

HIGHWAYS AND TRAFFIC REPRESENTATION PANEL

Monday, 8 November 2010

Present:

Councillor J Hale (Chair)

Councillors D Mitchell

H Smith

16 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to consider whether they had personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they were.

Councillor H Smith declared a personal interest in minute 18 (Speed Limit Review) by virtue of the objector being a resident in his ward.

Members were reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement. No such declarations were made.

17 SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR MARKINGS

The Director of Technical Services reported concerning objections to the provision of waiting restrictions at two locations following an audit of school keep clear and associated Traffic Regulation Orders around the vicinity of all schools, within Wirral. The purpose of the audit was to ensure compliance with current DfT regulations and resolve a number of anomalies where schools had changed their entrances. The School Keep Clear Markings were used to protect pedestrians so that they have clear visibility of traffic and vice versa as well as identifying a safe area around the school.

(i) Elleray Park School, Wallasey

Residents of Elleray Park (property numbers 34 and 36) had submitted two separate objections to the proposals, as shown on plan BEng/51/10.

Both objectors were concerned that the proposals would exacerbate the problems they face in parking outside their properties, as at present there was no signage to delineate the hours in which drivers cannot stop on the School Keep Clear markings. If parking was restricted by a traffic regulation order it was anticipated that vehicles would then park opposite the school, outside their properties. The objectors felt that

the parking issues were mainly caused by teaching staff / visitors who park for long periods of time throughout the day.

The Panel received an email representation which was circulated in advance of the meeting.

(ii) Brackenwood Primary School , Pulford Road, Bebington

Residents from property numbers 3, 5 and 7 had objected to the proposals detailed in plan BEng/51/10. This was further supported by objections from Councillors Jerry Williams and Walter Smith.

Objectors were concerned that they, or their visitors would not be able to park outside their properties or anywhere within the turning head during its hours of operation (Monday- Friday 8am – 5 pm), despite the ‘school run’ being a problem for part of the day. They also felt that the proposals would displace parking towards the junction of Holmway / Norbury Avenue, and increase double parking or parking across driveways.

The Panel received email representations which were circulated in advance of the meeting.

Councillor Walter Smith addressed the meeting. He referred to his discussions with the objectors and asked the Panel to consider the introduction of an ‘Access Only’ scheme as a possible alternative proposal.

The Director referred to difficulties concerning the enforcement of ‘Access Only’ schemes and pointed out that vehicular access was still required to the school.

Resolved –

(1) That the Panel note the objections to the scheme for provision of waiting restrictions at Elleray Park School, as shown on plan BEng/51/10, and the officers’ responses, and recommend to the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee that the scheme be approved for implementation.

(2) That the scheme for provision of waiting restrictions at Brackenwood Primary School be deferred for further consideration of the alternative ‘Access Only’ scheme.

18 **SPEED LIMIT REVIEW**

The Director of Technical Services reported concerning objections received to proposals recommended as part of the Speed Limit Review study for various locations across the Borough:-

Following new guidance for the setting of local speed limits published by the Department for Transport, local authorities were required to undertake a review of speed limits on all A and B classified roads and implement any necessary changes by 2011. The Speed Limit Review Panel had assessed the suitability of existing speed limits and considered a number of different factors including road safety

analysis, cost and safety benefits, enforcement, and maintenance of proposed schemes, changes in driver behaviour and the consistency of speed limits. Discussions had also been held with neighbouring local authorities over cross boundary routes to ensure a consistent approach was maintained.

The Speed Limit Review Panel proposed a number of speed limit recommendations, which were based on robust evidence and follow the guiding principles published within Department for Transport guidance.

The Panel considered the following objections received from the Cyclists' Touring Club and Merseyside Cycling Campaign (Wirral Group) in response to the statutory advertisement of its proposals. Representative of these organisations attended the meeting and outlined their objections.

The Panel agreed to vote on each proposal separately.

B5137 Brimstage Road, Bebington

Proposal – Relocation of existing 30mph / National Speed Limit gateway

Objection – That the 30mph limit / gateway is not being altered to finish/start at the Clatterbridge roundabout.

Response – The principle behind increasing the speed limit along this short link was supported by evidence that drivers coming from a largely rural road network or motorway had not sufficiently reacted to the existing 30mph speed limit signs (possibly due to their proximity to the complex signalised motorway junction). The section of road concerned did not have any frontage or the usual attributes drivers associate with a 30mph speed limit, although street lighting was present on one side of the road.

