

A report was submitted to the Streetscene & Transport Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 16th January 2007. The report identified that a large proportion of local residents were not in favour of closing Serpentine Road. The report sought the Committee's views on reviewing its previous decision to implement a road closure. As a result the Committee's resolution was as follows:-

"That a traffic calming scheme be implemented in Serpentine Road, Liscard, as originally advertised and ratified by Cabinet, and that officers also explore the possibility of introducing a traffic calming scheme in Martins Lane, Liscard".

5.1.3 Speed Humps

The legislation covering 20 mph speed limits is contained within the Department of Transport's Circular 01/2006 and is the underpinning document for setting local speed limits.

The document indicates that 20 mph zones and speed limits should generally be self-enforcing, and should not be implemented on roads with a strategic function or main traffic routes.

Furthermore, 20 mph speed limits are unlikely to be complied with on roads where vehicle speeds are substantially higher than this.

The key to a successful zone of 20 mph is to give an appropriate design to be able to reduce the speed of traffic to 20 mph without the need for unreasonable levels of police enforcement.

5.2.1 Accident Record

During the current three-year study period there have been three personal injury accidents in Serpentine Road and six personal injury accidents in Martins Lane. Analysis of these accidents has revealed that four of these accidents (one of which occurred outside the objectors property) could have been prevented by the introduction of traffic calming measures. There have been no recorded personal injury accidents in the side roads between Serpentine Road and Martins Lane.

Initially seven road accidents involving personal injury had been identified in the three-year period up to 31 December 2003 within Serpentine Road.

It is considered that the introduction of a 20 mph traffic-calmed area will have a beneficial effect on the incidents reported by the objector.

5.2.2 Satellite Navigation Systems

There is no evidence to suggest that Sat Nav Systems have increased traffic flows in Serpentine Road as there are no traffic counts available to cover the period of transition for the integration of Sat Nav Systems.

5.2.3 Martin's Lane

The report which was submitted to the Streetscene & Transport Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7th June 2007 identified that to traffic calm or close Serpentine Road in isolation may result in the displacement of traffic into one or two of the side roads, which currently have no recorded personal injury accidents. However, it could be expected that Martins Lane would become the main focus of the displaced traffic. The introduction of traffic calming in Martins Lane and side roads should reduce the possibility of traffic displacement.

The introduction of a one-way Traffic Regulation Order in Martins Lane could not be recommended as it could be expected to bring about an increase in vehicle speeds and a subsequent displacement of traffic onto other roads.

5.2.4 Alternative Solutions

A full investigation of traffic conditions has been undertaken in Serpentine Road and the adjacent side roads. Consideration has been given in previous committee reports (which are listed in chronological order below) regarding traffic calming, a single road closure and a double road closure.

- 20 June 2005 Environment & Transportation Select Committee – Objections to traffic calming
- 28 November 2005 Environment & Transportation Select Committee – Alternative Road Safety Schemes
- 12 September 2006 Streetscene & Transportation Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Public Consultation Questionnaire exercise
- 16 January 2007 Streetscene & Transportation Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Objections to Road Closure
- 7 June 2007 Streetscene & Transportation Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Traffic Calming Feasibility Study

5.2.5 Displacement onto Side Roads

Previous reports have highlighted justifiable concerns associated with the displacement of traffic into the adjacent side roads should Serpentine Road be formally closed to through traffic.

6.0 FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The cost to implement a traffic-calming scheme in Serpentine Road, Martins Lane and side roads is estimated to be £100,000. Funding for this scheme would require allocation from the 2007/08 Transport Capital Programme. This funding would be split between Local Safety Schemes (£57,000) and Speed Reduction Schemes (£43,000).

6.2 It will be necessary to undertake sections of carriageway resurfacing to facilitate the construction of the traffic calming features.

6.3 The scheme will be implemented from within existing staff resources.

7.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Traffic travelling at a lower speed can have a positive effect on assisting disabled, visually impaired persons and persons with prams and pushchairs to cross the road.

8.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no implications under this heading.

9.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Features to calm traffic speeds can have a positive impact on community safety.

10.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific human rights implications arising directly from this report.

11.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no implications under this heading.

12.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT

12.1 Letters and emails received by my Department have been used in the preparation of this report.

13.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS.

13.1 This report has implications for the Liscard Ward.

14.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 That the content of the report be noted and the 20 mph speed limit and traffic calming scheme be approved for implementation as advertised.

DAVID GREEN, DIRECTOR
TECHNICAL SERVICES