The proposed amendment provided an opportunity to create a highly visible gateway approaching a built-up area. The Panel considered that such a gateway, in advance of the Toucan crossing, closer to the built up area was likely to achieve greater respect by drivers thus reducing vehicle speeds and improving road safety on the approach to its junction with Beechway and the residential area.

Recommendation (2:1) – That this proposal be implemented as advertised.

A5137 Brimstage Road / Whitehouse Lane, Brimstage

Proposal – Reduce from National Speed Limit to 50mph

Objection – That the limit is not being reduced from national speed limit to 40mph. The road is narrow and it is particularly hazardous when motorists are passing other vulnerable road users including horse-riders, cyclists and pedestrians of which there are high numbers given the rural area. It has a number of bends, junctions and accesses. It is unlit apart from the area of the defined village community.

The current 30mph limit in the village area is not being extended to west of Talbot Avenue in recognition of National Cycle Route 56 to better protect the large number of cyclists who use it.

Response – This route, running from the A540 to the west and the M53 Junction 4 Interchange to the east has two sections where proposed speed limit changes are proposed (Old Lane to Talbot Avenue and the link from east of Brimstage Lane to M53 Junction 4). Both sections were largely rural in nature and were located on an A class road. The guidance recommends that the speed limit in rural areas should be 50/60mph for most high quality strategic A and B roads with few bends, junctions or accesses. It was also noted that this route was subject to full carriageway reconstruction during April 2010.

The Panel also recommended including Whitehouse Lane in the speed reduction proposals to improve consistency and compliance.

The Panel considered that given the overall layout of this A class road, together with its road safety record, it was appropriate to reduce the speed limit to 50mph. The Panel believed that further reduction in the speed limit to 40mph would not necessarily bring any greater road safety benefits, and was likely to lead to a high rate of non-compliance. Guidance issued by the Dft also supported the Panel's views. Following the widespread approach to setting local speed limits the Panel considered that a 40mph speed limit was suited to routes where frontage development was dominant or where there was a significant number of vulnerable road users.

Recommendation (3:0) – That this proposal be implemented as advertised.

A551 Upton Bypass, Upton

Proposal – Increase from 30mph to 40mph

Objection – That the increase of the speed limit from 30mph to 40mph in a short stretch between two roundabouts in an area that is a network of minor rural lanes.

Response – This route provides a by-pass of the built up area of Upton and stretches from Arrowe Park Road in the south to the start of the M53 Junction 2 to the north. The route has very limited development and frontage access and is a single carriageway standard with street lighting present. The proposed speed limit change would improve the management and suitability of speeds along this route and assist in achieving more appropriate vehicle speeds thus encouraging compliance. Recorded 85th percentile speeds were much higher than the set limit and the road met the criteria for a higher speed road.

Recommendation (3:0) – That this proposal be implemented as advertised.

Heron Road, Hoylake / Pump Lane, Greasby / Saughall Massie Road, Saughall Massie

Proposal – Reduce from National Speed Limit to 50mph along Heron Road and Pump Lane. Increase from 30mph to 50mph along part of Saughall Massie Road.

Objection – That the speed limit is not being reduced to 40mph. Heron Road / Pump Lane is narrow and is particularly hazardous when motorists are passing other

vulnerable road users including horse-riders, cyclists and pedestrians. It has a number of bends. and is largely unlit.

Response – Heron Road and Pump Lane are rural in nature, there is very limited development and frontage access along the routes and they all met the criteria for a higher speed road.

Following the resurfacing of Heron Road and introduction of safety measures including SLOW and edge of carriageway markings, marker posts, cats eyes and signage, road safety has significantly improved on this road. Introducing a 50mph speed limit reduction would provide significant benefits including the opportunity to improve consistency with adjoining link roads including Saughall Massie Road to the east and the existing 50mph speed limit on the western section of Saughall Massie Road. In addition it was considered that this consistent approach would achieve greater respect by drivers and improve compliance. Following the widespread approach to setting local speed limits the Panel considered that a 40mph speed limit was suited to routes where frontage development was dominant or where there was a significant number of vulnerable road users.

Recommendation (3:0) – That this proposal, as now amended by the reduction of the speed limit to 40 mph along Heron Road, be implemented.

Storeton Village, Storeton

Proposal – Reduce from National Speed Limit to 30mph within Village area and relocation of existing 30mph / National Speed Limit gateway along Lever Causeway.

Objection – The proposed speed limit reductions and alteration to 30mph gateway are supported but we object to what seems an extension to the national limit for a short distance on the approach to the village from the east.

We take this opportunity to record our disappointment that the Review retains the national speed limit of 60mph on the Lever Causeway, itself. It is an accident black spot. We feel that a reduction in speed on the open stretch is essential alongside installation of road lighting and/or development of a segregated green way to either side of the carriageway for shared use by walkers, runners, horse-riders and cyclists.

Response – Lever Causeway currently has minimal frontage development and access and the accident rate is below the Dft threshold levels for action. Although there have been a small number of KSI casualties, these have not been due to the speed of traffic. The route also has good forward visibility.

Relocating the existing gateway along Lever Causeway would provide the opportunity to create a highly visible gateway approaching a built-up area. The Panel considered that such a gateway, in advance of the village, closer to the built up area was likely to achieve greater respect by drivers thus reducing vehicle speeds and improving road safety.

A Local Safety Scheme incorporating enhanced signing, extensive road markings and marker posts had been introduced on Levers Causeway during the last two years. Following detailed investigation into the crash history, this scheme did not warrant further speed reduction measures, however an ongoing programme of

monitoring was in place. Road safety had improved and there were no recent recorded injury accidents.

The programme of work for footway / cycleway measures for this year had been approved by the Council and this location was not identified as a priority within the programme. As with all roads throughout the Borough, it will be considered again when drawing up future programmes.

Recommendation (3:0) – That this proposal be implemented as advertised.

B5136 Thornton Common Road / B5151 Willaston Road, Clatterbridge

Proposal – Reduce from National Speed Limit to 50mph

Objection – To the reduction of the speed limit to only 50mph between Clatterbridge and the Thornton Common Road roundabout, and, on to the Willaston Road and Thornton Common Road. There are a number of bends, junctions and accesses, at times affording little clear sight of other vulnerable road users. As would be expected in what is a rural area, there is a high mix on these roads of horse-riders, cyclists, walkers and runners. A speed of 40mph is far more appropriate.

Response – Thornton Common Road and Willaston Road are both rural in nature, have very limited development and frontage access and meet the criteria for a higher speed road. Both routes have recently been subject to carriageway surface dressing and there are also proposals to introduce Local Safety Schemes comprising of enhanced warning signage and road markings.

The proposed speed limit change along Willaston Road was also consistent with proposals being considered by the neighbouring authority Cheshire West and Chester Council, as this was a cross boundary route.

Recommendation (3:0) – That this proposal be implemented as advertised.

Resolved – That the Panel:

- (1) Note the objections received and the officers' responses; and**
- (2) Recommend to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee that the following Speed Limit Review recommendations be approved for implementation: -**
 - (a) (2:1) B5137 Brimstage Road, Bebington - Proposal – Relocation of existing 30mph / National Speed Limit gateway;**
 - (b) (3:0) A5137 Brimstage Road / Whitehouse Lane, Brimstage - Proposal – Reduce from National Speed Limit to 50mph**
 - (c) (3:0) A551 Upton Bypass, Upton - Proposal – Increase from 30mph to 40mph**
 - (d) (3:0) Heron Road, Hoylake / Pump Lane, Greasby / Saughall Massie Road, Saughall Massie - Proposal – Reduce from National Speed Limit to 40mph along Heron Road, 50 mph along Pump Lane, and increase from 30mph to 50mph along part of Saughall Massie Road**

(e) (3:0) Storeton Village, Storeton - Proposal – Reduce from National Speed Limit to 30mph within Village area and relocation of existing 30mph / National Speed Limit gateway along Lever Causeway.

(f) (3:0) B5136 Thornton Common Road / B5151 Willaston Road, Clatterbridge - Proposal – Reduce from National Speed Limit to 50mph.

19 **PETITION: REQUEST FOR TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES IN MELLOR ROAD/ROSEBERY GROVE/AMERY GROVE, PRENTON**

The Director of Technical Services reported concerning a 51 signature petition requesting traffic calming measures in Mellor Road, Rosebery Grove and Amery Grove, Prenton.

Investigations into the road safety records for Mellor Road and the surrounding area revealed that it had an excellent personal injury accident record during the latest three year study period. The introduction of traffic calming measures would not result in a significant reduction of vehicle speeds or lead to an improvement in the already excellent accident record, and they were not therefore warranted at the present time. However, road safety officers would continue to offer education to children and parents about the highway environment.

The lead petitioner had been informed of the various measures that could be carried out within the area:

- The joint "Community Speedwatch" initiative with the Police which aimed to empower local communities to make drivers more aware of inappropriate speed should the lead petitioner or other concerned neighbours wish to take this forward.
- The road could be considered for the community speed initiative "Bring Accidents Down 2 Zero".
- As a result of the lead petitioners concerns raised regarding traffic speeds in Mellor Road and the surrounding area the Police had been requested to give the area some additional enforcement.
- The speed alert trailer could be used in this location although the use of this highly visible and effective equipment was dependent upon a safe and effective location following a risk assessment.

The report concluded that no additional traffic management measures were justified at the present time and recommended that the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee be advised that no further action should be taken in respect of this petition, but that the situation would continue to be monitored.

Resolved – That the Panel:

(1) Note the petitioners request for traffic calming measures to slow the speed of traffic in Mellor Road, Prenton and the surrounding area.

(2) Recommend to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee that no further action should be taken in respect of the petition requesting traffic calming measures to slow the speed of traffic in Mellor Road, Prenton and the surrounding area but that the situation will continue to be monitored.

20 PETITION: REQUEST FOR FURTHER ROAD SAFETY MEASURES TO SLOW TRAFFIC SPEED IN PARK ROAD, WALLASEY AND THE SURROUNDING AREA

The Director of Technical Services reported concerning a 521 signature petition requesting further road safety measures to slow the speed of traffic in Park Road, Wallasey and the surrounding area.

Councillor Denis Knowles, ward councillor, asked for this matter to be deferred to allow local residents to attend the meeting.

Resolved – That this matter be deferred until the next meeting of the Panel.

21 PETITION: REQUEST FOR TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES IN WRIGHT STREET, WALLASEY

The Director of Technical Services reported concerning a 105 signature petition requesting traffic calming measures in Wright Street, Wallasey.

Speed surveys which were undertaken in Wright Street had revealed low average speeds and a relatively light flow of vehicular traffic. It was therefore considered that traffic calming measures would not significantly affect vehicle speed.

The petitioners had expressed their concern regarding safety for children playing within the road. However, this was not considered to be a safe practice and during the past five years there had been two tragic road deaths involving young children playing unsupervised in roads. The lead petitioner was informed of the dangers of children playing on or adjacent to roads.

Councillor Darren Dodd and the lead petitioner addressed the meeting and highlighted their concerns regarding road safety.

The Director reported that investigations into the road safety records for Wright Street showed that it had an excellent personal injury accident record during the latest three year study period. The introduction of traffic calming measures would not significantly reduce vehicle speeds or lead to an improvement in the already good accident record, and they were not warranted at the present time. However, road safety officers would continue to offer education to children and parents about the highway environment.

The lead petitioner was advised of the following measures that could be carried out within the area:

- The joint "Community Speedwatch" initiative that the Council has with the Police, which aims to empower local communities to make drivers more aware of inappropriate speed, could be introduced should the lead petitioner or other concerned neighbours wish to take this forward.
- This road could be considered for the community speed initiative "Bring Accidents Down 2 Zero".

Officers had also considered an alternative to road humps as a form of traffic calming: by moving a central section of the double yellow lines currently in place along the south west side of the road to a position immediately opposite on the north east side, effectively providing a chicane in the road.

In order to maintain traffic flow and prevent vehicles parking opposite each other within the relatively narrow road, an area of overlap of the double yellow lines on each side of the road would be required. During site investigations, it was noted that a number of vehicles were parked on the existing double yellow lines. Should this occur within the overlap area of double yellow lines on the approach or exit from the parking chicane it was likely to cause an obstruction on Wright Street. Wright Street was a one way road and vehicles would not be permitted to reverse out of it should they not be able to manoeuvre through.

This alternative would lead to a loss of on-street parking for approximately four to six vehicles and given the already considerable pressure on parking provision within Wright Street, such a scheme may not find favour with residents.

The report concluded that, based on the Council's adopted criteria, physical traffic calming measures were not justified at this time and recommends that the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee be informed that no further action should be taken in respect of this petition but that the situation will continue to be monitored.

Resolved – That the Panel:

- (1) Note the petitioner's request for traffic calming measures to slow the speed of traffic in Wright Street and the surrounding area.**
- (2) Recommend to the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee that no further action is taken in respect of the petition requesting traffic calming measures to slow the speed of traffic in Wright Street and the surrounding area but that the situation will continue to be monitored.**

22 **TEEHEY LANE , BEBINGTON**

Further to minute 315 (Cabinet – 4/2/210) when this location was approved within the programme for pedestrian crossings, the Director of Technical Services reported concerning an objection received from the resident of 6 Teehey Lane, Bebington to

the introduction of a pedestrian refuge island on Teehey Lane between Bracken Lane and Gorseville Road, Bebington.

The objector was concerned that as the junction of Brackenwood Road / Teehey Lane / Gorseville Road was 'staggered' in nature, both drivers and cyclists already have to constantly check traffic from many directions with the proximity of the bend, speed of approaching traffic and adjacent access to the Bebington Care Home adding to their difficulties. He felt that the added complication of a pedestrian island requiring extra vigilance from drivers emerging from Brackenwood Road and Gorseville Road could potentially put pedestrians in more danger.

The Director reported that the provision of a pedestrian refuge would allow pedestrians to cross in two movements, simplifying the crossing manoeuvre and enabling them to concentrate on vehicles approaching from one direction at a time, and would prove to be of particular benefit for children, the elderly and persons with disabilities. The proposed position of the pedestrian refuge island was such that it would be clearly visible to drivers emerging from Brackenwood Road and Gorseville Road.

The objector was also concerned that vehicles parking on Teehey Lane adjacent to the Bebington Care Home would create difficulties for traffic negotiating the proposed pedestrian refuge island. He drew attention to extensive parking around the bend to the south of the junction and on the adjacent verge/footpath when open public events are held at the Care Home

The Director referred to numerous site observations indicating that there were no problems with parking on Teehey Lane associated with the Bebington Care Home. Any instances of inappropriate, illegal or dangerous parking observed in the vicinity of the bend would be referred to the Police for appropriate action. The impact of the scheme on general traffic conditions would be carefully monitored and appropriate action taken should future site conditions change.

The Panel received an email representation which was circulated in advance of the meeting. A ward councillor had also made representations on behalf of the resident of no.6 Teehey Lane and asked that the objections and concerns expressed by the resident are given full and due consideration.

Resolved – That the Panel note the objector's concerns, but recommend to the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee that the pedestrian refuge scheme and 'No Waiting At Any Time' Traffic Regulation Order be implemented as advertised.

23 ST PAUL'S ROAD, SEACOMBE

The Director of Technical Services reported concerning an objection received from the resident of 35a St Paul's Road, Seacombe to the proposed introduction of a pedestrian refuge island and associated 'No Waiting at Any Time' - Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) on St Paul's Road adjacent to the Seacombe Children's Centre / Jack & Jill Day Nursery.

The resident of 35a St Paul's Road addressed the meeting and expressed her concern that the proposal would remove the convenience of being able to park

directly outside her property and increase the difficulties in finding a parking place elsewhere on St Paul's Road owing to the high demand for on-street parking spaces during the day.

The Director reported that the proposed location of the pedestrian refuge island, as shown on plan BENG/48/10, was considered to be the most suitable to assist pedestrian movements across St Paul's Road, and in particular those wishing to cross to and from the Seacombe Children's Centre / Jack & Jill Day Nursery. In the absence of a safe and suitable alternative location for the pedestrian refuge island being available and notwithstanding the outcome of the issues in respect of the usage of the piece of land adjacent to no.35 St Paul's Road, it was recommended that the proposal be approved.

Resolved - The Panel note the objection but recommend to the Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee that the pedestrian refuge scheme and Traffic Regulation Order, as shown on plan BENG/48/10, be recommended for implementation.

24 **BERWYN DRIVE, HESWALL - UPDATE**

Further to minute 14 (8/7/2010) the Director of Technical Services reported concerning the progress of his continuing discussions with Company Chairman and managing Director to explore possible solutions to the problems experienced by local residents relating to the use of this road by articulated vehicles.

Resolved - That the Panel note that the matters raised from this meeting are being progressed.